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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 10, 2024

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*English*]

### GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION PRICING ACT

The House resumed from February 14 consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to C-234, An Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act.

**Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege again to rise in this place on behalf of the people of Chatham-Kent—Leamington to speak to the gutting of Bill C-234, arguably one of the most contentious amendments introduced into the House this session. Why is it so contentious?

I opened my remarks as I usually do. It truly is an honour and a privilege to bring the voices of our constituents to this place. In fact, the bringing of those voices of Canadians to this place is the role that all 338 of us are supposed to do, through the process of debate, committee and voting in this chamber. Therefore, it is not a throwaway comment that I make when I begin my interventions.

I am speaking with the weight of the vast majority of my constituents and of Canadians when I speak to the amendment that would restore the intent of the original Bill C-234 to exempt on-farm propane and natural gas for grain drying and for barn heating.

This amendment would remove the most contentious part of the amended bill that came to us from the other place, and it reflects what Canadians want.

This was a billion-dollar bill, a billion dollars worth of carbon tax cost that was to be avoided with the passage of C-234, and this cost would be borne by our farmers and, ultimately, by consumers by 2030. The amendment brought back to this chamber by the other place, which guts the bill, would cut this relief to farmers and ultimately to consumers by \$910 million, or 91% of that, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer. That is gutting.

A recent Leger poll confirms that the vast majority, seven out of 10 Canadians, support this exemption for farmers using natural gas

and propane, because there simply are not viable alternatives for the farmers. Let us put this in perspective. Canada contributes 1.6% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, and agriculture only contributes 8% of that 1.6%, so this carbon tax is only a virtue-signalling exercise that drives up the cost of food.

The carbon tax is a tax plan and not an environmental plan. Therefore, I do hope that the other place, the place of sober second thought, takes note of what the will of the people is and ignores the browbeating they received from the Prime Minister when they considered this bill a sober second time.

Before going on to the significance of the bill to my constituents, I want to take note of a few observations made by the independent PBO, and that is a gagged PBO, by the way. The PBO reports that Canadians will pay, in addition to the carbon tax, another \$486 million, so another half a billion dollars, in GST on top of the carbon tax by 2030. This is a tax on a tax. In 2022, the carbon tax also cost \$82.6 million just to administer. That cost was for 465 federal employees. Since 2019, this cost taxpayers nearly \$200 million, or a fifth of a billion dollars, just to administer.

I am going to focus the remaining of my time on two industry groups that do not immediately come to mind when we are thinking about the removal of barn heating from the carbon tax exemption. I am sure my colleagues who will follow with their interventions will speak to the more traditional aspects of barn heating.

The bill is of particular significance to my riding, as Chatham-Kent—Leamington is home to 60% of Ontario's greenhouses, 2,730 of Ontario's 4,000 acres. In fact, the greenhouse acreage in CKL is larger than the entire U.S. greenhouse industry combined, making it the largest concentration of greenhouses in North America. Total farm gate represents \$1.2 billion. Therefore, naturally my constituents are gravely concerned with the consequences of the Senate amendments.

*Private Members' Business*

Greenhouse farmers did receive an 80% carbon tax exemption in the original 2016 Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act. Why? Because they grow food and because they recycle much of the CO<sub>2</sub> back into the greenhouses, because, as we learned in high school science, plants grow better with CO<sub>2</sub>, tax or no tax applied. However, even with that exemption, Ontario greenhouse farmers will pay over \$18 million in carbon tax this year, and that will rise to \$40 million a year by 2030. Cumulatively, Ontario greenhouses alone will pay almost a quarter billion dollars in carbon tax by 2030, and this is with the 80% exemption, but as I said earlier, it is ultimately the consumer who pays. These are big numbers.

• (1105)

At a time of high food insecurity across Canada and the world, the gutting of Bill C-234 is just another example of the Liberals' virtue-signalling ideology that will inflict more financial hardship on farmers and, in turn, subsequently on Canadian consumers.

However, as difficult as it is for greenhouse farmers, it is that much worse for our mushroom farmers. They did not receive any consideration in 2016, so they are paying the full carbon tax plus HST. Let us think about this for a moment. A greenhouse cannabis producer gets an 80% carbon tax exemption, but a mushroom farmer gets no consideration. Is that virtue signalling?

Carleton Mushroom Farms co-owner Mike Medeiros summed it up best when he said, "Instead of it being a staple, it's going to be a luxury item and it's going to affect sales. By affecting sales, I may have to cut back my farm, make it smaller." Mr. Medeiros paid \$150,000 last year in carbon tax and is on track to be out of pocket another \$173,000 this year. By 2030, he estimates it will reach \$450,000. This is on top of his heating bills.

This mushroom farmer is an example of Canadian farm families setting the gold standard in efficiency, innovation and sustainability. He uses heavily insulated boilers that are powered by natural gas. Mushroom farmers in Canada will pay \$7.4 million this year because of the tax, and by 2030 that bill rises to \$16 million.

Another mushroom producer, one that I am even more familiar with, is Highline Mushrooms. It operates 10 farms across Canada and is headquartered in my hometown. Almost all the farms are near the U.S. border, so they compete with U.S. producers for retailers both in Canada and the U.S. Of course, U.S. producers do not pay a carbon tax and so, logically, industry expansion in this industry could very well go to the U.S.

Similarly, back to the greenhouse, its industry representatives recently testified at an agriculture committee hearing. They said that the U.S. industry was becoming a much more attractive alternative for expansion; this by our very own Canadian producers.

This Canadian carbon tax is also directly contributing to food insecurity. Under pressure from high food prices, a 2023 Agri-Food Analytics Lab survey showed that almost half of Canadians were prioritizing the cost of groceries versus the nutrition of their groceries.

Food Banks Canada backs up these figures with some startling figures of its own. Last year, food banks had to handle a record two million visits, and they expect another million new users this year.

One in 10 people in Toronto is having to rely on food banks to survive.

This past weekend, I, together with the Leader of the Opposition, visited the Waterloo regional food bank. It has experienced a 50% increase in usage over the past year, and a fivefold increase in the past decade. That should not happen in Canada.

The Conservatives have introduced an amendment to reject the Senate amendments and demand that the bill be passed in its original form, which would support our farmers and our families. When we tax the farmer that grows the food and we tax the trucker that delivers the food, we ultimately tax the Canadian consumer who consumes and buys the food.

I call on our NDP and Bloc Québécois members to hold to their original vote on this bill and reject the Senate amendments. It is high time that the government puts aside its ideological agenda and does what is best for Canadians, as Canadians are calling for. Better yet, it should step aside and let the Conservatives restore hope and sanity to our country, uniting our country and our home; my home, our home, let us bring it home.

• (1110)

**Mr. Kody Blois:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to seek unanimous consent to call this question to a vote.

**The Speaker:** I heard "no" even before the Speaker had the opportunity to put the question, so there is no unanimous consent for that. I encourage all members to, please, when they do seek unanimous consent, that they engage in negotiations with all the parties involved so that we do not use up the time of the House.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are not too many bills that go through Ottawa where their number becomes synonymous with an issue. Over the course of the last couple of years, Bill C-234 is known in every farm in every part of our country. I get asked very often, when I am out in my tours not just in my part of eastern Ontario but across the country, what the status is of the Conservative bill that was passed in the House of Commons quite a long time ago. When will the Liberal-NDP government listen to what farmers have been saying, listen to the Conservatives and listen to what a majority of members in the House have said, and pass this bill in its original form?

*Private Members' Business*

We are here still debating this because of deliberate attempts by the Liberal government, the Prime Minister, Liberal cabinet ministers, trying to gut the bill and minimize the positive impact this could have on the pocketbooks of Canadian farmers. Once the bill was passed here by opposition parties, despite the opposition from the Liberal government itself, as only a handful of Liberal MPs joined our cause, it went over to the independent Senate.

All of a sudden we found out, as things started to percolate and go on, that the environment minister, who is quite well known and not very well received by Canadian farmers, I would argue, was lobbying independent Senators to oppose and gut the bill. It got stuck in the Senate. It just dragged on and on and, sadly, it was amended to gut the bill that we had in place to try to minimize its impact. They took the exemption of having to pay the carbon tax off of buildings and greenhouses. If we accept these amendments, this is going to cost farmers hundreds of millions of dollars. That is wrong. It is going to drive up the cost for barns on our farms and the cost for greenhouses in the country.

It is so important that Canadians hear these numbers, not just from me or Conservative MPs, but from the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer, who is not on too friendly terms with the Liberal government these days. It has a carbon tax cover-up on the report he wants to release about the broad impact, the full impact, the carbon tax is having on all Canadians.

I want to highlight the report that the PBO was able to publish. It shows that if we do not pass this bill, Bill C-234, in its original form, which has passed the House, and have these amendments from the independent Senate rejected, it will mean that Canadian farmers between now and 2030 will be paying one billion dollars in carbon taxes, zero rebate, by the way. Farmers do not get any rebate on what they will be paying. There is nobody in the country who says that we can add a billion dollars in cost to Canadian farms over the course of the next few years and not have that increase the price of food and farming.

If that does not trigger Canadians enough, they should always remember that the government does not just charge the carbon tax. Here is the proof that it has a tax-and-spend problem in Ottawa under the Liberals and NDP. The government taxes the tax. It puts GST and HST on the carbon tax as well, further driving up the cost, with zero rebates.

If there is an irony about how out of touch and just tired the Liberal-NDP government is after nine years, it is its approach and inability to reason with science and fact when it comes to greenhouses. The leader of our party has raised this several times, because it is in his own riding of Carleton, SunTech Greenhouses in Manotick, as well as Carleton Mushroom Farms in Carleton county in the south part of Ottawa as well.

Greenhouses pay carbon tax. The CO<sub>2</sub> that comes from the greenhouses that are paying and getting nailed for the carbon tax goes into the plants to grow them and sell them close to home. It is shown that if we do not get this passed in its original form and stop the amendments that the Liberals were driving the independent Senate to try to remove, it is going to be \$250 million that greenhouses are going to pay in carbon taxes by 2030. No one can tell me that is not going to drive up the price of tomatoes and mush-

rooms in Canada. It has been those businesses that have shared their stories of frustration.

• (1115)

SunTech Greenhouses is now saying that it is cheaper for grocery stores in Ottawa to buy tomatoes from Mexico than it is from Manotick, and it is only going to get worse. The carbon tax is going to quadruple on the price of gas. It is going to nearly triple on natural gas and propane in the coming years.

Carleton Mushroom Farms, south of Ottawa, last year paid \$150,000 in carbon taxes alone. That is not its entire bill. That is the carbon tax portion of its bill. It expects the carbon tax amounts for 2024 to be about \$175,000. When all is said and done, in the Liberals' current plan, if we do not give this exemption that Canadian farmers are desperately calling for to help with food prices, Carleton Mushroom Farms, one business south of Ottawa, is going to be paying \$450,000 in carbon taxes alone. The government is out of touch. If it is already cheaper for a grocery store in Ottawa to buy Mexican tomatoes and have them shipped up here, just imagine what is going to happen when the carbon tax bills triple for greenhouses in this country.

There is an irony to it, is there not? In the name of the environment, we have to charge a carbon tax. First of all, the Minister of Agriculture, through the agriculture committee, and Agriculture Canada do not even quantify and explain how these carbon taxes are going to lower emissions and help Canadians. They cannot even quantify it, and refuse to, but worst of all is the irony of taking a tomato from Mexico and shipping it all the way up here by truck or ship, whatever it may be, in the name of the environment because the carbon taxes are too high to be competitive right in our own backyard in eastern Ontario. Do members not find that the height of irony?

The local food movement means having as much food as possible grown here in Canada and consumed by Canadians, and maybe shipped around the world, which would be a great thing too. We are now hearing stories, right here in the backyard of Parliament, of companies saying they are going to have to shrink their production and footprint because they cannot compete with food coming in from around the world, when we have some of the best lands for agriculture in all of the country right here in eastern Ontario.

*Private Members' Business*

Why is it so hard for the Liberal government to accept common sense? It should give the exemption to Canadian farmers that they deserve, and take the carbon tax off buildings, dairy farms, all farms across the country, greenhouses and the drying that happens in this country. There is so much frustration right now, and it is not just the carbon tax. The Liberals are increasing other taxes and making it more difficult for farmers to do the important work that they do. It is just common sense.

The House of Commons has voted on this. I would tell any Liberal or NDP member of Parliament, because the NDP is waffling big time on whether it is going to accept the amendments as part of its coalition deal, that we want assurances, and I think we could get them. If Liberal MPs spoke to greenhouses in their regions or ridings and spoke to farmers in their yards as they are drying grain to get a true understanding of the costs and how punitive this carbon tax is, they would agree to keep Bill C-234 in its original format and stop the radical environment minister from calling up independent senators and lobbying them to gut this bill. Instead, let us provide Canadians some relief on food prices, which are already at record highs and going up this year. This is a tangible way the federal government can provide relief to lower the costs.

It is very clear that we are ready for a carbon tax election right now. We have been very clear with Canadians that we would axe the tax entirely. We would not need to do these carve-outs on home heating. We would not need to do these carve-outs for farmers. We are ready for the election right now, and Canadians are, too. They have had enough. I am ready to get my running shoes on and go door knocking, not just in Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry but, I can assure members, in rural ridings across this country. I will be speaking to farmers to make sure they know that after years of effort and after the bill passed in the House of Commons, it was gutted in the Senate and is being delayed by the government. Liberals are refusing to provide relief at a time when they know Canadians are hurting because of food prices and farmers are frustrated.

It is common sense. We need to reject these amendments and pass the bill in its original form. Let us give farmers the true relief they need after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government.

• (1120)

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House today to address the critical issue affecting not just farmers in Westman, but every farmer across our great nation, which is the impact of the Liberal carbon tax.

The carbon tax is not just an environment plan, like the Liberals tried to sell it for many years. It is a tax grab that punishes our livelihoods, our food security and our economy. Today we debate our Conservative bill, Bill C-234, an act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act.

The bill was intended to axe the carbon tax on fuels used in certain farm settings where there are no current, imminent viable alternatives, areas where the Liberal carbon tax not only makes zero sense, but straightforwardly penalizes farmers for doing their job. Let me be very clear about this. The Liberal government is punishing farmers with this carbon tax, yet it is not even measuring the impact of the tax on emissions.

The NDP-Liberal coalition members love to repeat their talking points that their tax grab is designed to change behaviour, but when there are no alternatives to power, heat or cool farm activities, equipment and buildings, it just takes away the very capital farmers would be able to invest in their own operations to adapt to the various challenges nature brings to their farming operations.

That is why Canadian farm organizations from coast to coast to coast stand united in their support for our legislation proposal, recognizing its importance for the economic and environmental sustainability of Canadian farms. Rarely has a single piece of legislation garnered such unanimous support. Moreover, Bill C-234 was duly passed by the House of Commons and sent to the Senate in March 2023, reflecting a non-partisan effort with backing from all opposition parties and even several Liberals at second and third readings.

According to the polls, the majority of Canadians want the carbon tax on farms scrapped. They recognize the burden this tax places on our agricultural sector. The Parliamentary Budget Officer himself reported that the carbon tax on propane and natural gas used for greenhouses, heating and cooling livestock barns and drying grain will cost farmers nearly \$1 billion by 2030. This is a staggering figure that highlights the need for immediate action.

The PBO also reported that Canadians will pay \$486 million in GST on the carbon tax this year alone, and this figure is projected to exceed \$1 billion by the year 2030. The administration cost of the carbon tax is another area of concern. In 2022, it cost nearly \$83 million to administer the tax. Since 2019, it has cost taxpayers nearly \$200 million just to manage this tax.

According to the 2023 food price report, the carbon tax will cost a typical 5,000-acre farm \$150,000 by 2030. This is an unsustainable financial burden for farmers. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture stated in 2022 that growth in expenses such as the carbon tax outpaced the rise in farm income.

Total farm operating expenses increased by almost 20%, the largest gain since 1979. Fertilizer prices for Canadian farmers increased by over 50%; commercial feed expenses for livestock producers increased by 20%; and machinery fuel expenses increased by more than 50%. The reality on the ground is even more dire. We have heard that 44% of fresh fruit and vegetable growers are already selling at a loss, and 77% cannot offset production cost increases.

*Private Members' Business*

Even with an 80% exemption on carbon tax from natural gas, one Canadian pepper farmer still pays \$150,000 a year in carbon taxes. Meanwhile, mushroom farms do not get this exemption, but greenhouses growing cannabis do. This makes no sense. The carbon tax currently costs greenhouse operators \$22 million a year, and they will pay between \$82 million and \$100 million by 2030 when the carbon tax quadruples.

The numbers speak for themselves. There are 145,000 farms in Canada, and 15,000 of those are in Manitoba. According to the PBO, Manitoba farmers paid \$3 million last year in carbon taxes on natural gas and propane to dry grain, heat and cool livestock barns and grow food. On April 1, the carbon tax increased by 23%, and Manitoba farmers will pay another \$3 million in carbon taxes over the next year. Cumulatively, by 2030 they will have paid \$37 million in Manitoba in carbon taxes on natural gas and propane.

● (1125)

Long story short, our Conservative bill, Bill C-234, will help our farmers, growers and ranchers, and widespread support is clear. Despite the decision by the majority of elected MPs, the Senate introduced amendments to Bill C-234 that severely undermine its effectiveness. These amendments, passed after prolonged procedural hurdles and frequent adjournments, removed relief for heating and cooling livestock barns, greenhouses and other growing structures. Furthermore, the amendments impose a sunset clause of just three years, which does not provide adequate time for viable alternative fuel sources to emerge.

The PBO estimates that the Senate's amendments to Bill C-234 will cut carbon tax relief to farmers by \$910 million, with dozens of millions of those in Manitoba, which would help consumers immensely. The actions by senators appointed by the Prime Minister effectively pick winners and losers within the agriculture community, exacerbating the challenges faced by our farmers.

Farmers, growers and ranchers demand that Bill C-234 be passed in its original form, with no changes proposed by the Prime Minister and his radical environment minister, who used the Senate in a very ugly campaign that cost Canadians in their everyday cost of living.

Let us do a quick recap of what happened in the Senate. The Senate agriculture committee held an unprecedented seven meetings to study the bill, which had been passed by the elected House. Liberal senators introduced amendments identical to those that the Liberal MPs failed to pass on our side of the Parliament. Knowing their flaws, the Prime Minister then announced that the carbon tax on home-heating oil would be paused for three years for Atlantic provinces, targeting 3% of Canadians whose support the Liberals were desperate for at that time.

Right after that, the committee report was presented in the Senate, but a majority of senators voted against the proposed amendments, marking a tactical victory of common sense. Then, in came the environment minister, who threatened to resign over Bill C-234 and asked the Prime Minister's Office to call senators in an effort to defeat the bill.

We Conservatives launched a massive campaign, including an opposition day motion, to force the Liberals to let senators work in-

dependently. Conveniently enough, at this point in time, the Prime Minister decided to appoint four new senators. Days later, the Liberal senators reintroduced defeated amendments. This time, they had just enough votes to pass them. It is unbelievable.

A majority of farmers, elected MPs and all Canadians support this bill, but one radical environment minister and a few senators decided that they know better. That is why we Conservatives will keep fighting for Bill C-234 to be passed without any amendments.

Manitobans are among the 97% of Canadians already left out in the cold by the Liberal government, which voted down our Conservative motion that would have removed the carbon tax on all forms of home heating. Now Liberals want to continue their plan to quadruple the carbon tax on farmers, a tax that will continue to increase the cost of food, making the cost of living crisis tougher every year.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has made clear that this bill will save farmers \$1 billion by 2030, reducing the food prices for Canadian families currently struggling to afford groceries. When the government taxes the farmer who grows the food and the trucker who transports the food, it taxes the single moms, seniors and all others who buy the food. All we are seeking with this bill is to get a carbon tax carve-out for farmers, like the one the Liberals have already given for a smaller number of Canadians on home heating.

Recently, during testimony at committee, the Parliamentary Budget Officer stated that the government had provided him with a copy of its own estimates of the impact of the carbon tax but had put him under a gag order not to talk about it. Even in the few instances where Liberals claim to have some data, they will not share it. We Conservatives will keep fighting to axe the tax on everything for everyone for good.

In conclusion, our farmers deserve better. They deserve a government that understands the critical role they play in feeding our nation and supports them in their endeavours. The current carbon tax policy is a burden that our farmers cannot bear, and it is time for us to take decisive action to relieve them of this undue pressure.

The Liberal government has already shown that it is willing to make exceptions for its carbon tax when it serves its political interests. It is now time for it to demonstrate that it will accept a carve-out when it is in the best interests of everyday Canadians. Let us work together to ensure that our farmers can continue to thrive and provide for all Canadians.

*Private Members' Business*

● (1130)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I implore members of the House to reject the Senate amendments to Bill C-234.

The subject is simple. It is imperative that we block these amendments and get back to Bill C-234 in its original form as quickly as possible. This is an emergency. The situation facing producers, farmers—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance on a point of order.

\* \* \*

[English]

**WAYS AND MEANS**

## NOTICE OF MOTION

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government wishes to see a Canada where fairness prevails for every generation.

Therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a notice of a ways and means motion, and a backgrounder, which lays out our plan to make our tax system and our economy more fair for every generation.

Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of the motion.

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[Translation]

**GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION PRICING ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-234, An Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out the disrespect shown by the Finance Minister, who could have tabled her notice in the period between two speeches. I think that is the least she could have done. I myself did so in the past, when I asked the member of Winnipeg-North if he would mind if I interrupted him during his speech. He consented. I think what the Finance Minister just did, which is to interrupt a member right in the middle of his remarks, is insulting, especially when every 10 minutes there is an opportunity to speak without interrupting anyone. I just wanted to point this out. I hope ministers will take this into account during future interventions and will refrain from such flagrantly disrespectful behaviour. There is no need whatsoever for this.

This government's lack of respect toward Canadians, however, is by no means surprising. We saw it with Bill C-234, where amendments were brought by the Senate to amend legislation that had been duly voted on and adopted here in the House. We are talking about independent senators who were appointed by the Prime Minister and who do the work of the Prime Minister when he is unable to do things properly in this chamber. That is what happened.

At the very start of my speech, I was saying that time is of the essence for producers, because their situation is extremely difficult. After nine years under this Prime Minister, they cannot take it anymore. This Prime Minister is simply not worth the cost of taxes. Canadians do not have to take my word for it. They can read it in an article published in *Le journal de Montréal* about a survey of the *Union des producteurs agricoles*, entitled "One in five farms unable to pay their debts: a heartfelt plea from farmers". The article says that farmers are at the end of their rope. They can no longer deal with the vagaries of weather, the interest rate explosion and the high cost of transportation—because the carbon tax does indeed add a bit to the high cost of transportation—that are preventing them from competing on a level playing field with Mexican vegetables being sold at a lower price in stores.

Think about it. It costs less to buy vegetables grown in Mexico, with all the gas and diesel it takes to get them here, than to buy vegetables produced here in Canada. It makes no sense, and the Liberals, and unfortunately the Bloc Québécois, encourage and support it. We do not understand why the Bloc Québécois did a 180 on the important issue of protecting Quebec's agricultural producers.

I will quote one agricultural producer. Philippe Leguerrier, a carrot producer in Blainville, said that he has not paid himself a salary since December. That is serious. When the people who produce food and feed Canadians can no longer pay themselves for their work, that is a sign that something is wrong with the system. Because of that, Canadians are having a harder and harder time feeding themselves. We saw that in the food banks, with 30%, 40% or 50% increases in recent years and long lines outside. Some 900,000 Quebecers visit a food bank every month because they can no longer pay for their groceries, a direct consequence of this Liberal Bloc government's decisions, of its desire and its ideological determination to impose a carbon tax on pretty much everything.

Of course, the Bloc Québécois will say that the carbon tax does not apply to Quebec. The government still wants to drastically increase it, and not in Quebec. Everywhere else the carbon tax applies, everywhere else truckers who produce these vegetables have to export them to Quebec, they will have to pay more. Who, in the end, will be footing the bill? Obviously Quebecers, families and workers who can no longer make ends meet at the end of the month. Clearly, with the sort of coalition it has formed with the Bloc Québécois the Liberal government has simply stopped supporting farmers.



As I mentioned, this bill is supported by every stakeholder in the agriculture sector. In committee, my colleague from Beauce had the opportunity to talk to groups from every region of the country and Quebec, and he was forced to admit that most if not all the people he spoke to are against the Senate's amendments to Bill C-234. In fact, this morning we received a statement from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business begging members to reject the Senate amendments to Bill C-234.

● (1135)

Why? It is because farmers are against the amendments proposed by the Senate. These amendments were imposed by unelected senators against the will of elected members of the House of Commons. A total of 81% of farmers say that they are against the amendments and 80% of them believe that these amendments will make the bill less effective for their business. They believe that this bill is essential to lower costs for farmers.

The agricultural industry needs a break on the carbon tax: 88% of farmers said that the carbon tax exemption on natural gas and propane used for drying grain and heating and cooling barns would be useful for their business.

That would enable them to do more and to save their farm and their business. We are talking about more than just businesses. We are talking about a way of life. Farming is a way of life in the regions of Quebec. It is a way of life in small towns. It is a way of life in communities in Plessisville, Laurierville, Thetford Mines and Beauce. Entire communities are currently wondering how they will be able to continue their primary activity, which is farming the land to feed Quebecers and Canadians. That is where things stand right now.

Just so people understand, let us recall that this bill was sent to the Senate. It was totally gutted. Building heating was completely removed. The time allocated to the exemption for grain drying was slashed to three years. It was just pushed back. They think we will be able to replace propane and natural gas within the next three years. No expert says this will be possible.

I am about to tell the Bloc Québécois and Liberal members something that may be a secret to them. I do not think they know this, but winters in Canada and Quebec are cold—very cold, even. Although energy is needed to heat barns and dry grain, the Bloc Québécois members and the Liberals think it is a good idea to continually hike taxes. Remember, the Bloc Québécois has said repeatedly it wants to radically increase taxes. This applies to farmers too. We do not understand why, on the one hand, the Bloc Québécois claims to defend farmers, but, on the other, acts to undermine them by supporting tax hikes and these Senate amendments. It is unacceptable and incomprehensible.

My colleague's committee heard from several farmers and numerous technology specialists who were very clear. There are no viable alternatives to propane and natural gas for drying grain now, and there will not be any within the next three years, period.

A comment we too often hear from the Liberals and Bloc Québécois members, as I said, is that the tax does not apply to Quebec. This is false. We import most of our propane from Sarnia, Ontario. If we buy it in Ontario, where the carbon tax applies, we pay the carbon tax when it is imported. It is a fact, that is the math. Already, something is not quite right in the Bloc Québécois's dis-

### *Private Members' Business*

course. We also pay the carbon tax indirectly when we pay for imported products delivered to grocery stores.

Let me quote again from the article in *Le Journal de Montréal* to illustrate how, when the government taxes the farmers who produce the food, the truckers who transport it and the grocers who sell it, prices become unaffordable:

Today, the price of fuel and rising wages are hurting farmers like Philippe Leguerrier more and more. Without his wife's salary to fall back on, it would be hard to make ends meet.

In closing, I will quote my colleague from Beauce:

Canadian farmers are stewards of the land. They are very concerned about their animals and the environment. They work so hard to feed our families and support our economy.

These farmers need support from members of the House of Commons and they need us to stand against the Senate amendments and pass Bill C-234 in its original form as quickly as possible.

● (1140)

[*English*]

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is actually a bit of a trip down nostalgia lane for me when we start talking about Bill C-234 because one of the first things I did when I became elected in 2019 was bring forward private member's bill, Bill C-206. Bill C-206 was in many ways a precursor to Bill C-234. I remember initially coming here after being elected and I really did not understand the process of the private member's bill. A little bit of a humorous story is that my staffer came to me and told me that I had won the lottery. I wondered, "What lottery?" It was the private members' bills lottery. For those who do not know, the private members' bills are drawn and I think we were number 16.

We went through a significant significant consultation process because we wanted to make sure we made the most of this opportunity. We talked to stakeholders and constituents, to people far and wide, about what we could possibly bring forward that would have the most beneficial impact for the people of Northumberland—Peterborough South as well as Canada.

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We were really taken by a conversation we had with a number of stakeholder organizations and a farmer and a great man, Mr. Sid Atkinson, who has since, unfortunately, passed away. He told us of the challenges that farmers were having with respect to the cost of grain drying and other expenses of the carbon tax. He made a very strong case and I will attempt to repeat it, though probably not as eloquently as Mr. Atkinson did. He told the story of the struggles that farmers were often having. Farmers are, after all, price takers; in many cases, they do not get to set their own prices. Prices are set either by exchanges in far-off lands or by large grocery stores here in Canada, so whatever price farmers have, they have to make it work. One of the new expenses they were facing was, of course, the carbon tax. Mr. Atkinson then went on to say, "I've lived on this farm and we've been on this farm for generations, so of course we care about the land, we care about climate change, but we also have to be fiscally responsible as well." Bill C-234 would not do either because the way it is written right now, dirtier fuels, gasoline and diesel, would be exempted, but cleaner ones such as natural gas and propane would not.

Back then, in 2019, I had the naïveté to believe that this was a mistake; that I would bring this to the Liberal government and the members would say, "Of course, we have made an error here" and ask, "Why would we exempt dirtier fuels like diesel and gasoline and instead tax those cleaner fuels, natural gas and propane?" Particularly natural gas has been pointed to by many, including environmental activists, as an excellent option as a transitional fuel because it is much cleaner than fuels such as coal and other fuels.

Therefore, we brought this Bill C-206 to the House and I was very pleased at the time that my colleagues from both the Bloc Québécois and the New Democratic Party supported that. At the time, we even had the support of the Green Party, so that was fantastic, because they saw this as not necessarily a fight over the carbon tax, though Conservatives are pleased to have that argument, particularly in an election, but those members saw it as just a common-sense provision that was just trying to give farmers equal access.

Along the trail, we have actually had a couple of Liberal supporters. At the time, the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell was a supporter of the bill and actually voted against his party and supported this. We had a consensus of support and we actually were moving along. We got it through second reading, made it through committee and got all the way to the Senate. Unfortunately, it was the summer when the Prime Minister called the unnecessary \$600-million adventure, which he called an "election", to leave us in exactly the same spot we were in terms of the number of representatives. I should say, though, that I am pleased that we were able to be joined by the great member for Peterborough—Kawartha as well as the member for Bay of Quinte, which is tremendous. That \$600-million cost unfortunately ended our debate and ended Bill C-206.

• (1145)

However, I was so pleased to see the member for Huron—Bruce take up the mantle and actually improve Bill C-206 with Bill C-234. Bill C-234, once again, received support from the majority of the members of the House, made it all the way from second reading to third reading to the Senate, where, unfortunately, and at least not to my recent recollection, there was an unprecedented all-out

push by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment to get this bill amended. Let us call a spade a spade here. The bill was not amended in an effort to improve it, but so that it would not pass through the Senate and receive royal assent. When a bill is amended at the Senate, it has to come back to this place. At that point, the government has the ability to push it back and, ultimately, defeat it through the use of time, if not time alone. Despite the fact this bill, at least initially, had the support of enough senators, with the all-out pressure of the Minister of Environment and the Prime Minister, it was amended in a very unfortunate way, because it removed barn heating as well as greenhouses.

Of course, in Northumberland—Peterborough South, we have some of the best farmers, the best farms and the best farmland in all the country. I can tell members that, from numerous discussions with farmers in our riding, it is costing them thousands of dollars in barn heating and carbon tax. The thing is, as was mentioned here, there is no rebate for farmers on this tens of thousands of dollars. The reality is that, oftentimes, it is either money that these farmers have to directly give up or it gets pushed on down to the consumer. Ultimately, if the price of eggs, milk or cereal goes up, the millionaires, billionaires and wealthy individuals of this world will be okay, but it is the most vulnerable who will hurt.

I might add that our rural communities are really challenged out here in Northumberland—Peterborough South. I know the member for York—Simcoe has talked numerous times about the economic challenges that his community is facing. What is wild is the way the Liberals have even done the calculations for the rebate, because those folks who are the most vulnerable are paying these tremendously high costs and often do not even get the benefit of the rural top-up. I have been to the member's riding. It is a beautiful place. It may not be quite as beautiful as Northumberland—Peterborough South, but it is a beautiful place. It is the soup and salad capital of Canada and it is facing these costs without the benefit of the rural top-up. I encourage anyone to drive down there. If they do not think that certainly parts of it, if not the majority of it, are rural, they certainly have not been to the beautiful riding of York—Simcoe.

To bring this to a conclusion, the facts are in and the judgment is in. When we take into account the economic and fiscal impacts, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has said unequivocally, and it is right in his report, that the majority of Canadians will face a net loss. That is the reality. Those are the numbers. If anyone had any doubt about that, that doubt dissipated at the finance committee last week when the member for Whitby asked the PBO how he knew that his measure of the economic impact of the carbon tax was correct. He said that, because he had seen the homework and the federal government's analysis, it was correct based on that.

Therefore, we are calling for the end of the carbon tax cover-up. If the Liberals truly believe their own misinformation that the carbon tax is not creating a net loss and making life more unaffordable for Canadians, then they should just release the report.

• (1150)

**Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in Canada, we have been blessed with incredible natural resources and abundance. From sea to sea to sea, we have been so richly endowed with our land, which produces food and feeds not only Canadians, but the entire world. Our agricultural sector is world-class in sustainability and efficient farming practices, and it is the envy of the entire world.

Our farmers and agricultural sector are essential to our national prosperity. However, examining the government's policies over the last nine years, so many farmers have written to me and have asked me a simple question: "Is the government trying to put us out of business as farmers?" With escalating carbon taxes, restrictive punitive regulations, onerous red tape and constantly shifting fertilizer rules, many farmers are asking if the Liberal government's objective is to destroy their farming business to advance its ideological goals.

It is clear that farmers are paying the price of the punitive carbon tax, and Canadians are also seeing skyrocketing increases in their grocery bills. What this government has failed to understand is that when we tax the farmer who grows the food and we tax the trucker who ships the food, we are essentially taxing the Canadians who buy the food. That is just basic economics. That is why Bill C-234 is back in the House and presented again. It would provide a needed carve-out for farmers from the Liberal carbon tax. This carve-out would ensure that farmers are not punished for drying grain, heating barns and essential farm operations.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has reported that carbon tax on propane and natural gas used for greenhouses, heating and cooling livestock barns, and drying grain will cost farmers nearly \$1 billion by 2030. In Ontario alone, with the April 1 carbon tax increase, farmers will pay \$53 million in carbon taxes over the next year. By 2030, they will have paid \$566 million in increased carbon taxes. This is just not affordable, nor is it sustainable.

Bill C-234, in its original form, would ensure that \$1-billion worth of tax savings would go back into the agricultural sector so that farmers could continue to produce the food that feeds Canadians. Let us be clear, the amendments made by the Senate essentially gutted the original bill, and there is no point to this bill if these amendments are allowed to stand.

There is no evidence put forth on an environmental basis that would support not giving a carve-out to farmers. The Liberals have always defended this ideological tax by saying that, without it, carbon tax emissions will continue to go up, global temperatures will rise and Canada will burn without the carbon tax. Yet, they fail to mention that the Canadian agricultural sector already leads the world in sustainable farming practices. If this government believes that its carbon tax is working, why does it not have measures? Why does it not have a means to measure the impact of this tax on greenhouse gas reductions? Let us not forget that the whole point of this carbon tax is to reduce carbon. How can farmers and Canadians

### *Private Members' Business*

trust this government when the Liberals do not even believe in the efficacy of their own carbon tax policies? They have no means of measuring how efficient the carbon tax is at actually reducing carbon.

• (1155)

The reality is that the Liberal policies have directly contributed to food insecurity in Canada. Across our nation, even though we should have some of the lowest food prices, we are seeing outrageous costs for food, and it is because of the carbon tax on the farmers. Today, in Canada, we are witnessing one in four Canadians skipping meals just to get by. We are seeing families paying \$700 more for food this year than they did in 2023. The unfortunate situation is that two million Canadians are actually accessing food banks every single month. This is atrocious.

In Haldimand—Norfolk, the community where I reside, the health unit came out with a report earlier this year to warn that a growing number of residents do not have enough money to buy healthy food for a healthy diet. I will quote the report. It said, "incomes are not enough to cover even basic expenses".

Despite the suffering of Canadians, the government continues to hike the carbon tax every single year. There is no common sense in that, and there is certainly no compassion. If the Liberal government refuses to axe the carbon tax, at the very least, it must consider supporting the proposal to reject the Senate amendments to Bill C-234. The government must pass the important legislation, in its original form, so that we can get back to supporting farmers and families. Then, farmers can once again feed Canadians. That is what the bill is about.

We know that the Liberals could do this tomorrow if they had the political will. They have done it already. A few short months ago, the Liberals announced a carve-out for home heating oil. They know that most people who heat their homes with oil have no viable alternatives, so to tax them would be burdensome and completely wrong. Farmers face the same situation, and they are in desperate need of this carve-out.

• (1200)

**The Speaker:** I hate to interrupt the hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk in the middle of her speech.

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.

*Business of Supply***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[Translation]

**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

## OPPOSITION MOTION—FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ)** moved:

That the House:

- (a) take note of the Special Report on Foreign Interference in Canada's Democratic Processes and Institutions of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians;
- (b) express concern that certain elected officials may be wittingly or unwittingly working in the interests of foreign powers; and
- (c) request the terms of reference of the foreign interference commission (the Hogue Commission) to be expanded to allow it to investigate Canada's federal democratic institutions, including members of the House of Commons elected in the 43rd and 44th Parliaments as well as Senators.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to rise today to give the opening speech for today's Bloc Québécois opposition day, which is about foreign interference. I would like to take this opportunity to say hello to my constituents in Trois-Rivières. I often discuss this subject with them because they find it interesting. People are curious, and today we are going to try to satisfy that curiosity.

Here is the motion:

That the House:

- (a) take note of the Special Report on Foreign Interference in Canada's Democratic Processes and Institutions of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians;
- (b) express concern that certain elected officials may be wittingly or unwittingly working in the interests of foreign powers; and
- (c) request the terms of reference of the foreign interference commission (the Hogue Commission) to be expanded to allow it to investigate Canada's federal democratic institutions, including members of the House of Commons elected in the 43rd and 44th Parliaments as well as Senators.

One week ago today, Canada, the Parliament of Canada and, undoubtedly, many of Canada's national security and intelligence allies lost their innocence. Despite the Liberal government's repeated denials, despite the ill-advised optimism of the so-called independent special rapporteur, despite the report by the ineffectual Rosenberg commission, the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, or NSICOP, published a devastating report on June 5. The report is not devastating in its tone. It is devastating because of what it contains, which was unknown to most although suspected by many.

Despite the redaction that comes with this type of report, it is obvious that there is a problem, that we are at risk. Throughout its 178 paragraphs, the report describes the concept of foreign interference. Incidentally, I would like to point out that the concept of foreign interference is not defined in Canadian law, nor is it included in Bill C-70, which we are currently studying. The report also describes the identity of the rogue states, their tactics, their use of cybertools and the absence of a coordinated response to these threats by the Canadian government.

Paragraph 50 and the paragraphs that follow are the ones that make the reader's hair stand on end.

First, we learn that some parliamentarians have communicated “frequently with foreign missions before or during a political campaign to obtain support from community groups or businesses which the diplomatic missions promise to quietly mobilize in a candidate's favour”.

Second, we learn that some parliamentarians have accepted “knowingly or through willful blindness funds or benefits from foreign missions or their proxies which have been layered or otherwise disguised to conceal their source”.

Third, we learn that some parliamentarians have provided “foreign diplomatic officials with privileged information on the work or opinions of fellow Parliamentarians, knowing that such information will be used by those officials to inappropriately pressure Parliamentarians to change their positions”.

Fourth, we learn that some parliamentarians have responded “to the requests or direction of foreign officials to improperly influence Parliamentary colleagues or Parliamentary business to the advantage of a foreign state”.

Fifth, we learn that some parliamentarians have provided “information learned in confidence from the government to a known intelligence officer of a foreign state.”

These are five devastating findings. This report confirms that, right now, there are members of the House who have, in one way or another, colluded with rogue states against our national interest. It is right there in black and white. If that is not foreign interference, then what is?

We cannot and must not remain indifferent in light of such a revelation. I promise that we will not remain indifferent. Of course, the government did warn us. I will give three examples of what it said. The government told us that intelligence is not truth. That answer has merit. Intelligence is not necessarily the truth. The government also told us that sometimes we have to look at the whole picture to understand the meaning, the direction and the path and to know where we are going.

● (1205)

That is not wrong. It is an interesting point. The report also states that the information was top secret and could not be revealed upon penalty of life imprisonment, which is also true. These three points are factual. We can agree on that.

I would like to hear and understand the justifications or answers but, in the end, the report is clear. There is currently interference in our Parliament. Instead of trying to reassure us with empty rhetoric, what did they do? What are they doing? What are we going to do? These questions remain unanswered.

After hearing the lame justifications concerning the Trudeau Foundation given before the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, after reading the complacent report of the so-called independent special rapporteur and the damning report of the committee of parliamentarians, what are they doing? What will it take for them to do something?

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Currently, the situation is tense. There is a sense of distrust. That is no good for anyone, for any party. Then, to add insult to injury, the committee of parliamentarians mentioned something very interesting in its 2023 report. The committee said that the government submitted only four of the thousand documents requested. That is four out of one thousand. That has to be read to be believed. In all fairness, I would say that some of the 996 missing documents were submitted in redacted form. Okay, but still, it is a curiously small sample.

Once the parliamentarians read the report of the Special Committee on the Canada–People's Republic of China Relationship on the Winnipeg laboratory, there were all sorts of debates in the House, and approximately 600 pages of the report were redacted, including the footnotes and page numbers.

A special committee was struck to analyze the situation alongside arbitrators, who used to serve as Federal Court judges. The arbitrators found that the redaction was excessive. It may have been preventive, but it was excessive. We saw that the report's redactions were nearly eliminated. They were not entirely eliminated because there was sensitive information in the report, but all in all, most of the redactions were done away with. We often come up against over-classification, which is to say that information is classified in too high a category. It goes from “confidential” to “secret”, from “secret” to “top secret”, and so on. It is done for preventive reasons, but perhaps not very accurately.

I would just echo the remarks of the Information Commissioner, who told us at a meeting of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, that this government clearly prefers darkness to light.

It is in that spirit that the Bloc Québécois is moving its motion today. The situation is worse than we could have possibly imagined to date. The report tells us not only that foreign states are interfering in our democratic process, but that parliamentarians are colluding with these states. These elected representatives are not publicly named, and the members who serve on the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, or NSICOP, are bound to secrecy forever, as I was saying earlier, under penalty of imprisonment.

In other words, the names of the individuals working for foreign interests may not be revealed by the NSICOP, but they can be through other avenues, such as a broader inquiry by the Hogue commission. The commission could dig deeper and obtain new testimony as part of a broader investigation.

The Liberal government must understand that its duty is to protect us, not protect itself. It must cease its strategy of dodging serious questions and remove its rose-coloured glasses, because the year is no longer 2015. The government must also stop trivializing the situation, as the parliamentary secretary and member for Pickering—Uxbridge did last week. Before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, she replied, “Boo hoo, get over it” to a parliamentarian who was querying the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs about the foreign interference.

This trivialization is unacceptable and will not be tolerated any longer. The Liberal government must also understand that not everyone is nice, that not everyone is telling the truth and that the interference is real. To get to the bottom of things, some explanations are in order. It is a given that the “top secret” security classification binds parliamentarians to secrecy for life. This is a real thing.

● (1210)

There is also something called cabinet confidence. Its purpose is codified in the Westminster Parliament, and that is not a bad thing in and of itself. It allows participants to perhaps be more honest with each other, with no filters and without the risk of being smeared or whatnot.

Secrecy is not a bad thing in and of itself. Cabinet confidence is not a bad thing in and of itself either. The problem lies in cabinet confidence being abused, in a way that could be described as unethical, in this instance. To make sense of it, we have to be able to distinguish between secrecy and concealment, which are very different notions. Without going into the origin of the word, secrecy is that which must not be shared. It is in a different category. Concealment is simply deception to conceal what could be shared. Concealment is a form of manipulation, a type of lying that implies a certain superiority over others, based on the fact that one knows and believes the other does not need to know. It is not very egalitarian. However, lying is mostly making people believe something and do what they would not have done had they known. That is fundamental in an election.

All lies are secret, but not all secrets are lies. This is an important distinction, and I encourage my friends across the aisle to think about it. Concealment and lies are the enemies of trust, which, I would remind members, consists in putting one's future in someone else's hands. In an election, citizens put their future in the hands of their elected candidates and they have the right to expect those candidates to earn that trust. Citizens expect that the government will protect their interests, not those of a foreign power or, worse yet, partisan interests.

However, as it stands, when one looks at everything the Liberal government has done to address foreign interference, one can only be surprised by its casual approach and its elevation of concealment as a way of life. That is why we must push harder to do away with concealment and lies and restore the trust that Canadians deserve from elected officials.

After the failure of the so-called independent special rapporteur, the Bloc Québécois placed its trust in the Hogue commission. The Hogue commission was established by the four main parties, who worked together and unanimously agreed on the commissioner and the scope and nature of the commission's terms of reference.

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For the benefit of those who may not know, I will list a few elements of those terms of reference. The commission will “examine and assess the interference by China, Russia and other foreign states or non-state actors, including any potential impacts, in order to confirm the integrity of, and any impacts on, the 43rd and 44th general elections”. It will also “examine and assess the flow of information to senior decision-makers, including elected officials”. Thirdly, it will “examine and assess the capacity of relevant federal departments, agencies, institutional structures and governance processes to permit the Government of Canada to detect, deter and counter any form of foreign interference directly or indirectly targeting Canada’s democratic processes.”

That is an extraordinary mission, and as they say, extraordinary problems require extraordinary remedies. The Hogue commission has extraordinary powers: It can adopt any procedures or methods it sees fit to effectively conduct the public inquiry, and it can receive and examine all pertinent documents, classified or not. That is the problem, because the commissioner admitted that she had not received certain documents or that she received redacted documents when they should not have been redacted, which brings me back to the issue of over-classification. We need to stop being afraid of being afraid. The four parties unanimously appointed a commissioner and gave her a mandate. The commissioner should be able to obtain these documents.

Foreign interference has no political stripe. Foreign interference affects every parliamentarian here in the House, every political party and every citizen. Tens of billions of dollars are stolen every year. Members of many diasporas are threatened on Canadian soil every year. The threats are real, now, here in the House. Doing nothing is not an option anymore. We must stop looking the other way and believing that the danger will go away on its own.

• (1215)

That is why the Bloc Québécois “request[s] the terms of reference of the foreign interference commission...to be expanded to allow it to investigate Canada’s federal democratic institutions, including members of the House of Commons elected in the 43rd and 44th Parliaments as well as Senators.”

We must choose to make history rather than endure it. Great danger calls for great courage. The Bloc Québécois is moving this motion so that trust can be restored. I ask all my colleagues to have courage.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King’s Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I too was shocked to read the report, and I will be supporting this motion.

Is the hon. member recommending that the leaders of the political parties be authorized to read the report before they start talking nonsense in the House? Right now, we do not want to see partisanship on a matter that has to do with our national security.

• (1220)

**Mr. René Villemure:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite for that very relevant question.

I said it, and my colleague said it: Foreign interference has no allegiance, no political stripe. It affects everyone. The offer to get the

clearance necessary to see the documents ought to be taken up and is worth following up on. People will be able to find out for themselves, within their own party, whether there is anything there or not. Of course, they will not be able to reveal the content of the report, that is clear. Still, it is worth considering.

Yes, any political party leader who respects Parliament should request that security clearance.

[English]

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety have cited protecting sensitive intelligence and other national security considerations for not making the names of the compromised MPs and senators known to the Canadian public.

However, I have to say that so often when the government cites national security and intelligence, it turns out that what it is really about is protecting the interests of the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party. Given that there is a path forward by turning over the intelligence to Madam Justice Hogue, if the government does not cooperate, can the member come to any other conclusion than that it is about protecting and covering up for the Prime Minister and the interests of the Liberal Party, not about national security and sensitive intelligence?

[Translation]

**Mr. René Villemure:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I enjoy working with the member on a daily basis.

As I said earlier, the government must protect the people, not itself. If the government is protecting itself, I will borrow an expression from my colleague who might call this “highly suspicious”.

We have to be careful. I think it is time to work together for the public interest, for the common interest, for the national interest. This is not the time to protect ourselves. We have to protect everyone.

[English]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, first of all, it was a real pleasure working with the member for Trois-Rivières at committee last week. It was four days in a row of long sessions. I appreciated sitting next to him and getting through the important work of looking at Bill C-70.

When we look at the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party, we see that the Liberals seem to be hiding behind judicial process and the need for the RCMP investigation. We know there is a big gulf between intelligence and evidence; we know intelligence cannot always make its way to satisfy judicial requirements.

The Conservatives seem to be hiding behind a veil of ignorance. Their party refuses to get briefed, the leader in particular. The member answered the questions of my Liberal colleague earlier about getting party leaders briefed. When the director of CSIS was before our committee, he talked specifically about the actions that party leaders can take with respect to who gets to sit in caucus and who is allowed to run under the party banner.

*Business of Supply*

I would like my colleague to share his thoughts on the power of party leaders and the actions they can take here now if they are all properly briefed. This is a very serious issue, and we want the issues to be resolved as quickly as possible so we do not have compromised candidates on the ballot in the next election.

[Translation]

**Mr. René Villemure:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague. We had the opportunity to work together to examine Bill C-70 in depth. His comments were always insightful.

At this time, we know that the NDP leader has gotten security clearance, that the Prime Minister has automatically received the information and the leader of the Bloc Québécois is completing the process to receive security clearance. Of course the Conservative Party does not want to do so. I like my colleague's expression, when he talks about a veil of ignorance. It reminds me of my studies in philosophy with John Rawls.

I think that we cannot afford not to push together. I repeat, interference has no political stripe. It is a real threat. It is financial, it is democratic. It is steamrolling everyone. Parliaments all over the world are interested in foreign interference. Last week, a law was passed unanimously in the European community. I think we cannot be against it. If we are against, I have serious doubts and I have a problem with that.

• (1225)

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, more than 70 committee meetings have dealt with this issue during the last Parliament. There have been meetings with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the Communications Security Establishment and the House of Commons administration. The most significant finding pertains to protocol. Each one does its work but no more than that, even though alarm bells are ringing.

We are asking that the commission set up and chosen by the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons be independent. That is where we are today, after all these months. We are calling for a truly independent commission. Does my colleague agree with me that in Canada we do not have a culture of information management to protect our citizens, as compared with other countries?

**Mr. René Villemure:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Laurentides—Labelle for raising this matter. Last week's special report from the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians followed the testimony given by many witnesses at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security and the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, as well as numerous other reports. Communication was identified as a problem, along with siloing.

Bill C-70 seeks to solve part of this problem, but we will study that tomorrow. For now, I feel we should allow a culture of intelligence sharing, but above all, we should develop a culture of protecting ourselves and realizing that interference exists in 2024, that it is already here and that, whether we like it or not, it is spreading. I am in complete agreement with my colleague. I hope this type of procedure can be put in place.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate that the member indicated in one of his answers that it is important for us to recognize that democracies all over the world, many of Canada's allied countries, are having to deal with the issue of international interference. It is indeed a very serious issue. I am glad to see that Canada has a House of Commons, and in particular a government, that is doing what it can in order to protect democracies.

The question I have for the member is related to NSICOP, which is a relatively new standing committee. Canada is now a part of the Five Eyes countries that actually have a committee like this. The Conservatives have dissed the committee on several occasions. I am interested in knowing what the member from the Bloc has to say about the important role that NSICOP plays. We would not have the report today if it were not for that committee.

[Translation]

**Mr. René Villemure:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Winnipeg North. I was hoping he would ask me a question. As for the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, I would say it is fundamental. We cannot do without this type of structure today.

I read the report as soon as it was released last week. Given the committees I sit on, I knew some of the facts already, but I would say that, based on the way it was put together and in spite of the redactions, the report was well done.

I think it is vital that this committee continue to be allowed to receive intelligence, since some was withheld, and that it continue its fine work. I think that is a good idea.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I really appreciated the member's speech. One of the things I have heard people in my riding say is that it is important to restore trust in our systems, so the member's point was well received.

I agree that there is a difference between intelligence and evidence and that we must have trust in our independent systems. How should we continue to move forward while restoring Canadians' trust? Also, what should we do to ensure that decisions like these are not politicized and that we are able to do a good job of representing Canadians?

**Mr. René Villemure:** Madam Speaker, trust is the ultimate goal. Trust means not having to prove anything.

How can trust be restored? There are several ways. Obtaining a security clearance is one way. The committee that was set up to deal with the Winnipeg affair is another. That all-party work produced all kinds of results.

*Business of Supply*

I think there are a few ways. It is up to us to make the right choices.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this is a very important issue.

As we are all gathered here today, we must recognize and acknowledge that all parliamentarians swear an oath before they begin their important work in the House. We must all uphold the sanctity of that oath every single day. Canadians deserve nothing less.

Moreover, we must all work together to take any attempt to undermine our democracy very seriously. Together, we must remain steadfast in our commitment to safeguard the integrity of our democratic processes and institutions. This obligation falls equally on both sides of the House.

I thank my hon. colleague for moving this motion. It gives us all an opportunity to debate the importance of the issue and commit to working together to counter interference in our democratic institutions.

I would like to begin by commending the considerable amount of work that the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, or NSICOP, put into producing the “Special Report on Foreign Interference in Canada’s Democratic Processes and Institutions”. The report is a testament to the parliamentarians’ diligence and dedication in safeguarding the integrity of our democratic processes. It underlines the challenges we face with respect to foreign interference and highlights the need for constant vigilance and solid mechanisms to protect our democracy.

The government takes the recommendations in NSICOP’s report very seriously. We will take them into account, along with the recommendations of the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency, or NSIRA, and those of the independent special rapporteur when we consider our next steps. I know that the final report of the Hogue commission, which will be published in December, will also contain recommendations based on the public inquiry.

These reviews are essential for ensuring that all of the measures taken by Canada to counter the ever-changing threat of foreign interference be adapted, effective and progressive. Each of these review mechanisms was put in place to strengthen accountability when it comes to making sure that intelligence is taken into account and used appropriately to protect Canadians from all types of threats.

It is every bit as important to express our trust and confidence in Canada’s intelligence agencies. Our intelligence professionals are committed to observing the highest standards when it comes to integrity and national security. They work tirelessly to ensure that our democratic institutions are protected from any undue foreign influence.

I would like to address the substance of the motion introduced today. The NSICOP’s conclusions should give pause to every member in the House. It is unacceptable, not to say intolerable, that some members sit here in the House when they work behind the scenes to advance the objectives of anyone who does not first and

foremost have Canadians’ best interests at heart. The NSICOP’s report indicates that that may well be what is happening now.

Our colleague across the aisle introduced this motion today to make sure that these concerns are carefully considered. He proposes that the Hogue commission be empowered to examine this issue. The commissioner already has a solid mandate, which was negotiated among all parties in the House.

Although it is not up to the House to give instructions to the commissioner on how to fulfill her mandate, we think she has the authority she needs to do the important job with which she has been entrusted. I think that we all agree that the commissioner has the ability and the obligation to interpret the terms of reference she was entrusted with in an independent manner.

• (1230)

[*English*]

Let me underscore our view on the commission’s terms of reference in this way. First, as reflected in the language of the motion before the House today, the commission’s terms of reference speak to “the cardinal importance of preserving the integrity of Canada’s electoral processes and democratic institutions and the need for transparency in order to enhance Canadians’ trust and confidence in their democracy”.

The terms of reference go on to state, “the leaders of all recognized parties in the House of Commons have supported the establishment of a public inquiry into foreign interference in federal electoral processes and democratic institutions with respect to the 43rd and 44th general elections”.

In her initial report, Commissioner Hogue comments on her mandate as follows, at page 56, “The Terms of Reference refer expressly to both the ‘electoral process’ and to ‘democratic institutions,’ which indicates the government intended the Commission to look at foreign interference beyond elections.”

She then goes on to say:

...in the context of the Commission’s mandate, democratic institutions refer to Parliament and the executive branch. This is consistent with a key focus of my mandate, which is the federal electoral process. The outcome of which is the election of politicians to govern and legislate in the interests of Canada.

In summary, my mandate is to investigate potential foreign interference with:

The federal electoral process.

Law-making by elected members of Parliament.

Executive decision-making by Cabinet and its ministers in relation to their departments, including indirect foreign interference with ministerial decisions when such decisions are based on information originating at a lower level of government covertly influenced by a foreign state (or its proxy, agent, etc.).

• (1235)

[*Translation*]

I apologize for having quoted so extensively, but her comments make something very clear.

Justice Hogue believes that the impact of foreign interference, carried out wittingly or unwittingly, on how parliamentarians fulfill their duties as a legislative branch of government fits perfectly within the scope of what she was asked to examine.



*Business of Supply*

The proposal that the commission examine foreign interference involving members of the House of Commons elected during the 43rd and 44th parliaments and members of the Senate raises important questions.

I would like to add to what I said earlier and stress how important it is that we all grasp that the commission's terms of reference must be understood within the framework of the Inquiries Act and the terms of the order in council. For example, although the government recognizes that the commissioner would have the latitude to examine questions raised in today's motion, her mandate does not extend to issuing findings or recommendations on civil or criminal liability.

In closing, I would like to repeat that the government launched the regulatory oversight report process, headed by the Right Honourable David Johnston, it asked the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians to conduct studies on foreign interference, and it created the Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference.

Several of these initiatives, except the commission of inquiry led by Justice Hogue, of course, were undertaken despite opposition from certain parties in the House. However, overall, we have the best record of any western government in the past five or six years. We know the extent to which other allied countries, other democracies, are under attack, either through social media or through any other form of foreign interference from suspect countries.

We have done all this because we believe Canadians and Parliament deserve to understand this critical threat to our democratic values. We welcome today's debate.

I look forward to hearing all members share their views on the importance of transparency and accountability in these areas.

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I think it is important to take note of the progress that has been made. That needs to happen.

I would like to ask my colleague whether he agrees that we must all come together to act on this issue, given that interference has no political stripe or partisanship.

• (1240)

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question and, again, for moving today's motion.

We obviously believe that this is not a partisan issue; it must not turn into a partisan debate. I am afraid of that happening because that is what those who interfere in our democratic institutions want. They want to divide us, to tear each other apart over these issues. There is no greater gift or reward for these countries, for these players, than for us to tear each other apart as a result of their interference.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for his speech. I would also like to thank the member for Trois-Rivières and the Bloc Québécois for their proposal today that focused on this theme.

Unfortunately, foreign powers have already won. Foreign powers made sure that there are people here in the House who got elected

with their support and assistance. I am not the one saying it. It is the judge.

We know that this is a very sensitive issue for everyone, because nobody knows who is involved. That said, does the minister understand and accept the fact that, in order to lift the cloud of suspicion that is hanging over the 337 people sitting in the House, these individuals who were elected with the help and support of foreign powers hostile to our country must be clearly identified?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Madam Speaker, I think that I said very clearly in my speech that the 338 members must have loyalty only to Canada and its institutions when they come into the House. It is clear to us that this is the case. I think that the hon. member would also agree that in this democratic chamber, we must at all times respect our democratic institutions, such as our justice system, our intelligence services, our police services and our Criminal Code, which is there to root out what might exist and what has been alleged in the report, even if it is based on partial information.

To answer the member's question, yes, members must show complete loyalty to our country.

[English]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to note that, at the end of this report, there is a litany of scathing conclusions on the Liberal government's action on this file. I think that forms the basis as to why the opposition needs to take the government's promises with a grain of salt. The report states, "The slow response to a known threat was a serious failure and one from which Canada may feel the consequences for years to come."

I also take note of the government House leader's comments that this should not be a partisan issue, but it does involve political parties. While the Conservative leader continues to hide behind a veil of ignorance by not getting the briefing that would allow him to take action as party leader, we have yet to understand what the Liberal Party will be doing as an institution. When the director of CSIS was before the public safety committee last week, he said that we do not have to rely on judicial processes or the police. There are actions political parties could take, such as removing members from their caucuses and not allowing them to run again.

What is the Liberal Party going to do to make sure that there are no compromised persons on the ballot when we vote in the next election?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Madam Speaker, on the member's first question, I would put the government's track record of setting up formal processes, checks, balances and institutions against that of any other government. We know that governments across the G20 and the OECD are facing these anti-democratic incursions from foreign state actors, and this government has responded comprehensively, in the way that I outlined in my speech.

*Business of Supply*

As for political parties, all political parties have a duty to uphold the basic principles of democracy within their party processes. Those are very solemn and important things, and it is important that we arrive in this chamber not only with the support of our electors and constituents but that, prior to that, we gain the confidence of the members of the political party to which we belong. That is a solemn process, and parties, of course, have the duty to continually review that process and ensure its integrity at the highest possible level.

• (1245)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, even prior to the Prime Minister becoming the Prime Minister, in third party, we had advocated for a standing committee, NSICOP. If it were not for NSICOP, we would not have the report that we are talking about today.

It is interesting that, even in third party, when we were raising the issue, the Conservative Party opposed bringing in a NSICOP committee. It is important for us to recognize that, today, because of the persistence of this government, the committee exists, and there are representatives from all political entities in the chamber and in the Senate.

I am wondering if my colleague could just enhance his comments in regard to why all of us need to come together, as NSICOP has done, to follow through in listening to what is being said.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Madam Speaker, indeed, that is the irony of the situation, that the government was determined, very early on, to create these processes and institutions that were designed to review relevant intelligence, to, yes, hold our intelligence agencies accountable, but more importantly, to report to Canadians on the effectiveness of the work that goes on, out of necessity, in secret.

We did this in spite of the opposition coming from certain corners of the House. It is purely ironic that today we debate one of the work products, the conclusions, of that very entity that we fought so hard to set up and that we fought so hard to ensure contained representation from all political parties and from the other place, and that it was able to report to us as honestly, as publicly and as transparently as this one has. That is indeed an irony.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, putting aside the government's continued obstruction of Madam Justice Hogue's inquiry, refusing to turn over certain documents and hiding behind cabinet confidence, when I listened to the government House leader's speech, I took it that he expressed vague support for the motion before the House.

I seek clarification. Is the government committed to turning over the evidence from the NSICOP report, on an unredacted basis, to Madam Justice Hogue so that she can make findings of fact and so that those MPs who wittingly assisted hostile foreign states could be made known to the Canadian public, yes or—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. leader of the government in the House.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Madam Speaker, I caution the member that any responsible government, from any political party, has

to maintain the integrity of our security agencies and maintain the integrity of the information that is supplied to them, including the sources, the methods, etc. That is something that this government has a sworn and solemn duty to uphold and to respect, and it is one that we will continue to uphold and to respect.

I did say in my speech that the terms of reference that have been worked out among all parties in the House confer a wide latitude, not unlimited latitude but a wide latitude, on the commission of inquiry. For her to examine the issues that the member raises is something that we believe is possibly within the terms of reference already conferred on the commissioner.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Madam Speaker, initially, it seemed that the government had done everything it could to cover up the issue. It began by refusing to hold a public inquiry. I want to know whether the government is now actually prepared to get to the bottom of the matter and expand the commission's terms of reference.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Madam Speaker, I think my speech answers my colleague's question.

We believe that Justice Hogue's mandate is quite broad and includes a good number of the aspects required to get to the bottom of things. That is our position.

• (1250)

[*English*]

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

The report of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians with respect to foreign interference is truly shocking. The report revealed that certain members of Parliament and members of the Senate have wittingly, and I emphasize the word “wittingly”, engaged in supporting and assisting hostile foreign states. This includes meeting and communicating frequently with foreign diplomatic missions, sharing privileged information with foreign diplomats and sharing information that was provided to members and to Senators, in confidence, with security officers of hostile foreign states, among other activities.

It should not need to be stated that the fundamental duty of every member of Parliament and of every senator is to put the interests of Canada first, not the interests of some other state. Any member of Parliament or member of the Senate who put the interests of a foreign state ahead of the interests of Canada has betrayed Canadians. They have betrayed the trust placed in them. They have betrayed their oath of office, and they have cast a dark cloud over the institution of Parliament and have undermined public confidence that parliamentarians are advancing the interests of Canadians and not the interests of other foreign states.

*Business of Supply*

Since the NSICOP bombshell report was released, what we have seen from the Prime Minister is a total lack of transparency. The Prime Minister has seen the unredacted NSICOP report. He knows who the compromised MPs and Senators are. Indeed, it was the Prime Minister who made the final call with respect to redactions in the NSICOP report, including blacking out the names of the compromised MPs. Canadians deserve to know the names. They deserve to know who the members are, sitting in the House of Commons and in the Senate, who are compromised.

The Minister of Public Safety appeared before the public safety committee last Thursday. I was there. He had an opportunity, in the face of a lack of transparency from the Prime Minister, to clear the air and to answer basic questions. I have to observe how disappointed I was with the minister, as he provided non-answers. He was arrogant and dismissive in the face of legitimate questions being asked by members of Parliament on behalf of Canadians. The Minister of Public Safety, of course, refused to name names, just like the Prime Minister. He refused to disclose how many MPs and Senators are compromised. He refused to even provide a ballpark figure. Is it five, 10 or 20? How many are we dealing with here? How big is the problem? Tellingly, twice the minister refused to answer the very straightforward question I asked him, which was if he could provide the assurance that no one around the Prime Minister's cabinet table is among the compromised MPs. Twice, the Minister of Public Safety refused to answer that question, which I emphasize is telling and raises questions about whether foreign interference actors and their tentacles have extended to the highest levels of the Liberal government after nine years of the Prime Minister.

The Minister of Public Safety said that it would be irresponsible to make known to the Canadian public the names of those MPs and of those Senators who are compromised. I say what is irresponsible has been the total lack of transparency by the Prime Minister that has resulted in effectively shielding members of Parliament and members of the Senate who have put the interests of foreign states ahead of the interests of Canada. I say that is irresponsible.

• (1255)

The Minister of Public Safety said that there were sensitive intelligence and national security considerations. He has a point, but only up to a limited extent. I would remind the minister and the government that what is being asked of the government is not to make known to the public sensitive intelligence, or sources and methods. What is simply being asked of the Liberals, the government, is to provide the names of the compromised MPs and senators: just the names, please. It is not MPs or senators who have conversed with or met with foreign diplomats, but rather MPs who have knowingly, willingly and deliberately co-operated with and have assisted foreign states in undermining the interests of Canada. We want to know and Canadians want to know who they are.

So often we see from the Liberals that they hide behind national security and intelligence issues, and then we learn that it actually had nothing to do with those things, but that it had to do with protecting the interests of the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party, and to save the government from embarrassment for its many failings when it comes to standing against, and protecting Canada's democracy and sovereignty from, foreign interference. After all, we have a Prime Minister who has a very well-established and disturbing

track record of turning a blind eye to foreign interference, so long as it benefits him and the Liberal Party.

This is a Prime Minister who turned a blind eye and covered up, until he got caught, Beijing's interference in the 2019 and 2021 elections, because he thought it would benefit the Liberal Party. This is a Prime Minister who was briefed, in the 2019 election, that one of his candidates, the current member for Don Valley North, was being assisted by the Beijing Communist regime. Upon being briefed, what did the Prime Minister do with that information? The Prime Minister did nothing. He allowed that candidate to stand as a Liberal in the 2019 election, resulting in his election to the House of Commons, and he covered it up for four years. Madam Justice Hogue concluded that the Prime Minister's actions in that case were based upon his concern for "direct electoral consequences". In other words, it was about protecting the Prime Minister and the interests of the Liberal Party over protecting our democracy from Beijing's interference. Simply put, the Prime Minister and the Liberal government cannot be trusted.

However, the good news is that there is a reasonable path forward that was set out in a letter over the weekend from the opposition House leader to the Minister of Public Safety. That path forward would provide that the government turn over the intelligence and the evidence in the NSICOP report to Madam Justice Hogue on an unredacted basis. Madam Justice Hogue could then review the intelligence thoroughly and could make findings of fact with respect to which MPs wittingly assisted foreign states, and those findings of fact, with the names of those MPs, could then be put in a report that would then be tabled in Parliament. It would provide for the transparency that Canadians deserve, all the while protecting sensitive intelligence and allowing for a reasonable degree of due process in the circumstances.

If it really is about protecting sensitive intelligence and national security, then the government should turn over the evidence to Madam Justice Hogue. If the Liberals fail to do so, there is only one conclusion that can be drawn, which is that, once again, the Prime Minister is protecting himself, the Liberal Party and potentially compromised Liberal MPs.

• (1300)

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his remarks here today. I want to remind him of a couple of things.

The NSICOP report was very clear. The allegations refer to MPs from multiple parties being involved, either wittingly or unwittingly. When I listened to the member's remarks, he suggested, in a way, that the members would be entirely on the Liberal benches. I would caution him by saying that they were from multiple parties; he could be talking about some of his own colleagues.

The important point is that we need to be able to have some type of process here because of the way this has come to light. I hope the member will encourage the hon. leader of the official opposition to actually take a security briefing so that he can see the report.

*Business of Supply*

The member talked about the different thresholds of culpability. The report talked about people working with foreign governments wittingly and knowingly versus individuals or MPs who might not have even necessarily known they were being targeted. Those are two different levels of evidence.

How does the member square the idea of putting names of people out in the public who might not necessarily be culpable? Reputational harm might be caused to the member in question.

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, what I said, and what the opposition House leader has provided for as the path forward in his letter, is for Madam Justice Hogue to thoroughly review all the intelligence, make findings of fact and release the names of those who wittingly, knowingly, deliberately and willingly collaborated with hostile foreign states. That is what we are proposing.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to pick up on something the member for Kings—Hants talked about, which is the continued reluctance of the Conservative Party leader to get a security briefing.

If we look at the NSICOP report, paragraphs 72 and 73 talk about the People's Republic of China and India directly interfering in the Conservative leadership process. If I were a Conservative Party leader, I would be treating that with a five-alarm fire response.

The NDP leader is going to get a briefing on these names. We all know that, in this place, party leaders have incredible control over their caucuses. They can control who gets to sit in the caucus and who gets to run again.

Why the continued reluctance of the Conservative Party leader to get the briefing so he can take action in case there are compromised MPs in his own caucus?

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, the leader of the Conservative Party does not have the authority to expel a member of caucus. That is a caucus decision. What could the Leader of the Opposition do based on a security briefing? In fact, it might impede his ability to act.

What we need is not more secrecy; we need transparency. We need a process so the MPs who wittingly collaborated with foreign states are identified and named, and Conservatives have provided a very reasonable process for that to take place. It is disappointing that the Liberals across the way have not seen fit to endorse that road map.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, let us be very clear: The leader of today's Conservative-Reform party has made the conscious decision to say, "No, I want to keep being dummied up. I do not want to know and do not want to get the security clearance so I can ask questions." The leader of the New Democratic Party has already asked questions. The Conservatives are using a false argument.

Why is the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada not getting the security clearance he needs to be better informed?

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, I simply say to the Liberals that if they have nothing to hide, they should release the

names with an appropriate process. They can refer the evidence over to Madam Justice Hogue and let her make findings of fact. Let there be transparency.

The government has been repeatedly told that the best way to counter foreign interference is through sunlight and making foreign interference known to the public. Canadians deserve to know which MPs and senators happen to be compromised. I invite the government to get on with it.

• (1305)

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Madam Speaker, one week ago, the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians released a report containing its findings. The report came after more than a year of work by the committee. The committee reviewed some 33,000 pages from 4,000 classified documents. The committee members were briefed, and they interviewed dozens of top intelligence and government officials, including the Prime Minister himself. It was found that a few members of the House are witting participants in the efforts of foreign states to interfere in our politics. This is shocking.

[*Translation*]

The report revealed that these parliamentarians had responded to the requests or instructions of foreign officials to inappropriately influence parliamentary colleagues or parliamentary business for the benefit of a foreign country. The committee noted in its report that some members in this House had violated the solemn affirmation or the oath sworn at the beginning of their term.

[*English*]

I will quote from the report, which found "examples of members of Parliament who worked to influence their colleagues on India's behalf and proactively provided confidential information to Indian officials." It also found "a textbook example of foreign interference that saw a foreign state support a witting politician."

Furthermore, it found "a particularly concerning case of a then-member of Parliament maintaining a relationship with a foreign intelligence officer.... [This] member of Parliament sought to arrange a meeting in a foreign state with a senior intelligence official and also proactively provided the intelligence officer with information provided in confidence."

The report found that the People's Republic of China had established a "network [that] had some contact with at least 11 candidates and 13 campaign staffers, some of whom appeared to be wittingly working for the [People's Republic of China]." The report also found similar activities by another network in the riding of Don Valley North.

The report also found that parliamentarians communicated "frequently with foreign missions before or during a political campaign to obtain support from community groups or businesses which the diplomatic missions promise[d] to quietly mobilize in [their] favour".

*Business of Supply*

The report found examples of parliamentarians “[a]ccepting knowingly or through willful blindness funds or benefits from foreign missions or their proxies which ha[d] been layered or otherwise disguised to conceal their source”.

Furthermore, the report found that parliamentarians had provided “foreign diplomatic officials with privileged information on the work or opinions of fellow Parliamentarians, knowing that such information [would] be used by those officials to inappropriately pressure Parliamentarians to change their positions”.

The report found that parliamentarians had responded “to the requests or direction of foreign officials to improperly influence Parliamentary colleagues or Parliamentary business to the advantage of a foreign state” and had provided “information learned in confidence from the government to a known intelligence officer of a foreign state.”

The report also identified those parliamentarians who wittingly and knowingly collaborated with foreign governments to the detriment of Canada and its people. We do not know the identities of those members of the House who wittingly and knowingly worked in favour of the interests of a foreign government. That is because of an order by the Prime Minister, under subsection 21(5) of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians Act, that the report be redacted.

• (1310)

Every single member of this chamber swore an oath or made a solemn affirmation that they would be faithful and bear true allegiance to the sovereign. What we swore to or solemnly affirmed was to be faithful and to bear true allegiance to our constitutional system, which is enshrined in the Constitution Acts, in orders in council, in rulings of the Supreme Court of Canada and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and in the unwritten conventions that have governed Parliament and parliamentary democracies for centuries. In other words, we swore or solemnly affirmed that our first and foremost duty was to the people of Canada.

In its report, the committee found that a few members of this chamber had violated that oath or solemn affirmation. Those members need to be held accountable. Members who willingly, knowingly and wittingly assisted a foreign government to the detriment of members of this place and their privileges, as well as the interests of Canada and its people, need to be expelled from the House. The way expulsions work in this place is that all 337 members of this chamber need to vote in public after a debate on expulsion. I have had the difficult experience of participating in exactly such a debate on a former member several parliaments ago. It is not a pleasant thing to do, but it is necessary to protect the integrity of this institution. It should not just be a criminal standard to which we are held in this place. The oaths and solemn affirmations we take are to the people of Canada. Our conduct needs to be becoming of those oaths and affirmations.

Canadians also need to be able to go to the polls in the next election knowing whether their incumbent member of Parliament was one of the few parliamentarians referred to in the report. That is why the Prime Minister needs to name the names of those members, along with the relevant information to allow the House, its

caucuses and its committees to hold parliamentarians accountable and take action to protect the integrity of this place.

That brings us to the motion in front of the House today. We once again find ourselves in the situation that we had a year and a half ago, three years ago and four years ago, where the government is not willing to respect the norms of parliamentary democracy and provide the House and its committees with the information necessary for them to fulfill their constitutional role. The government is not willing to release this information.

A year ago, we ended up in the same situation. We began debate and hearings on investigations related to foreign interference in the House and its committees in 2020. On November 18, 2020, a motion I had moved was adopted by the House, calling on the government to produce a robust action plan to respond to the threats of foreign interference.

In the subsequent years of 2021, 2022 and 2023, four committees of the House of Commons conducted hearings. The procedure and house affairs committee, the Canada-China committee, the foreign affairs committee, and the Subcommittee on International Human Rights conducted hearings with 70 meetings, 364 witnesses, 152 hours of testimony and some 1,902 pages of evidence, trying to get to the bottom of foreign interference.

A year ago, the government punted it to NSICOP. NSICOP has done its job and given its report, which contained the names of members of the House who knowingly and wittingly assisted a foreign state to the detriment of the interests of the people of Canada. Here we are again with the government refusing to release the information. Therefore, once again, we are left with having to go through an extra-parliamentary process to get this referred to Justice Hogue at the public inquiry so that we can get to the bottom of this and understand who was involved. The House can then take action.

• (1315)

We had the same problem with the Winnipeg lab documents. It took us three years to get the information. We had to resort to an extrajudicial, extraparliamentary process through the ad hoc committee to get that done.

We support the Bloc motion, but in a spirit of collaboration, I would like to move an amendment to the motion as follows:

*Business of Supply*

That the motion be amended by replacing paragraph (c) with the following: (c) demand that the government provide the unredacted version of the special report, together with all the intelligence documents and testimony which the committee considered to the public inquiry into foreign interference in federal electoral processes and democratic institutions, the Hogue commission; and that the Hogue commission's terms of reference be expanded in order (1) to require the Hogue commission (a) to assess the statements made at paragraphs 55 and 56, the text box following paragraph 57, and paragraphs 58, 59, 61, 64, 68 and 164 of the special report concerning officials who wittingly assisted, supported or participated in the efforts of foreign states to interfere in Canadian politics; (b) to question the individuals named or referred to in those paragraphs and, out of respect for procedural fairness, to offer those individuals the opportunity to make representations concerning the statements; (c) to make findings of fact concerning these statements; and, (d) to produce and publish a report by October 1, 2024, on these matters, including its findings of fact and the names of any current member of the House of Commons it concludes engaged in these foreign interference activities so that this House may take appropriate remedial action; and (2) allow the Hogue commission to investigate other foreign interference efforts in relation to Canada's federal democratic institutions, including members of the House of Commons elected in the 43rd and 44th Parliaments, as well as senators.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It is my duty to inform hon. members that an amendment to an opposition motion may be moved only with the consent of the sponsor of the motion. If the sponsor is not present, the House leader, the deputy House leader, the whip or the deputy whip of the sponsor's party may give or refuse consent on the sponsor's behalf.

Since none of them are present in the House to give consent, the amendment cannot be moved at this time.

[English]

Questions and comments. The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills was actually a member of Parliament in 2013, as was the Conservative leader, when the issue of foreign interference came up. What kind of actions did we see from the member and from the leader of the Conservative Party back then? Absolutely none.

When the Liberal Party tried to create NSICOP when we were third party, what did the member opposite say? What did the leader of the Conservative Party say then? Absolutely nothing. In fact, they opposed it. We have the report today because of NSICOP. The hypocrisy coming from the member opposite is amazing. It is time that we start working together and recognizing that foreign international interference is serious.

When are the member and his leader going to get off the partisan cheap shots and try to get the issue dealt with in a more apolitical fashion?

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, I remember well the foreign interference threat activities that were revealed by Dick Fadden in the public realm in 2013. They were directed at provincial governments and municipal politicians. I would note that the then Liberal government at Queen's Park in Toronto discounted that intelligence advice, dismissed it and said that it was not sufficient to take action. Here we are some 11 years later, faced with the foreign interference threats now at the federal level.

With respect to NSICOP, the very structure and flaws of the committee have been proven. It is a committee of the government. Under subsection 21(5), the Prime Minister ordered the redaction of the names of members of the House who were involved in the activities. That is why that committee should be a committee of Parliament and not an extraparliamentary committee that lies beyond the House and its authority.

• (1320)

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, there is a question in my mind about why we even have to be here to debate the motion. Right now there is an inquiry on foreign interference. Commissioner Hogue has been given the mandate to do exactly that work. Should the government not just give all the documents, unredacted, both those within cabinet and what NSICOP received, to Madam Justice Hogue for review so we can have faith in the determination of the outcome of foreign interference activities related to Canada?

As well, I would absolutely agree about the names of the people who are implicated, potentially, in the report under the allegation, who wittingly, knowingly and intentionally collaborated and worked with foreign states to undermine Canada's democratic institutions and processes. We should all be on board with that. Would the member like to comment?

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, the member has done a lot of very good work on the issue and at the public inquiry, and she rightfully points out something, which is that it has been reported that up to 10% or so of the documents the government has submitted for the second phase of the inquiry have been redacted and that other documents have been withheld from the public inquiry.

After reading the NSICOP report of a week ago, I wonder whether, of the 4,000 documents and some 33,000 pages that NSICOP received unredacted, Justice Hogue had access to all those documents to come to conclusions in her initial report. My skepticism suggests she did not, which is why the government should hand over all of the 4,000 documents, unredacted, that NSICOP received, to the public inquiry.

[Translation]

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Madam Speaker, in spite of the proposed amendment, we will not be in favour for the reasons I outlined in my speech.

*Business of Supply*

[English]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, “I...do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.” I have uttered those words three times now: once in 2015, once in 2019 and again in 2021. Of course now our allegiance lies with His Majesty King Charles II.

It is important to note we are not giving our oath to the person. It is really given to the embodiment of the Crown as an institution, which is, of course, a symbol of the Canadian state, a ship that continues to sail on despite the occasional changing of its captain.

I never thought I would arrive at a moment in time when I had to seriously doubt the sincerity of that affirmation or oath from fellow members of Parliament, but given the astounding report we received last week from the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, that is the moment we have all arrived at.

I do want to note that I am incredibly proud to be a member of a caucus that has consistently led the way on trying to get results on the file we are considering. I take members back to just over a year ago, when, on May 30, 2023, my hon. colleague, the member for Vancouver East, used our opposition day in the House of Commons to make sure we debated a motion calling for a public inquiry.

As members will recall, at that time, the government had set up a special rapporteur, the right hon. David Johnston, but it was quite clear the faith in Mr. Johnston's abilities had become compromised because of his close relationship with the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party. That is why we felt at the time, as New Democrats, it was necessary for the House to call on Mr. Johnston to step aside in his role and for the government to finally get serious about the matter of foreign interference and urgently establish a public commission of inquiry.

I am pleased to report that, thanks to all of the opposition parties, the motion brought in by my party passed by a vote of 174 to 150; unfortunately, the Liberals were the ones who voted against it. It did have results, because Mr. Johnston resigned the following week. He understood at that moment in time that it was simply untenable for him to continue in his role while not enjoying the full confidence of the House of Commons. As well, we know that finally the foreign interference commission was set up on September 7, 2023.

I am a member of a caucus that has seen its leader, the NDP leader, the member for Burnaby South, being directly impacted by foreign interference. We know that my colleague, the member for Vancouver East, has also suffered the same. In our small, close-knit NDP caucus, we know all too well how pernicious foreign interference is, because we have seen it directly implicate, constrain and negatively affect two of our members. It is very personal for our caucus.

That brings me to the motion the Bloc Québécois has brought forward on its opposition day for the House to consider and eventually vote on. I want to break up my speech into several parts, looking at the various components of the motion.

Let us take a look at the first part of the motion, “that the House take note of the Special Report on Foreign Interference in Canada’s Democratic Processes and Institutions of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians.” Let us take note of the report. First of all, I want to note that in the opening paragraphs, the following appears: “the Committee noted the intelligence community’s consistent assessment that threat actors continue to consider Canada a permissive environment, viewing interference activities as a low-risk, high reward way to pursue strategic interests.”

● (1325)

At the end of the report, there is a litany of scathing conclusions against the Liberal government, complaining that the delays in developing policy demonstrated a lack of urgency commensurate with the gravity of threat, that delays in actions undermined the government’s operational responses to the threat, and that a slow response to a known threat was a serious failure and one from which Canada may feel the consequences for years to come. Let that sink in, “for years to come”.

We are very much behind the eight ball on this issue. The warnings have been there, our country has been slow to act and those are the findings of NSICOP. Furthermore, we know now too that the Liberal government is withholding more than 1,000 pages of documents from the committee, just as it has withheld documents from the public inquiry. Those are hardly the actions of a government that is dedicated to transparency. I would argue that at this moment in time, what we need is transparency, we need to rebuild trust and we need accountability. This is an issue that rises above any one political party. This comes to the foundations of our democratic system itself. That is not full of hyperbole; that is the actual truth.

There is a real deficit in trust in the Canadian public right now and underpinning all of that is trust that we have faith that our democracy will continue through the turbulent times, that we can have faith that the people we elect to this place are doing their job honourably, on behalf of their constituents and in the best interests of the country we call Canada. It is clear that we have arrived at a moment where we must forcefully push back against hostile foreign powers that seek to undermine our democracy.

Let us go to the second part of the motion, which states that the House “express concern that certain elected officials may be wittingly or unwittingly working in the interests of foreign powers”. The NSICOP report landed with the force of a bomb last week. Its allegations that sitting members of Parliament are working on behalf of foreign interests is an incredibly serious issue that this House must be seized with. For example, paragraph 55 in the report talks about “Some elected officials...wittingly assisting foreign state actors soon after their election.” The paragraph was heavily redacted, but the description of the redacted elements make mention of “members of Parliament who worked to influence their colleagues on India’s behalf and proactively provided confidential information to Indian officials.”

*Business of Supply*

Paragraph 56 talks about a foreign state, and it does not mention which one, supporting a witting politician. Again, it is heavily redacted. Paragraph 57 talks about the People's Republic of China establishing a quid pro quo relationship with MPs where it would mobilize its network in Canada in the members' favour in return for positive engagement with the PRC. On and on it goes, detailing clandestine networks influencing the political process, the use of proxies, covertly buying influence with candidates and elected officials, etc.

I want to take a moment to ask a question that I think is on a lot of Canadians' minds, and it is certainly on my mind. What is going on with the leader of the Conservative Party's ongoing refusal to get the clearance necessary for a top secret briefing on this matter? The NDP leader already has the clearance and is going to get the briefing on who these compromised politicians are. For the life of me, I cannot understand why there is ongoing refusal on the part of the leader of the Conservative Party. The only thing I can derive from that fact is it seems he would rather talk about things he does not know rather than know things that he cannot talk about. The report, specifically paragraphs 72 and 73, talks about where the People's Republic of China allegedly interfered in the leadership races of the Conservative Party of Canada and India allegedly interfered in the Conservative Party's leadership.

• (1330)

That is a five-alarm fire. That is something that all parties need to take seriously. We know, of course, of the allegations that exist out there with the Liberal Party. It has already impacted one of their sitting MPs, who is now sitting as an independent. Again, this is an issue that I think every single leader in this place needs to get up to speed on. I will tell us why.

Last week, as a member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, we were doing a thorough review of Bill C-70, which I will talk about later, which is designed to deal with foreign interference. One of our witnesses was David Vineault, who is the director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. I asked him about this, about whether it is in the intelligence community's interest that key members of Parliament, i.e., leaders of parties, get briefed on this information. He said yes, that it is in their interest to make sure that as many key members of Parliament, of the whole Parliament of Canada, are briefed on this.

Again, I understand that there is a wide gulf between intelligence and evidence but there are other mechanisms that party leaders can make use of within their own caucuses, so that if a party leader learns the identity of a compromised MP, there are actions that leader can take within their caucus to make sure that the Canadian people do not have a compromised person on the ballot in the next election. That is one avenue that can be taken.

It is shameful, I think, that, so many times, there is a deliberate choice to play partisan games rather than become informed. In my opinion, that is simply not leadership. There is a veil of ignorance on the Conservative side, but on the Liberal side, their continued reliance on judicial process and the RCMP investigating is also a cover, because, again, there is that gulf between intelligence and evidence. The intelligence does not always meet the high standard that is necessary in a court of law. Often, intelligence agencies are

very loathe to share that intelligence because it could compromise their sources that gathered the information in the first place. Again, to the CSIS director's point at committee, there are actions that party leaders can take, but they can only take them if they make the conscious choice to become properly informed. We have yet to see that from the Conservative Party leader.

The final part of the motion from the Bloc Québécois is asking that the terms of reference for the foreign interference commission, known as the Hogue commission, be expanded to investigate Canada's federal democratic institutions, including members of the House of Commons elected in the 43rd and 44th Parliaments, as well as senators.

I have listened to some of the debate thus far, and some members believe that the existing terms of reference already cover this. I would say that given the heightened attention and interest that there is on this issue and the very real concern that Canadians have with it, if there is any way we could ask the government to give more specificity and direction to what the terms of reference should be to the commission, then I, for one, would be in favour of it. I do think it is reasonable to ask for that because, again, we need to make sure that the inquiry has full access to all of the classified material. We cannot have cabinet confidences blocking the inquiry's search for the truth. That is very much a fact, and I think most Canadians would very much agree with that.

I think we are all very well aware of how serious this issue is and the attention that we need to pay to it from this point forward. The next question is: where do we go from here? I love reviewing Canadian statutes, and the statute, of course, that is most at play in these circumstances is the Security of Information Act. Anyone, under that act, who is permanently bound to secrecy commits an offence when they intentionally and without authority communicate or confirm special operational information.

• (1335)

In this case, that would be the names of these MPs. We are in a conundrum here. On one hand, we have the Security of Information Act, SOIA, with very stiff penalties. If one committed an offence under the SOIA, one could be found guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not more than 14 years. That is a serious punishment for breaching these conditions in the act. Again, members of NSICOP are members of Parliament, but, looking at the act that created that committee under section 12, no member of that committee can "claim immunity based on parliamentary privilege". They have waived their parliamentary privilege to be a part of that committee. As a result, they are also bound by secrecy. They cannot utter the names because they would be found liable to imprisonment as well.



*Business of Supply*

I must return to the rights of the House of Commons itself, because I think we are setting up a battle here between the rights of the House versus existing statutes. We all know that two of the most powerful mechanisms that the House of Commons has are the regulation of its own internal affairs and the power to discipline. Those are the dominant rights and powers, among a few others, that the House of Commons has. I would submit to colleagues that breaking the oath of allegiance or the affirmation that we all made to have the privilege of sitting in this place is probably the most serious offence that I can think of. It is something that I think the House would be well-versed to seize itself with and to find the appropriate punishment. I am not sure where this battle is going to go, again, because we have rights as members of Parliament in that anything we say here on the floor of the House is protected by parliamentary privilege. We literally cannot be held liable for the things that we say on the floor of the House, because there can be no impediment to an MP doing their job. Members of Parliament cannot fear prosecution to be able to do their job. We have to find a way where this information becomes known. The ultimate goal I want is for no Canadian to face a possibility where there is a compromised politician on the ballot who may be working on behalf of a foreign power, rather than the interests of the community they represent or to our country as a whole.

In this last two minutes I have, I do want to mention that, in terms of where we go from here, Bill C-70 is going to go through clause-by-clause this afternoon. I am going to be there, at committee, reviewing every single one of those clauses. It is going to be reported back to the House, hopefully by Wednesday. I think there are some substantive measures in that bill. We are certainly happy to be supporting it. I think it is important that we set up a registry. I think it is important that the CSIS Act gets updated so that it can work in a digital world. I also think it is important that the Security of Information Act gets important updates so that for clandestine interference, we have appropriate punishments for people who are engaging in those kinds of activities.

However, let me say this. With every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. I think that foreign governments need to hear the message that their meddling in our internal affairs is now clearly on our radar and we are going to act. This is an item that the country is seized with, that this Parliament is seized with, and we are now prepared to take measures to make sure we root this problem out and get the perpetrators the justice that they so clearly deserve. The allegations that MPs knowingly received help from a foreign government are deeply disturbing. No one with those interests in mind should be sitting in this House of Commons. They should not be welcome in the Parliament of Canada. Canadians ultimately do deserve to know who these MPs are, who they are in undermining our democracy, and the government must find a way forward with this. All parliamentarians have an obligation to do everything they can to address foreign interference.

With that I will conclude by saying that we will support this motion. We will always be on the side of supporting efforts to get to the bottom of this issue and treating it with the seriousness that it deserves.

• (1340)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am glad that my colleague clearly supports what we are proposing.

This is where we are today. In this entire months-long process, and considering how close the NDP member is to the government, how is it that he has not leveraged his influence a bit more to have an opposition day like the one we are having today?

[*English*]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, as I mentioned in the early part of my speech, on May 30, 2023, it was the NDP that put forward the motion that expressed our distrust with the special rapporteur because of his close ties with the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party of Canada. It was that very same motion that established the need for a public inquiry. We actually achieved both those things, because the week after our motion was passed, no thanks to the Liberals but thanks to the Bloc Québécois for its support, David Johnston stepped down as the special rapporteur, and on September 7, 2023, we had the public inquiry set up. Therefore, we have been using our influence with the government, because we did achieve two notable things.

However, I am very much looking forward to the fact that our leader is going to receive the briefing necessary to understand which MPs are implicated in this mess. All party leaders in this place need to have that briefing. They need to understand if members of their own caucus are compromised so that they can take the appropriate actions to ensure that those individuals do not show up on a ballot come the next election.

• (1345)

**Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if the member feels, like I do, that until we know who exactly is named in that report as having conspired with foreign entities, a dark cloud hangs over all 338 members, because everyone is suspected of being one of the persons. I think the names, like he said, should be released, and how many should be released as well.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, it is true that since the report landed with the force of a bomb last week, it has let a cloud of suspicion hang over this entire place.

I did note that there is a wide gulf between intelligence and evidence, so it may not always be possible to satisfy evidence that someone was directly implicated in a court of law. However, there are extrajudicial methods that we can take, which is why it is very important that party leaders get briefed on this to find out if there are compromised members in their caucus.

However, what I am really worried about is that, one way or another, these names are going to be leaked anyway. It is really important for this Parliament and, indeed, the government to stay on top of that file and ensure that we agree on a process where we can ensure that those members are getting the punishment they are due for conspiring to work on behalf of a foreign power, but also that Canadians can be sure they will no longer show up on a ballot in the next federal election.

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague gave a very good speech on what is happening here and how we have to address this, but he has one dichotomy in that speech, which is the role of His Majesty's loyal opposition in that, declaring that the leader of the Conservative Party should get that briefing. However, later in his speech, he talked about the parliamentary role that we have to play as His Majesty's loyal opposition in holding the government to account. His proposition that the leader of my party gets that briefing puts my leader on the side of not being able to voice exactly what has happened there, like the members of NSICOP to which he also referred.

Could the member please note that dichotomy, that we have to be here in Parliament serving our parliamentary role, and we cannot be silenced by being part of an agreement to not disclose what happens in that realm?

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, I will agree with my colleague that it is a challenge. We have an existing statute coming up with parliamentary privilege, but that should not preclude his leader from getting the briefing necessary.

As I said in my speech, I was speaking with the director of the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service, David Vigneault, at committee last week. He said that it was the opinion of the intelligence community that all leaders get briefed on this very serious issue.

We may not be able to speak about it, but there are actions that party leaders can take within their own caucuses. Eventually we are going to find a path forward where we get to know these names, but I do not believe that the Conservatives' current arguments precluding their leader from getting this briefing holds much water. I would urge the member to speak to his leader on getting the briefing. We need to rise above partisanship right now and get to the bottom of this, and that starts with every leader getting the briefing necessary to get the names.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford made reference to Bill C-70 on a foreign interference registry, which we fast-tracked and which I supported. I have since heard from many concerned groups, and I wonder if he has as well, that in our collaborative spirit, which is so rare in this place, to get the bill through and be heard so that we would have a foreign interference registry, I think we made a mistake in not allowing the bill to be properly studied. There are a lot of concerns being raised now.

I wonder if the hon. member has any concerns as well, as a member of the committee, as to how we might be able, in a future Parliament, to hear expert witnesses and amend the bill.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, indeed, we certainly have heard those concerns not only in briefings, but also in witness testimony.

The National Council of Canadian Muslims has certainly raised concerns with respect to parts 1, 2 and 3 of the bill. It is very happy with the registry.

We were put in this uncomfortable position because we waited so long for the legislation to arrive in the House of Commons. As the NSICOP report mentions in its conclusion, there are a litany of

scathing conclusions against the Liberal government for the delays that have put us in this precarious position.

Certainly, and I think I can speak for other committee members, we felt a bit rushed last week, but I believe we gave the bill a thorough vetting in the time we did have. I am looking forward to commencing clause-by-clause this Monday afternoon, and at report stage hopefully this Wednesday.

However, these upgrades to the CSIS Act, the SOIA and the Canada Evidence Act in setting up a new registry are incredibly important legislative tools, not only to create a registry but to go after the clandestine operations that we know are happening all too well with respect to foreign interference in Canada.

• (1350)

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the NSICOP report indicates that the Prime Minister already knows who these individuals are. When I say “individuals”, we are talking about elected officials, members of Parliament, who knowingly, intentionally and wittingly collaborated with and worked for foreign states to undermine Canada's democratic processes and democratic institutions. In light of that, we have not seen the Prime Minister take any action, and the community, the public and members of Parliament have been kept entirely in the dark.

Is it not time that the information be shared with all parliamentarians and, most important, with all Canadians? When we run for office, is it not our job to serve Canadians and not foreign states?

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, I read the report over and again on my recent flight from home to Ottawa and the conclusions in it are damning. I agree. The fact that the Prime Minister has known this for quite some time, and we only learned about it last week, is a brutal judgment. Earlier I asked the government House leader what the Liberal Party was prepared to do to ensure that its candidates in the next election were not compromised. It is obvious that the government has fallen short on this matter. It has clearly fallen short of our expectations, let alone those of Canadians.

We need to find a way to learn the identities of these people. Underlying this critical point is that we need to find a way to ensure they are not on the ballot in the next federal election.

[Translation]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I wish to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the member for Beauport—Limoilou.

The Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs has held more than 70 meetings on foreign interference in our elections. There have been two questions of privilege, one raised by the member for Wellington—Halton Hills and one raised by the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, which have been studied by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. An independent commission of inquiry has been launched at the relentless urging of my colleague from Trois-Rivières and myself in the House. Now the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians has released a bombshell report showing that Canadian parliamentarians are encouraging foreign governments to use them as part of their manipulations.

However, the report has not been met with urgency. The government hopes to put a lid on the scandal and smother it like so many others, but this time, the pressure cooker is about to explode. I think it is about to happen. What will it take for the government to act?

I cannot believe it is the Bloc Québécois, a separatist political party, that has to lead the charge on this matter to generate a discussion in the Parliament of Canada. That is crazy. Now even the Parti Québécois wants to launch a national inquiry in Quebec on foreign interference. The mayor of Brossard supports the idea, because the federal government is not doing its job.

Last week we learned that members of the House of Commons are being directly influenced by China and, even worse, are instigating interference. They are exploiting the schemes of foreign threat actors to further their own ends. That is serious. I hope that people understand what we are saying. When we talk about it, the government says that it is really not that serious. It is time for it to take responsibility and acknowledge how serious this problem is.

People know I am a sovereignist. I am sitting in a Parliament that I do not wish to sit in because I want Quebec to be independent. However, today I am the one asking the federal government to defend Canada. I want the government to realize that it is not addressing the issue. The government did everything it could to smother the scandal by initially vetoing a public inquiry and appointing a special rapporteur who we know is a friend of the Trudeau family as a diversion. Time is running out.

Just recently, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety told opposition members to “get over it”. She did this right in the middle of a parliamentary committee meeting. I can tell the member for Pickering—Uxbridge without hesitation that no, I will not get over it, because I have no trust.

For months, I have been hearing the security agencies, CSIS, the RCMP and the Communications Security Establishment Canada, pass the buck and tell us that they are doing their job, but that it is difficult. I cannot get over not actually knowing what makes it so difficult. No one has the courage to answer my questions in committee.

I have come to my own conclusion, which is that our intelligence agencies are being ignored because the news they are reporting to the highest levels of the Canadian government is not to the Prime Minister's liking. Why? It is because, as has now come to light, members of the government party are under the influence of foreign states. These states have developed clandestine networks surround-

### *Statements by Members*

ing candidates and elected officials to arrange nominations, elections, parliamentary business and government decision-making.

• (1355)

Do people realize what is going on? It is unbelievable. These foreign states are surrounding targets with ethnocultural community leaders and prominent Canadian business people and political staffers. These states convey their preferences. What do the collaborators do? They promote the chosen slate to targeted groups of voters. They go through the back door.

Back in February 2023, David Mulroney, Canada's former ambassador to the People's Republic of China, told the committee: “[I thought] back in history to the 1930s, when France constructed the Maginot Line. They were not going to suffer what happened to them in World War I, so they were going to build defences that went from the borders in the low countries all the way along the borders of France to Spain. It was impregnable, and it gave the French great confidence. However, the Germans didn't follow that plan. They had another plan. They entered via the Ardennes, and France fell. It was a disaster because they had designed something as they saw fit.” That is exactly what Canada is experiencing.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*English*]

### ST. ANNE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I rise today heartbroken at the loss of St. Anne's Anglican Church on Gladstone Avenue in Toronto.

As a fellow Anglican, I have worshipped in that space, and I do not think there is a more beautiful church in Canada. I guess I should use the past tense. It was an extraordinary architectural gem, a national heritage site lost forever.

When people read that there were works of the Group of Seven in that church, it is not just as though they were paintings hanging on the walls. The paintings were the walls. They were frescoes, unique in the works of the artists J.E.H. MacDonald, Frederick Varley and Franklin Carmichael, and they were portraits of saints and apostles as imagined by Canada's most talented, amazing artists.

To the congregation of St. Anne's, its clergy and leadership, we mourn with them and we grieve with them, but we remind them to remember that faith cannot be burned down.

\* \* \*

### DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

**Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, today marks the dragon boat festival, a traditional Chinese holiday that commemorates the life and death of famous Chinese scholar Qu Yuan.

*Statements by Members*

I look forward to commemorating the festival by attending the highly anticipated 36th Toronto International Dragon Boat Race Festival this Saturday, organized by the Toronto Chinese Business Association and GWN Dragon Boat. This year, the festival will welcome over 2,000 athletes and 80,000 visitors globally to the Toronto Islands, showcasing Canada's leadership in promoting the sport of dragon boat racing, as well as Asian and Chinese Canadian cultural heritage.

Let us continue to honour this Asian Canadian legacy with the spirit of celebration, reflection and solidarity within our communities. I wish everyone a safe and healthy dragon boat festival.

\* \* \*

**N2 NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORK**

**Mr. Rob Morrison (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC):** Madam Speaker, today I would like to highlight a group local to Nelson, B.C., the N2 Neighbourhood Network. Heading up this group is Tanya, a local business owner who is passionate about keeping Nelson safe and prosperous for future generations.

Although local to Nelson, the N2 Neighbourhood Network has travelled around Kootenay—Columbia and B.C. to listen to business owners and communities alike regarding the increasing crime and drug use in our areas. By listening to folks, Tanya and the group can bring awareness to situations that are, frankly, getting out of hand: needles in playgrounds, graffiti on public and private spaces, and damage to and theft from our small business owners. They meet publicly, with all welcome, to discuss solutions to bring these ideas to the authorities.

It is appreciated to have such passionate community contributors openly trying to better our communities, seeing that public drug use and blatant disregard for property and people's safety are getting out of control. I look forward to supporting this group and seeing how it grows for a better future.

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**GRADUATION CONGRATULATIONS**

**Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, June is graduation season, and today I rise to congratulate all graduates, especially those in my riding of Halifax West.

[*Translation*]

This accomplishment is the result of years of hard work and marks the beginning of a new chapter.

[*English*]

For all our graduates, their teachers, parents, extended family and school administrators have been essential to their success. They have supported and believed in them, pushed them and inspired them. They have been there to share their successes from elementary to high school and beyond.

I want to give a shout-out to the graduates of Charles P. Allen High School, Halifax West High School, Citadel High School, École secondaire du Sommet, Bay View High School, as well as our NSCC grads and those receiving a degree from the Mount,

Saint Mary's University, Dalhousie and King's. I send my congratulations.

[*Translation*]

I encourage them to be curious.

[*English*]

I encourage them to pursue their dreams.

[*Translation*]

I hope they find their place in our country and in our world.

\* \* \*

**MARC-ANTOINE BERNIER**

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about a young man from my riding who is making us proud in the realm of lifesaving sport. His name is Marc-Antoine Bernier.

Marc-Antoine is an inspiring and determined young man I have had the pleasure of meeting several times. He is heading off to the Lifesaving World Championships in Australia in August. This will be his second time competing in the championships. His first was in Italy in 2022. Marc-Antoine has been training at the Dam'cauclès lifesaving club in Val-d'Or for the past 10 years.

Yesterday, he won the title of Canadian lifesaving champion in the 19-plus age group at a competition in Victoria, British Columbia. Over the past few years, Marc-Antoine has also had opportunities to participate in other high-profile competitions, including the Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships, where he was the only person representing Quebec.

At the upcoming Lifesaving World Championships in Australia, I will be cheering Marc-Antoine on, as will everyone in Val-d'Or, in Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou and across Quebec.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

[*English*]

**CENTRETOWN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am excited to rise today to celebrate the 55th anniversary of the Centretown Community Health Centre, a pillar of support and compassion in my community of Ottawa Centre since 1969. Over the past five and a half years, CCHC has evolved into a multiservice, non-profit organization offering a wide array of services that cater to the diverse needs of the residents of Centretown. I know that personally because I had the great fortune of serving on the board of Centretown Community Health Centre for several years.

[Translation]

Through its work, CCHC's mission extends beyond simply treating disease. Its holistic approach includes promoting healthy lifestyles, supporting mental health, fighting addiction and promoting inclusive communities, to ensure that every individual feels valued, supported and empowered.

[English]

There are many people to thank, but I want to congratulate all the staff for their hard work in serving so many in our community.

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### CARBON TAX

**Mr. Shuvaloy Majumdar (Calgary Heritage, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, every day I hear NDP-Liberals make the disturbing claim that Canadians get more than they pay into the carbon tax. It is as if they are completely tone-deaf to the voices of real Canadians, so I am bringing the stories of everyday Calgarians right into this chamber.

Here is the real impact of the carbon tax: For the Royal Canadian Legion 285, it was \$12,144 this year; for Bitter Sisters Brewing Company, it was \$8,200 last year; and for Maria, her husband, and their two wonderful children, the burden is becoming absolutely unbearable. They buy expired food just to make ends meet, denying their kids the proper nutrition they need. Now they are on the brink of having to turn to food banks and the Woodcreek Community Association food pantry.

My neighbours are suffering. NDP-Liberals need to act and axe the tax.

\* \* \*

### ARCHERY

**Hon. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Brampton is forging its way as a sports hub in Canada. Bramptonians have been recognized for their achievement in sports around the world.

I rise today to highlight a young athlete in my community who is setting records and proudly representing Canada on the world stage. Harkunwar Singh Teja is an archer who recently set new records at the Pan American youth and masters championships. He received a gold medal in the compound under 15 men's category, and both of his results, from the qualification round and the final, broke continental records. These records are recognized as both Pan American championship records and records in the Americas. We hope that his record will stand for years to come.

This is a historic moment for archery in Canada and a proud one for Jiwanjot Singh Teja, a world-renowned archery coach who is also Harkunwar's father and mentor. I send my congratulations to Harkunwar.

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### RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Windsor—Tecumseh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House of Commons to pay tribute to a

### Statements by Members

legendary teacher, Mr. Gary Rankin, sometimes referred to as “Mr. Riverside”, for his love of teaching. He has been teaching for 23 years, all of them at Riverside Secondary School. I would also like to pay tribute to his work in the Riverside Minor Baseball Association.

At Riverside High School, he coached sports teams, but where he truly left his mark was leading the Riverside student parliament, teaching leaders of tomorrow how Parliament works and what public service is all about. Mr. Rankin retires this year, leaving behind a legacy of community service as a great teacher and a great role model. I know this because three of my staff at my constituency office and on Parliament Hill were once his students.

To Mr. Riverside, we say congratulations on his retirement. It is never “goodbye”, but perhaps, “this House now stands adjourned”.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the government has given hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts to their lobbyist friends. The Department of National Defence handed out \$72 million in consulting contracts last year alone. This includes the usual recipients, such as McKinsey, which was awarded a total of 13 non-competitive contracts, but that is not all. The Prime Minister's favourite company, SNC-Lavalin, is back. It was once again awarded contracts worth well into the six figures. When questioned about this at the public accounts committee, neither the defence minister nor his officials could answer what these contracts were for.

Meanwhile, our troops are being forced to visit food banks and couch surf, and some have even started GoFundMe campaigns, yet the Liberal-NDP government has handed out millions in contracts to Liberal insiders and friends. Conservatives demand that the government treat our troops with the respect and decency they deserve. In an increasingly dangerous world, it will not be lobbyists who will defend Canada but the brave members of the Canadian Armed Forces, who will be called upon to serve our great nation.

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### PORTUGUESE HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in June we come together to celebrate Portuguese Heritage Month, a significant occasion when we acknowledge the remarkable contributions that Portuguese Canadians have made to this great country.

*Statements by Members*

Today, June 10, is Portugal Day, observed both in Portugal and across the globe. As a Portuguese Canadian, this day holds a deep sense of pride and joy for me personally. It is a momentous occasion that allows us to reflect on our shared heritage and commemorate the achievements and traditions of Portugal.

Since the first Portuguese immigrant pioneers to Canada, over the course of these 70-plus years, the descendants of these courageous pioneers have flourished and achieved greatness throughout this magnificent country.

Today, let us take this opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments and honour the rich heritage and seamless integration of the Portuguese community in Canada.

*Feliz Dia de Portugal, de Camões e das Comunidades Portuguesas. Viva Canada. Viva Portugal. Obrigado.*

\* \* \*

**OPIOIDS**

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canada's opioid and overdose crisis is raging out of control.

The Prime Minister's solution to the crisis has been to flood our streets with taxpayer-funded drugs marketed as safe. Now a doctor from London, Ontario, where Canada's first safe supply program started, is sounding the alarm.

Dr. Sharon Koivu, who initially supported the program, said that safe supply has “worsened the addiction crisis” in her community. She revealed that safe supply is being diverted and sold to organized crime, and is leading to London having a 40% higher opioid death rate than the rest of Ontario. One of her patients actually moved from his apartment to a tent near a local pharmacy, where safe supply pills were much cheaper and more abundant.

The government is not fixing the opioid crisis. It is actively making it worse. For the good of all Canadians, the Prime Minister must put an end to his radical drug experiment today.

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**CARBON TAX**

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, poverty and food insecurity are emergencies in Canada. Last year, a record two million Canadians had to visit food banks in a single month. Food Banks Canada says nearly half of Canadians feel financially worse off since last year, and 25% cannot afford to feed themselves. An Alberta food bank reported that four times more working people have to access help than in 2022. Across Canada, one in five people says they or someone they know used a food bank in the last year.

However, the NDP-Liberals still plan to quadruple their inflationary carbon tax over the next six years. The budget watchdog already proved their carbon tax is not worth the cost and drives up the price of everything for everyone. The majority of people are worse off with the carbon tax, but the Prime Minister will not listen. Like before, he is covering up reports that show the carbon tax's real cost to Canadians.

Only common-sense Conservatives will axe the tax, for all for good, and bring home lower prices so Canadians can afford to eat, house, heat, cool and drive themselves, essentials in Canada.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**FRENCH LANGUAGE LEARNING**

**Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have been studying French for three years now and I just want to say that it is never too late to learn.

I want to thank my teacher, Jacinthe Parisé, and all the teachers helping us here in Parliament learn French or English. I also want to thank the interpreters who work hard to share their talent and help us communicate with one another. I appreciate their patience with my pronunciation.

I am proud that Canada is a bilingual country, and I encourage everyone to learn French or English. If I can do it, anyone can. We should never stop learning. I am proud to have delivered this message in French.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

[English]

**PETER ROSENTHAL**

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour the life well lived of the brilliant mathematician, civil rights lawyer, professor and peace movement activist Mr. Peter Rosenthal, who passed away on May 25 at the age of 82.

Mr. Rosenthal is remembered in the words of our mutual friend Max:

Peter Rosenthal worked two very demanding full-time jobs. He came to Canada to teach Mathematics at the University of Toronto in the 1960s, but once he arrived, spent an equal amount of time fighting against injustice as a social justice lawyer through our legal system. In his legal career, he'd take on pro bono cases, representing the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, victims of police brutality, and other marginalized groups of society.

Peter remained humble, treating everyone he met with kindness and curiosity, and never let his politics get in the way of his friendships. He was beloved by his family....

To honour Peter's life, please take a moment to delight in the beauty of mathematics, and speak out against injustice wherever you find it.

[Translation]

#### DAVID LABRECQUE

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in March, the extraordinary and dynamic David Labrecque announced that he was retiring after 35 years as an educator. For the past 10 years, he was executive director of the Alphonse-Desjardins Sports Centre. At the time, I wished him a happy and restful retirement and said that he could look forward to spending time in his garden.

However, following a brief three-week retirement, in a dramatic twist, on April 3, the organizing committee for the 59th Quebec Games in Trois-Rivières—which will take place from July 25 to August 2, 2025—announced the appointment of David Labrecque as executive director. With David at the helm, everyone can rest assured that the games will run smoothly.

I would like to congratulate the president of the Quebec Games in Trois-Rivières, Martin Leblanc, and his team on this excellent appointment. Good luck, David.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one of the most basic responsibilities of any government is to protect the country from foreign threats. On this, the Prime Minister has been a complete failure. Last week, an intelligence report stated that an unknown number of parliamentarians have been “witting’ participants” in foreign interference in Canadian politics. What is even worse, though, is that the Prime Minister has known about these allegations for years and has done absolutely nothing about it. He has had years to establish a process to get to the bottom of which MPs have betrayed Canada and put in place a fair process for those accused while protecting intelligence sources. Instead, he has been quite happy to sit back and let it all happen. This is unacceptable.

To maintain faith and trust in our democratic institutions, Canadians need the truth. That is why common-sense Conservatives are demanding that the government expand the scope of the foreign interference public inquiry to receive all documents and information and reveal the names of which MPs have sold out their country. The Prime Minister and his Liberals might not have a problem with MPs’ working for other countries, but Conservatives do, and we are going to do everything we can to get Canadians the truth.

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#### GINO: A CHILD OF WAR

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Speaker, today the movie *Gino: A Child of War* premieres on Parliament Hill. I would like to invite all Canadians to join us and discover the story of Gino Farnetti-Bragaglia. Gino’s heart-wrenching yet inspiring journey sheds light on the boundless hope and resilience of the human spirit amid the chaos of war.

This five-year-old boy from Torrice, Italy had his life upended by the ravages of World War II. In June 1944, compassionate members of the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps conducting resupply

#### Oral Questions

tasks found a famished young Italian boy close to the battle ruins. For the next 10 months, Gino found shelter, nourishment and care among his Canadian guardians.

The movie highlights the shared heritage and enduring strength that define and connect Canada and Italy. It honours the brave Canadian men and women in uniform who fight for freedom and democracy, past and present. In honouring Gino’s story, we celebrate the values of duty, compassion and courage as demonstrated by the Canadian soldiers, the perseverance that unites us and the freedom we enjoy today, thanks to the sacrifices of the past.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1420)

[Translation]

#### DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last week we learned, courtesy of the report released by the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, that members were “‘semi-witting or witting’ participants in the efforts of foreign states to interfere in our politics.” This is an extremely troubling revelation, and that is why we must know who these members are who are colluding with hostile foreign powers.

Will the Prime Minister reveal the names of these members and the unacceptable actions alleged against them? Yes or no?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I am a little surprised. The person sitting next to him, his House leader, sent me a letter over the weekend suggesting that these questions be addressed to the Hogue commission, and that this was the appropriate forum with the precautions that are in place.

Today the House is debating a motion from our friends in the Bloc Québécois that we are going to support. I think this is an important time for Parliament. We must come together and support the work of the Hogue commission, and that is exactly what we plan on doing.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect their elected representatives here and their senators to work in their interest. I am pleased to hear the minister’s response, but I would like him to confirm whether the Prime Minister will officially submit to Justice Hogue the names of the MPs, or perhaps the senators, who have been implicated in disseminating intelligence to hostile states.

Will he give the names, yes or no?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will reiterate that our colleague should consult the person sitting to his left. He knows full well that the Hogue commission has access to precisely this type of information. The Hogue commission has access to all the records that the committee of parliamentarians consulted.

Privy Council officials have already been in contact with the Hogue commission precisely to discuss how we can move forward on this. That is the responsible way to proceed. The member knows full well that it is irresponsible to rise in the House and ask that a list of names be disclosed. We will not do that.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, certain members of this House acted in the best interest of hostile foreign regimes interfering in Canada's democracy. This is a disgusting betrayal of Canadians who elected us to represent them in this place. We as MPs are supposed to serve Canadians, not foreign hostile actors.

Why is the Liberal-NDP government fighting to protect the names of MPs collaborating in the best interest of hostile foreign regimes and not Canadians?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat what I said a moment ago in French. We agree with members of this House that the appropriate forum to look at these matters is the commission that is already set up and operating, set up, I would remind colleagues, with the unanimous support of all parties in this House. The Hogue commission has access to all of the documents that the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians looked at. Officials from the Privy Council Office have already been in touch with the Hogue commission to determine the best way forward.

We think that is a responsible way to proceed, not simply standing up and illegally announcing a list of names, like my colleague suggests.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, "boo hoo, get over it" was the most disgusting response from the cover-up coalition. The government turned a blind eye to foreign interference to protect its own partisan interests. It refused to hand over documents to that commission. Now it will not release the names of the MPs in this House doing dirty work for foreign hostile regimes. Canadians need to know who these MPs are.

Is the Liberal-NDP government really going to let sitting members of this House working against the interests of Canadians run in the next election?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government will be supporting the motion before the House today, brought by the Bloc Québécois, asking the Hogue commission to examine this very matter. We think that is the appropriate way to do it.

The Conservatives are pretending that one can stand up and release a list of names. I asked the deputy commissioner of the

RCMP, Mark Flynn, this morning, what would happen if I stood up and announced a list of names, like my colleagues are asking me to do. He said I would be subject to criminal prosecution. Guess what? I am not going to do that.

\* \* \*

● (1425)

**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Liberals have had years to do something, and they have done nothing.

Speaking of cover-ups, there is another one. Last week, the Parliamentary Budget Officer revealed that the government is hiding a secret carbon tax report that proves a majority of Canadians pay more into this scam than what they get back in these phony rebates, but the Liberal-NDP government did what it does best. It put a gag order on the PBO, keeping the truth from Canadians.

When will the Liberal-NDP cover-up coalition lift the gag order and release the report to confirm what Canadians already know, which is that the Prime Minister and his carbon tax scam are not worth the cost?

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

**The Speaker:** Once again, I am going to remind members to please not take the floor unless they are recognized to speak so that we can hear the questions and the answers.

The hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we respect the work of the PBO, who provides independent analysis on the government. Conservatives, unfortunately, are misleading Canadians yet again. Our government has supported, and will continue to support, the Parliamentary Budget Officer to fulfill his role in his office. The report correctly confirmed that eight out of 10 Canadians get more money back in the rebate than they pay in a fuel charge. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has said that carbon pricing is the least disruptive measure to use to fight climate change.

Instead of misleading Canadians, Conservatives should take math classes over the summer and should come up with a real plan for the economy and for climate change.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today we are debating a Bloc Québécois motion seeking to expand the Hogue commission's terms of reference to allow it to also investigate members of the House of Commons working on behalf of foreign interests.



*Oral Questions*

Why did we move this motion? Because the Liberals consistently lack leadership on the interference file. They are always playing catch-up and, frankly, they should be embarrassed that the Bloc Québécois has had to take this initiative again today. They are the government in power.

Why do they always have to get backed into a corner before taking action on foreign interference?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have good news. The work I did with my colleague and the other House leaders last summer has resulted in the Hogue commission.

We believe that the terms of reference we negotiated with our friend from La Prairie allows the commission to do precisely the work that the Bloc Québécois motion calls for.

We will support the motion in tomorrow's vote. We will work with the Hogue commission precisely to determine the best way to proceed.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last week, during question period, when I asked what the government was going to do to ensure that no one in the House is working for a foreign power, the Deputy Prime Minister responded by talking about the interest rates.

The Bloc Québécois cares about this issue and is concerned about this threat to democracy and here she comes out with her useless spin. That speaks volumes about the Liberals' lack of seriousness. They are not taking this seriously. The threat is very serious.

Will the government offer its full collaboration to the Hogue commission once its terms of reference have been expanded?

Democracy depends on it.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, absolutely, the answer is yes. As I said, senior officials at the Privy Council already initiated that discussion with the Hogue commission on the weekend.

We will always be there to ensure that the Hogue commission has everything it needs to shed light on this situation.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has confirmation that MPs knowingly worked with foreign governments to undermine Canada. He has known for 11 months and has done nothing. All the while, Canadians have been harassed. Canadians have been threatened. A Canadian citizen was killed. Those were all linked to foreign governments.

Why has the Prime Minister failed to protect Canadians?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously, the most important responsibility of any government is to protect its citizens. Far from not taking this matter seriously, our government has been the only government in the history of Canada to set up a series of measures to detect, to disrupt and to prevent foreign interference.

We are very pleased that members of the House are working collaboratively to support government legislation before the House right now to give additional tools, to create additional criminal offences and to hold those to account who might seek to interfere in our democratic institutions. We will continue to always do this important work.

• (1430)

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has known for 11 weeks and has done nothing.

[*Translation*]

For 11 weeks, the Prime Minister has known the names of the MPs who may be working with the governments of foreign countries like India and China. For 11 weeks, he has known that some members are potentially helping a government that may have been responsible for the murder of a Canadian citizen.

Why did the Prime Minister do nothing for those 11 weeks?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, our government is always working to protect democratic institutions and to strengthen the measures needed to ensure the integrity of our electoral process.

Law enforcement and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service are always on the job and they take their responsibilities seriously. I have full confidence in our national security agencies, and I have full confidence in the Hogue commission, which is looking at the exact scenario my colleague was talking about.

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[*English*]

**CARBON PRICING**

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the Liberal-NDP government, here are the facts. One in five Canadians knows someone accessing a food bank, 25% of Canadians are going hungry and 44% feel financially worse off than just one year ago. Canadians are not doing well, despite the Prime Minister gaslighting them. It gets worse. There is now a PBO report that reveals the true cost of the carbon tax.

Why are they not allowing the PBO to release it? He has been gagged, and now we want to know why.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only people in this city who seem to be gagged are Conservative MPs. They are not allowed to express their true views when it comes to ending a woman's right to choose. None of them is allowed to express a view on tax fairness. Tomorrow, they are going to have to stop deflecting and evading, and are going to have to take a stand. We will see if they support fairness for every generation.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for that perfect example of deflecting.

Again, this is not hearsay. This is a letter sent by the minister's office to the PBO. He is saying to the PBO that this is the real cost of the carbon tax. Conservatives have been saying for months to axe the tax because we know that it drives up the cost of literally everything. It is causing misery. The Liberals say that this is not true.

If it is not true, why the gag order? Why are they not allowing the PBO to release the carbon tax cover-up that shows the true cost of what it is costing Canadians?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we believe in investing in affordability for Canadians with programs like a national school food program, dental care, and a national system of early learning and child care. We are going to pay for it in a responsible way with tax fairness.

I would like to invite that member to lift her own personal gag order and to come clean with Canadians on whether she supports tax fairness or whether she supports tax breaks for the wealthiest among us.

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are not being fooled by the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister. They know that the carbon tax is making their lives more unaffordable.

Last week, the Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed that a secret government report shows that the carbon tax costs Canadians more than they get back. The Prime Minister has forced the PBO to sign a gag order so that he cannot share that report. Canadians deserve the truth.

When will the government come clean with Canadians and release the report?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the people who are not going to be able to fool Canadians for very much longer are the Conservatives. For days and days, for weeks and weeks, they have been dithering and deflecting and evading when it comes to our proposed measures on capital gains.

Tomorrow, they are going to have to take a stand. I invite the member opposite to lead the way by lifting her own personal gag order and saying what she believes.

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

• (1435)

**The Speaker:** I am going to ask members again, who have been really pretty good today, to please not take the floor until they are

recognized by the Chair. Certainly, we all want to hear the question from the hon. member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek.

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that Canadians know that, after nine years, the Prime Minister is just not worth the cost or the corruption. He is desperate to cover up his own secret report, which shows that Canadians are worse off under his carbon tax regime. He knows it. We know it, and Canadians know it. When will the Prime Minister lift his gag order on the Parliamentary Budget Officer and release his report?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Friday, surprise of surprises, that very member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek informed, I am sure, for the first time, not only her own caucus colleagues, but also, indeed, the entire House of Commons, that she picks and chooses which parts of the Conservative platform she runs on. This whole party, we know, ran on the price on pollution in the last election, but this member stood up and told us that she really did not. Maybe she could tell us right now which parts of the Conservative platform she does not approve of today.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are not buying what the Prime Minister is selling because they know that the carbon tax is not worth the cost.

Canadians cannot put gas in their cars or food on their tables. They know the real pain of the carbon tax, and so does the Parliamentary Budget Officer, who confirmed that the Liberals have an economic analysis of the carbon tax that shows the real pain of that tax, but they refuse to release it. I wonder why. Maybe it is because it confirms what Conservatives and Canadians have been saying all along, which is that the carbon tax is not worth the cost.

Will the Prime Minister unmuzzle his budget watchdog, table the report and admit to Canadians that the carbon tax is all pain, no gain?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the people who I sincerely believe need to be unmuzzled are the Conservative MPs. I think it is time for Canadians to know which Conservative MPs believe that a woman's right to choose should be ended in Canada, and it is definitely time for Canadians to know whether Conservative MPs believe in tax fairness or whether they believe in tax breaks for their wealthy friends. Tomorrow, we will find out.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I can see why the Liberals do not want to answer this question. The Prime Minister tried to sell this fairytale, which is that Canadians are better off paying the carbon tax, to Canadian mayors last week. He got booed off the stage. Even big city mayors know that the carbon tax is not worth the cost. It fuels homelessness and food insecurity. Food banks are saying that visits are up 50%, and they cannot even keep up with demand.

There is a secret Liberal report that shows that the Liberal carbon tax is not worth the cost. Will the Prime Minister table that report and the carbon tax cover-up, and admit to Canadians that the carbon tax is all pain, no gain?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader is fond of making inflammatory statements. He called our system of early learning and child care a slush fund. He called co-op housing “Soviet-style” housing, and he called brave Ukraine, dismissively, a “faraway” land. However, he is silent on one issue, and that is tax fairness. Tomorrow, he is not going to be able to dither any more. Every single Conservative is going to have to take a stand. We will see what they really believe.

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[Translation]

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we have to revisit the three worrisome reports released by the Auditor General, who describes a total loss of control over public funds.

On the Liberals' watch, we have seen a dramatic increase in untendered contracts, with no explanation. Consultants have gotten rich without accountability and without anyone even knowing whether they delivered the required services. Public funds were allocated to ineligible projects.

How is it possible to lose control that badly without a single person being held accountable?

● (1440)

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that question, which gives me an opportunity to remind the House of the importance of the work of the Auditor General and of all other institutions and officials of the House of Commons.

That is why the report that she tabled last week was well received. This report sets out observations and findings that are almost identical to those we have been aware of for almost a year now.

For that reason, we will continue to expedite the work that has also been ongoing for just over a year now.

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, let us recap: Public funds were spent with no bidding process or oversight on companies that we are not sure delivered on their mandates; sustainable development funding was diverted to interests that have nothing to do with the environment; there was no decision-making at the top, despite minutes confirming these problems

and warnings from whistle-blowers; there were conflicts of interest; and there were ethical issues.

I have a riddle for the Liberals: Am I talking about the Auditor General's reports or the Prime Minister's track record?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. Honestly, I am a bit surprised because this type of criticism usually comes from the Conservative Party.

As she well knows, Sustainable Development Technology Canada is an agency created by Parliament. The chair of its board has resigned, as has its president.

More importantly, we changed the model so that we could continue to send funding to SMEs fighting climate change, many of which are in Quebec.

On this side of the House, we will always do what it takes to ensure good governance while maintaining and supporting our SMEs across the country.

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General's reports, including the one on McKinsey, do much more than outline specific problems.

It is all of the Prime Minister's work that we are talking about here. These reports depict a government that has no qualms about breaking its own rules, a government that has no qualms about ethics, and a government whose consistent negligence gave rise to a culture of carelessness and waste of public funds. In her report on McKinsey, the Auditor General calls it a common problem.

How do we fix this common problem when it is ultimately simply the result of the Prime Minister's leadership style?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will reiterate exactly the same things I summarized a few moments ago. The Auditor General's work is essential, not only on this issue, but on many other issues where her advice and recommendations are changing the way we can improve services to Canadians, including by increasing integrity and trust in procurement processes.

That said, we have many other things to do, including continuing to invest in the middle class, not least by taking advantage of last week's great announcement that interest rates went down for the first time in four years, making us the first G7 country to make this happen.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**CARBON PRICING**

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the Prime Minister is not worth the cost. Canadians are struggling to afford food and the NDP-Liberal government does not care.

From its carbon tax to red tape to its ban on plastics for produce, every single bad policy the government announces hurts our farmers and makes food more expensive. One farmer paid over \$25,000 in a single month in carbon tax alone. Farmers cannot absorb these costs, and, no, they do not get a rebate cheque.

When will the NDP-Liberals get out of the way and pass Bill C-234 in its original form?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we believe it is essential to make investments to make life more affordable for Canadians. That is why we have put forward the most ambitious housing program in Canadian history. That is why we are making dental care available to two million Canadians already. That is why we have created a national system of early learning and child care. We know it is important to pay for this in a fiscally responsible way, so we have a plan for tax fairness. However, the Conservatives prefer austerity and helping their wealthy pals. Tomorrow they are going to have to admit it.

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is another fairy tale from a Liberal who clearly does not understand food production.

The government cannot deny that paying \$25,000 in a single month in carbon tax is punishing this farmer. The NDP-Liberals live in la-la land if they do not think that these costs get passed on to Canadian families.

When will the government leave fantasy land, stop hurting our farmers and pass Bill C-234 in its original form?

• (1445)

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian farmers know, but the member apparently does not, that 95% of all farm fuels are already exempt from the price on pollution.

As for Bill C-234 and the very tortuous parliamentary process that party has submitted that bill to, I am glad that my counterpart, the Conservative House leader, has finally relented and allowed the bill to be debated today. However, we will see how the opposition determines to go forward on that bill, which it presented and is responsible for.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the “Liberal Bloc” continues to make life more expensive for Canadian farmers and families. By allowing the Senate to gut Bill C-234, it is contributing to the demise of a generation of farmers. The Bloc Québécois and the Prime Minister are not worth the cost. Food prices are at an all-time high, and food bank use in Beauce has increased by 25% in the past six months.

Will the government commit today to voting for what Canadians want and passing Bill C-234 in its original form?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the farmers in Beauce are very smart people. They know full well that 95% of the fuels used on farms are exempt from any kind of price on pollution. The message seems to have escaped the members representing them, though. I would like to remind the member that the bill he is talking about will do nothing to help those farmers.

I cannot wait to see the convoluted process that the Conservative Party is going to use to get this bill passed.

\* \* \*

[English]

**LABOUR**

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Steelworkers Local 2918 at IMT Defence is proud to build the equipment Ukraine needs to defend itself against Putin's illegal invasion. However, the workers are underpaid and cannot afford food or rent. Despite receiving millions in taxpayer dollars and sky-high profits, their employer has not been treating these workers with the respect they deserve. They have been on strike since early June to demand fair wages.

When will the Liberals finally stand up for Canadian workers and ensure tax dollars go to well-paying unionized jobs?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the situation. We will stay on top of it and we will keep the member informed.

\* \* \*

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, big telecom companies are adding to the struggles of women and gender-diverse people fleeing violence. While telecom CEOs lay off staff and give themselves huge bonuses, a recent report found that Bell, Rogers and Telus forced extra fees and long wait times on victims trying to change their phone numbers or leave shared plans with their abusers.

When will the Liberals stop being soft on telecom giants and force them to improve services for people fleeing violence?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is a very important question. I found the situation my colleague described as unacceptable. As she knows, we have been very tough on telecom CEOs around the country. Despite the Conservatives who are laughing, this is a very serious question. This is about protecting women. This is about protecting consumers. This is about being Canadian. We will follow up and make sure that we rectify the situation.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if we were creating our tax system from scratch, what choices would we make as Canadians? Would we give the greatest tax advantages to those who make the most money, or would we insist on paying a fair share to keep Canada strong? The next generation of young Canadians across the country are leading the way in telling us that they want a fairer and forward-looking Canada.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance tell Canadians how this government is making this vision a reality?

● (1450)

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians believe in fairness. Many of the wealthiest Canadians make most of their money through investments and they can often wind up paying a lower overall tax rate than a nurse or a carpenter. That is not fair. That is why today our government is introducing changes that will result in a small number of well-off Canadians paying a little more tax. This will make our tax system fairer. That is fairness for all generations.

\* \* \*

**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was warned multiple times about security threats from foreign interference. He was told measures to protect something as fundamental as our democracy were insufficient and he repeatedly failed to do anything about it.

We now know that members of the House knowingly assisted hostile foreign states against Canada's interests, and the government hides behind national security and cabinet confidence, while these members are still allowed to sit in caucus, sit in the House and serve their communities.

The Liberals have redacted and withheld documents from the Hogue commission. Will they hand over all the documents unredacted with names?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier in question period, our government has always collaborated with the Hogue commission, and senior public servants who are responsible for decisions around redactions work collaboratively and constructively at all times.

As I said, obviously the government will ensure that the Hogue commission has access to all the documents necessary to do the important work that we have asked it to do. That has been our position

since we created the Hogue commission and that will continue to be the work we will do.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is a really long way to say no. Canadians want to know who is working against—

**The Speaker:** I am going to stop the hon. member just so we do not injure either our interpreters or other members who are listening on the earphones. If there are any earphones near a microphone, I would ask members if they could put them in the proper place to make sure we do not get that Larsen effect.

The hon. member for Thornhill from the top, please.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, that is a very long way to say no. Canadians deserve to know who is working against Canada. Their responses have been a convoluted, finger-pointing exercise of secret committees or, worse, dismissive “Boo-hoo, get over it” statements from someone who once sat on the very committee that just—

**The Speaker:** I am going to stop the member once again. Members are not getting any translation services. There is now translation.

I am once again going to ask the hon. member to start from the top.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve to know who is working against Canada, and the best way—

**The Speaker:** We still seem to have translation difficulties.

The hon. member for Joliette.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Mr. Speaker, the interpreter is saying that there was some feedback. There is a problem. They are no longer able to interpret.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** For members of Parliament who are asking questions, I would ask their neighbours to make sure their earphones are away from the microphone.

SITTING SUSPENDED

**The Speaker:** We are going to suspend the House for a couple of minutes as we explore this issue further.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 2:54 p.m.)

● (1535)

[*Translation*]

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 3:40 p.m.)

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I thank you for the patience you showed while we made changes to our process.

*Oral Questions*

• (1540)

[English]

I would like to thank all members for their patience. Before we continue with question period, I would like to just take a moment to explain the delay.

First of all, I would like to reassure all members, as many members have come up to the Chair wanting to know if any interpreter had been injured.

[Translation]

I am pleased and relieved to report that no interpreters were injured as a result of this feedback.

We do have a protocol in place to ensure workplace safety for our interpreters.

[English]

The Larsen effect is a very serious effect for our interpreters. Their ears are their tools, and their ears help us, of course, do the work that we do here in the House.

I am going to ask members, out of an abundance of caution, that if their earphone is not on their ear, to please put them in the desk.

[Translation]

That way, we will ensure that interpreters are not injured in the House of Commons.

I would also like to thank our new team of interpreters. As per protocol, when a situation like this arises, a new team is put in place. Let us thank these interpreters for their work.

[English]

Also, one last thing, thank goodness we have the clerk to remind me. Members will find that the default setting on their earphones has now been set to low. So for those who are expecting interpretation, they will have to turn up the microphone.

We will continue where we left off. The hon. member for Thornhill, from the top.

\* \* \*

**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that was a very long way to say no, and Canadians deserve to know the truth.

The Liberal responses have been a convoluted, finger-pointing exercise of secret committees or, worse, a dismissive “Boo hoo, get over it” from someone who once sat on the very committee that released this damning report. If they will not tell the truth, I will ask the minister one more time.

Will the Liberals send every document, unredacted, with names, to Justice Hogue so she can release them?

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a shame

that the Conservatives want to heckle and the irony is in the fact that they want to misrepresent what happened at committee.

While Conservatives play partisan games, we are steadfast and focused on countering foreign interference and putting in place the measures that will strengthen our democratic institutions. It is ironic that the Conservatives bring up NSICOP, a committee they voted against and in fact also pulled members off at one point.

We are going to do everything to ensure that our democratic institutions are protected from foreign interference.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the truth is that this Prime Minister has a long and troubled history when it comes to foreign interference, whether it involves political financing, his admiration for the basic dictatorship of the Communist regime in Beijing, or his talent for turning a blind eye to reports from the intelligence community.

The National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians courageously exposed the fact that the Prime Minister has known for a long time that members have been wittingly co-operating with hostile foreign states.

After nine years of hiding, will the Prime Minister finally be transparent and tell Canadians who they are?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague opposite knows very well that it was this Prime Minister and this government that established, over the objection of the member opposite, the committee of parliamentarians, which oversees our intelligence agencies.

Had it not been for these initiatives and the very tough set of measures taken to counter foreign interference, we would not know what we know today, and the member, despite being opposed, would not have had the information that he wishes to have today.

• (1545)

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government has had to be dragged kicking and screaming every step of the way to get answers on foreign interference. That is the truth. The Prime Minister knows that. He knows the names. He has consistently refused to act. No Liberal MP has suffered any consequences, even though he knows the names. Well, hiding behind classified information to avoid taking action to protect Canada's interests is no longer an excuse.

Since he refuses to be transparent with Canadians, will he accept the common-sense Conservative proposal to share the names and facts about the MPs who are colluding with foreign states and being hostile toward Commissioner Hogue?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are having a hard time understanding why such a combative tone is being used on an issue that should not be partisan. The member knows full well, as the minister just reminded us, that the government is sworn to secrecy, that this information is one of Canada's most important secrets and that we could be criminally prosecuted if we disclosed such information. That is not something we are going to do.

I am having a hard time understanding why the member opposite is adopting such a partisan and combative tone. We will obviously rely on the laws that are in place.

\* \* \*

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this morning, *Le Journal de Montréal* painted a bleak picture of the job market. According to Statistics Canada, the number of unemployed workers in Quebec jumped by 58,000 in one year. We are talking about thousands of full-time jobs. This is very bad news, because the federal government continues to neglect the unemployed.

At a time when the job market is showing signs of distress, six out of 10 workers still do not qualify for employment insurance.

The Liberals have been promising reform since 2015. It has been nine years. What are they waiting for?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her question.

Let me begin by saying that we understand the difficulties that Canadians and Quebecers are going through. That is why we are very pleased with the good news that we all heard last week about the Bank of Canada's decision to lower interest rates. The bank was able to do this thanks in part to our responsible fiscal policy, which has allowed inflation to fall.

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, now is the time to protect workers. Why do the Liberals always wait until there is a disaster before they take action?

There needs to be a single eligibility threshold of 420 hours with the maximum amount of benefits. It is time to permanently end the EI spring gap. It is time to undo the discrimination against women who lose their job while they are on parental leave. The Liberals can no longer condone a system that leaves six out of 10 workers out in the cold.

When will EI be reformed?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague criticizes me a lot on this issue. Let me assure the House that we have already made changes to the EI system. We extended sickness benefits to 26 weeks. We extended the additional support for seasonal workers by five weeks until October 2024. The member and I have had a conversation about this. We will sit down together again.

As the Deputy Prime Minister said, interest rates are falling here in Canada, and we will be there for unemployed workers from coast to coast to coast.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**ETHICS**

**Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, explosive revelations from Global News highlight the ethical concerns surrounding the NDP-Liberal government. Text messages implicate a Randy in shady business dealings from a company that the employment minister has a 50% interest in. The mysterious Randy was requesting an immediate half-million dollar wire transfer. This occurred nearly a year after the employment minister's cabinet appointment.

The minister claims it is not him. Then who is it?

• (1550)

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member across knows full well, ministers are expected to comply with what are among the most stringent conflict of interest and ethics provisions in the world. The minister has responded to all of the questions, and that member knows that full well.

**Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I get that transparency is an elusive concept for the government, but it is in the minister's best interest to get to the bottom of this to clear his name. So far, his committee interventions have shown an evasiveness and a laissez-faire attitude toward this serious situation. Perhaps ethical breaches are so old hat for this Liberal Party that the minister does not see this as a big deal. Canadians, however, disagree.

When will the minister take his scandal seriously and tell us who the real Randy is?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as my colleague across the aisle just pointed out, the minister spent an hour in committee answering questions from all sides of this House. The minister has filed the requisite disclosures under the very stringent conflict and ethics provisions. Those measures are available to the hon. colleague for consultation, and I would say that the minister has complied with all of those measures.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government House leader and the Minister of Employment are not fooling anyone. The company at the centre of this scandal admits there is this other Randy, but at the same time, they claim to have forgotten what his last name is. In all of Alberta, there are only 630 Randys, so what are the odds that two of them are going to be working in the same tiny company at the same time and that no one knows who this other Randy is?

Will the minister just come clean and tell the House who the other Randy is?

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for the third time, the minister is subject to this government's conflict of interest and ethics provisions, which are among the most stringent in the world, and he has answered all of these questions.

\* \* \*

**INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is facing an existential crisis due to climate change. Older generations are asking what we can do to preserve and maintain prosperity for the next generation, while young people everywhere are worried about their own future.

Can the Minister for Innovation, Science and Industry update the House on the government's plans for harnessing the technology sector in order to create the jobs of tomorrow and fight climate change effectively?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, generational fairness is one of our top priorities. In fact, it was one of the key themes of the last federal budget.

This week, we are making changes to the capital gains inclusion rate. These changes will not only allow us to pay for the green energy transition, but they will also create jobs for this and future generations.

We can already see that our economic plan is working. We have record investments and are creating prosperity for generations to come. We know that the Conservatives will probably vote against it. On our side of the House, we will always be there for this and future generations.

\* \* \*

*[English]***LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA**

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are on the hook for a shady real estate deal between the Prime Minister and his best buddy, Tom Pitfield. We know that the labour minister, Pitfield and the PM went together to billionaire island when the Prime Minister was found to have broken the law. We know that the labour minister and Pitfield were groomsmen in the Prime Minister's wedding, and the labour minister is on the Treasury Board, which approved this shady real estate transaction.

After nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, we know the Prime Minister and labour minister are not worth the corruption or the cost to Canadians. About that cost, how much did this sketchy deal help the insider, Tom Pitfield?

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows full well that that decision and recommendation were made by the National Capital Commission, an independent organization, which has said that it wants to focus on revitalizing downtown Ottawa. It recommend-

ed this decision to the Treasury Board, obviously without the Prime Minister's Office, or any other minister not associated with the Treasury Board, having a say in the matter.

\* \* \*

● (1555)

**HOUSING**

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of this Prime Minister, Quebecers are forced to sleep in shelters, under bridges or in their cars. While seniors in Quebec are living in motels or vans because of a lack of affordable housing, the Bloc Québécois is voting in favour of \$500 billion in spending, and they are even voting against the leader of the Conservative Party's bill to make housing more affordable.

What do the Prime Minister and the leader of the Bloc Québécois have to say to seniors who are living in their vans because they do not have a home?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her question. We understand the importance of investing in housing, of investing in affordable housing. We also understand the importance of investing in affordability, for example, in dental care, which is very popular among seniors in Quebec. However, we also understand that we need to finance all those investments.

I have a question for all of the Conservative members. Will they support our tax fairness measure to finance the necessary investments?

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of this government, homelessness is becoming a concern in Quebec. The resulting insecurity is becoming untenable for Quebecers.

The Bloc Québécois voted for \$500 billion in budget allocations and Quebecers are the ones paying the price, left to fend for themselves in the midst of a housing crisis. The Bloc Québécois and the Prime Minister are just not worth the cost.

Will this Prime Minister, who is supported by the Bloc Québécois, think of Canadians and stop voting against the Conservative Party's measures to ease the suffering of Quebecers?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I just talked about the much-needed investments we are making. We also understand that we need to make these investments in a fiscally responsible way.

That is why tomorrow we will be asking every member of the House, including the Conservatives, the following question: Are they prepared to support our tax fairness approach or would they rather support the wealthy?



### TAXATION

**Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if we had to create a whole new tax system from scratch, what choices would we, as Canadians, make? Would we give the biggest tax benefits to those who earn the most, or would we make sure everyone pays their fair share?

The next generation of young Canadians is showing us the way. They say they want a more just, more future-oriented Canada. Would the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance please explain to Parliament how the government is making that vision a reality?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his hard work.

Fairness is a Canadian value. Most of the wealthiest people make most of their money through investments, and they often wind up paying a lower overall tax rate than a nurse or a carpenter. That is not fair.

Today, our government is introducing changes that will make our system fairer. I hope all members will support these very important changes.

\* \* \*

[English]

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there has been a nearly 40% increase in fraud since 2021, and the Liberals clearly have failed to protect Canadians. The scams disproportionately impact seniors, and they cost people millions of dollars. One senior in my riding, Peggy, is selling her house after losing her life's savings to a phone scam.

We urgently need better policies and regulations, including improved safeguards, more education campaigns and better enforcement.

Why is the government failing to protect vulnerable Canadians from increasing levels of fraud?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously we are very concerned as a government with any instances of on-line fraud that we see. I note that our recent budget implementation act has numerous measures to crack down on money laundering and crime related to fraud. We have done lots of work in this area, successively, in both the fall economic statement and the BIA, and we look forward to looking into the matter that the member opposite has raised.

\* \* \*

● (1600)

### DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, now that I have received confirmation from the Privy Council Office that I am to read the full, unredacted report of the National Se-

### Oral Questions

curity and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians later today, I would like to ask the hon. Minister for Public Safety if he would be willing to meet with me tomorrow to discuss ways that we can, within the letter of the law, work together to ensure greater transparency around this critical issue.

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader of the Green Party for availing herself of and accepting the offer the minister has written to all party leaders to get their security clearance to be able to read the important report. I know that the minister would be happy to continue discussing that with her, as with all parliamentarians, and I will certainly raise this with him in terms of scheduling.

However, I will point out once again that we urge the Conservative leader to receive his security clearance so he can be better informed on the issue of foreign interference.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE TIBETAN PEOPLE

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That the House recognize that:

- (a) China is carrying out a policy of systemic cultural assimilation against Tibetans;
- (b) Tibetans, as a people and a nation, can claim the right to self-determination;
- (c) as such, they are empowered to freely choose their economic, social, cultural and religious policies without interference from any external power; and
- (d) this empowerment prohibits China from interfering in the choice of the next Tibetan spiritual leader, the eventual successor to His Holiness the 14th Dalai lama.

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

*Business of Supply**[English]*

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, a letter addressed to the chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts from the Auditor General has been received but was not widely disseminated. In the letter, the Auditor General recommends that the House, first of all, take notice of what she writes in the letter, which says that it would be detrimental to her work if the motion that we are about to vote on should pass, and that already measures are in place that would address the matter in the motion. So I would like to—

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** Order. Any minister can table a motion as long as it is available in both official languages. I am assuming that the document is in the proper form, in both official languages.

The member for Vancouver East is rising on a point of order.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, consultation has taken place, and I believe that if you seek it you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

That notwithstanding any standing order, special order or usual practices of the House, Bill C-71, an act to amend the Citizenship Act, be deemed to have been read a second time—

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** Once again I will remind members that when they seek unanimous consent, they should follow the example of the member for Lac-Saint-Jean and try to obtain unanimous consent so the time of the House is used most efficiently.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1605)

*[English]*

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—DOCUMENTS REGARDING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TECHNOLOGY CANADA

The House resumed from June 6 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

**The Speaker:** It being 4:05 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion of the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle relating to Business of Supply.

Call in the members.

• (1620)

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

*(Division No. 803)*

#### YEAS

##### Members

Aboulttaif  
Albas  
Angus  
Ashton  
Baldinelli

Aitchison  
Allison  
Arnold  
Bachrach  
Barlow

Barrett  
Beaulieu  
Berthold  
Bezan  
Blaney  
Boulerice  
Brassard  
Brunelle-Duceppe  
Cannings  
Carrie  
Chambers  
Chong  
Cooper  
Dancho  
Davies  
Deltell  
Desilets  
Doherty  
Dreeshen  
Ellis  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Findlay  
Gallant  
Garrison  
Gazan  
Genius  
Gladu  
Goodridge  
Gray  
Hallan  
Hughes  
Jeneroux  
Johns  
Kelly  
Kitchen  
Kram  
Kurek  
Kwan  
Lantsman  
Lawrence  
Lemire  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
MacGregor  
Majumdar  
Masse  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McPherson  
Michaud  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Muys  
Normandin  
Paul-Hus  
Perkins  
Plamondon  
Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Rood  
Savard-Tremblay  
Schmale  
Shields  
Simard  
Singh  
Soroka  
Ste-Marie  
Stubbs  
Therrien  
Tochor  
Trudel

Barsalou-Duval  
Bergeron  
Bérubé  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Block  
Bragdon  
Brock  
Calkins  
Caputo  
Chabot  
Champoux  
Collins (Victoria)  
Dalton  
Davidson  
DeBellefeuille  
Desbiens  
Desjarlais  
Dowdall  
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Epp  
Falk (Provencher)  
FERRERI  
Fortin  
Garon  
Gaudreau  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Gourde  
Green  
Hoback  
Idlout  
Jivani  
Julian  
Khanna  
Kmiec  
Kramp-Neuman  
Kusie  
Lake  
Larouche  
Lehoux  
Leslie  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lloyd  
Maguire  
Martel  
Mathysen  
Mazier  
McLean  
Melillo  
Moore  
Morrice  
Motz  
Nater  
Patzner  
Pauzé  
Perron  
Poilievre  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Ruff  
Scheer  
Seeback  
Shipley  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Small  
Steinley  
Strahl  
Thériault  
Thomas  
Tolmie  
Uppal

Van Popta  
Vien  
Vignola  
Vis  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Williams  
Zimmer— 171

Vidal  
Vierson  
Villemure  
Vuong  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Zarrillo

## NAYS

### Members

Alghabra  
Anand  
Arseneault  
Badawey  
Baker  
Beech  
Bittle  
Blois  
Bradford  
Carr  
Chagger  
Champagne  
Chen  
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)  
Coteau  
Damoff  
Dhillon  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Fillmore  
Fonseca  
Fragiskatos  
Freeland  
Gaheer  
Gerretsen  
Guilbeault  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Housefather  
Iacono  
Jaczek  
Jones  
Kayabaga  
Khalid  
Koutrakis  
Lalonde  
Lamoureux  
Lattanzio  
LeBlanc  
Lightbound  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Martinez Ferrada  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLeod  
Mendicino  
Miller  
Murray  
Ng  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Powlowski  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rota  
Sajjan  
Samson

Ali  
Anandasangaree  
Atwin  
Bains  
Battiste  
Bibeau  
Blair  
Boissonnault  
Brière  
Casey  
Chahal  
Chatel  
Chiang  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
Dhaliwal  
Diab  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Ehsassi  
Erskine-Smith  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fraser  
Fry  
Gainey  
Gould  
Hajdu  
Hardie  
Holland  
Hutchings  
Ien  
Joly  
Jowhari  
Kelloway  
Khera  
Kusmierczyk  
Lambropoulos  
Lapointe  
Lauzon  
Lebouthillier  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
Maloney  
May (Cambridge)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
Mendès  
Miao  
Morrissey  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
Oliphant  
Petipas Taylor  
Qualtrough  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Sahota  
Saks  
Sarai

Scarpaleggia  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Sorbara  
St-Onge  
Tassi  
Thompson  
Turnbull  
Van Bynen  
Vandal  
Virani  
Wilkinson  
Zahid

## Business of Supply

Schiefke  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sousa  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Trudeau  
Valdez  
van Koeverden  
Vandenbeld  
Weiler  
Yip  
Zuberi— 150

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment carried.

The next question is on the main motion.

● (1630)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 804*)

## YEAS

### Members

Aboultarif  
Albas  
Angus  
Ashton  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Beaulieu  
Berthold  
Bezan  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Block  
Bragdon  
Brock  
Calkins  
Caputo  
Chabot  
Champoux  
Collins (Victoria)  
Dalton  
Davidson  
DeBellefeuille  
Desbiens  
Desjarlais  
Dowdall  
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Epp  
Falk (Provencher)  
Ferreri  
Fortin  
Garon  
Gaudreau  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Gourde  
Green  
Hoback  
Idlout  
Jivani  
Julian

Aitchison  
Allison  
Arnold  
Bachrach  
Barlow  
Barsalou-Duval  
Bergeron  
Bérubé  
Blanchet  
Blaney  
Boulerice  
Brassard  
Brunelle-Duceppe  
Cannings  
Carrie  
Chambers  
Chong  
Cooper  
Dancho  
Davies  
Deltell  
Desilets  
Doherty  
Dreeshen  
Ellis  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Findlay  
Gallant  
Garrison  
Gazan  
Genuis  
Gladu  
Goodridge  
Gray  
Hallan  
Hughes  
Jeneroux  
Johns  
Kelly

*Government Orders*

Khanna	Kitchen	Fragiskatos	Fraser
Krmiec	Kram	Freeland	Fry
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek	Gaheer	Gainey
Kusie	Kwan	Gerretsen	Gould
Lake	Lantsman	Guilbeault	Hajdu
Larouche	Lawrence	Hanley	Hardie
Lehoux	Lemire	Hepfner	Holland
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)	Housefather	Hutchings
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert	Iacono	Ien
Lloyd	MacGregor	Jaczek	Joly
Maguire	Majumdar	Jones	Jowhari
Martel	Masse	Kayabaga	Kelloway
Mathysen	May (Saainch—Gulf Islands)	Khalid	Khera
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
McLean	McPherson	Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Melillo	Michaud	Lamoureux	Lapointe
Moore	Morantz	Lattanzio	Lauzon
Morrice	Morrison	LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Motz	Muys	Lightbound	Long
Nater	Normandin	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Patzer	Paul-Hus	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Pauzé	Perkins	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Perron	Plamondon	Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)
Poillievre	Rayes	McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
Redekopp	Reid	McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Rempel Garner	Richards	McLeod	Mendès
Roberts	Rood	Mendicino	Miao
Ruff	Savard-Tremblay	Miller	Morrissey
Scheer	Schmale	Murray	Naqvi
Seeback	Shields	Ng	Noormohamed
Shipley	Simard	O'Connell	Oliphant
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh	O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Small	Soroka	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Steinley	Ste-Marie	Robillard	Rodriguez
Stewart	Strahl	Rogers	Romanado
Stubbs	Thériault	Rota	Sahota
Therrien	Thomas	Sajjan	Saks
Tochor	Tolmie	Samson	Sarai
Trudel	Uppal	Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Van Popta	Vecchio	Serré	Sgro
Vidal	Vien	Shanahan	Sheehan
Viersen	Vignola	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Villemure	Vis	Sorbara	Sousa
Vuong	Wagantall	St-Onge	Sudds
Warkentin	Waugh	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Webber	Williams	Thompson	Trudeau
Zarrillo	Zimmer — 174	Turnbull	Valdez
		Van Bynen	van Koeverden
		Vandal	Vandenbeld
		Virani	Weiler
		Wilkinson	Yip
		Zahid	Zuberi — 148

**NAYS**

## Members

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Battiste
Beech	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blois	Boissonnault
Bradford	Brière
Carr	Casey
Chahal	Champagne
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier

**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

\* \* \*

*[English]***PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND REVIEW COMMISSION ACT**

The House resumed from June 6 consideration of Bill C-20, An Act establishing the Public Complaints and Review Commission and amending certain Acts and statutory instruments, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at report stage of Bill C-20.

## Government Orders

[Translation]

The question is on Motion No. 1.

● (1640)

[English]

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

(Division No. 805)

## YEAS

## Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chambers	Chong
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
Deltell	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	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
Nater	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perkins
Poilievre	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shipley	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson

Zimmer— 117

## NAYS

## Members

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blanchet
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
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	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lemire	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès

*Government Orders*

Mendicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Pauzé	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Powlowski	Rayes
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Sousa
Ste-Marie	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 204

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 1 rejected.

• (1645)

**Hon. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.)** moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in.

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Mona Fortier:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to apply the result from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting yea.

[*English*]

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

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote. We will be voting in favour and adding the votes of the members for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques and Shefford.

[*English*]

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply the vote, and we will be voting yes.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, the Greens agree to apply the vote and will be voting in favour as well.

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 806*)

## YEAS

## Members

Aboultarif	Aitchison
Albas	Alghabra
Ali	Allison
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arnold
Arseneault	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
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
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Epp	Erskine-Smith
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Fillmore	Findlay
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill	Glada

Godin  
Gould  
Gray  
Guilbeault  
Hallan  
Hardie  
Hoback  
Housefather  
Hutchings  
Idlout  
Jaczek  
Jivani  
Joly  
Jowhari  
Kayabaga  
Kelly  
Khanna  
Kitchen  
Koutrakis  
Kramp-Neuman  
Kusie  
Kwan  
Lalonde  
Lamoureux  
Lapointe  
Lattanzio  
Lawrence  
Lebouthillier  
Lemire  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
Lloyd  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Majumdar  
Martel  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
Mazier  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLean  
McPherson  
Mendès  
Miao  
Miller  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Motz  
Muys  
Nater  
Noormohamed  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Paul-Hus  
Perkins  
Petitpas Taylor  
Poilievre  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Rota  
Sahota  
Saks  
Sarai  
Scarpaleggia  
Schiefke  
Seeback  
Sgro

Goodridge  
Gourde  
Green  
Hajdu  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Holland  
Hughes  
Iacono  
Ien  
Jeneroux  
Johns  
Jones  
Julian  
Kelloway  
Khalid  
Khera  
Kmiec  
Kram  
Kurek  
Kusmierczyk  
Lake  
Lambropoulos  
Lantsman  
Larouche  
Lauzon  
LeBlanc  
Lehoux  
Leslie  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lightbound  
Lobb  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacGregor  
Maguire  
Maloney  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathysen  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McLeod  
Melillo  
Mendicino  
Michaud  
Moore  
Morrice  
Morrisey  
Murray  
Naqvi  
Ng  
Normandin  
Oliphant  
Patzer  
Pauzé  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Powlowski  
Reid  
Richards  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rood  
Ruff  
Sajjan  
Samson  
Savard-Tremblay  
Scheer  
Schmale  
Serré  
Shanahan

*Privilege*

Sheehan  
Shipley  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Small  
Soroka  
Steinley  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Tassi  
Thériault  
Thomas  
Tochou  
Trudeau  
Turnbull  
Valdez  
van Koeverden  
Vandal  
Vecchio  
Vien  
Vignola  
Virani  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Weiler  
Williams  
Yip  
Zarrillo  
Zuberi — 321

Shields  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Simard  
Singh  
Sorbara  
Souza  
Ste-Marie  
Strahl  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Therrien  
Thompson  
Tolmie  
Trudel  
Uppal  
Van Bynen  
Van Popta  
Vandenbeld  
Vidal  
Viersen  
Villemure  
Vis  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Wilkinson  
Williamson  
Zahid  
Zimmer

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Nil

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

When shall the bill be read a third time? Later today?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 Nunavut, Housing; the hon. member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, The Economy; the hon. member for York—Simcoe, Carbon Pricing.

\* \* \*

## PRIVILEGE

## ALLEGED BREACH OF DEPUTY SPEAKER'S IMPARTIALITY

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wanted to add some additional comments regarding the question of privilege raised by the NDP's deputy House leader.

In her comments on Thursday, as in her original submissions the week prior, the member for London—Fanshawe failed to offer any arguments that would extend the applicable requirements for the Speaker's impartiality to the other chair occupants. For his part, the hon. Member for Mégantic—L'Érable cited at length from *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, as well as rulings delivered from the Chair, in 1993 and 2023, on the subject matter. The NDP deputy House leader failed to answer those points and explain how well-established precedents should be thrown out the window.

### Routine Proceedings

Finally, the hon. member for London—Fanshawe neglected to address the NDP's disappointing hypocrisy in raising these concerns, all while the NDP website leverages the hon. member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing's Assistant Deputy Speaker title for fundraising and volunteer recruitment purposes. Her silence speaks volumes.

I would just like to point out that when my colleague raised this point, the response from the NDP House leader was to refer to the question of privilege as “the dumbest question of privilege” he has ever heard. I agree with him. I just believe that his comments should be addressed to the member for London—Fanshawe's raising of the original point, not to the point that my colleague, the deputy leader for the Conservatives, made, which is that, if the New Democrats were upset with the original point, they should look at their own examples before they raised theirs in the House of Commons.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would urge you to agree with my hon. friend, the deputy leader for the official opposition, that there is no question of privilege here.

#### RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet, I would also like to address the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre regarding the hon. member for Saskatoon West. First, I am pleased to hear that she accepted the apology of our colleague when he rose on Thursday morning to advise the House that he had misspoken one word. It is an age-old tradition in this place that we accept the word and the apologies of our colleagues. That said, it apparently did not draw a line under the matter, so we are left to address the question of privilege raised concerning the accuracy of the Debates. I will read from page 1229 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition:

The availability of the blues on the House of Commons' internal website permits Members and their authorized delegates to use the web page or email to submit suggested changes for Parliamentary Publications editorial staff to consider.... It is a long-standing practice of the House that editors of the Debates may exercise judgment as to whether or not changes suggested by Members constitute the correction of an error or a minor alteration.

These practices were the subject of a very recently delivered ruling by the Speaker; on May 30, at page 24087 of the Debates, he said:

While the Debates are published under the authority of the Chair, the House should know that the Chair plays no part in editing the Debates. The editors of the Parliamentary Publications team craft a record that, in their judgment, best corresponds to the proceedings, without political interference and in a completely non-partisan manner.

The editors may make changes to the records of the House proceedings, whether or not those changes are proposed by members, in accordance with their own guidelines and long-standing practices.

If the Speaker himself plays no part in editing Hansard, then it must similarly follow that a private member on the opposition benches could claim no power or authority to override the editors' guidelines and long-standing practices. I would respectfully submit that, on that basis alone, the question of privilege must be dismissed.

In any event, though, I would also refer the Chair to these comments, found on pages 1229 to 1230 of Bosc and Gagnon, where we read:

Substantial errors in the Debates, as opposed to editorial changes, must be brought to the attention of the House by means of a point of order as soon as possible after the sitting, if a Member wishes to have the record changed.... When a question arises in the House as to the accuracy of the record, it is the responsibility of the Speaker to look into the matter.

In short, the correct procedure would have been for a point of order, not a question of privilege, to address a concern of this nature with Hansard. Therefore, the question of privilege must also fail on these grounds.

Nonetheless, I would underscore for the House that the member for Saskatoon West has done the honourable thing. He apologized and advised that he had misspoken one word, thereby properly correcting the record to reflect the intention of his remarks.

As such, Mr. Speaker, I would submit that you may now simply find the matter to be closed.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1650)

[English]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 10 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

\* \* \*

### PETITIONS

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are currently 1,092 political prisoners in Cuba. That is why I am submitting the following petition, signed by hundreds of Canadians, with four clear demands: urge the Canadian government to demand that the Cuban totalitarian regime promptly release all political prisoners; enact a resolution to censure the unelected Cuban regime for its severe human rights abuses; recognize Cuban Canadians, whether citizens or permanent residents, as a voice of dissidence to the Cuban regime; and engage in discourse with Cuba's pro-democracy civil society.

\* \* \*

### QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.



## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I was wondering whether the government is incompetent or complacent toward the interference confronting us.

Had it not been for the work of The Globe and Mail journalists, Parliament never would have been alerted to China's scheming in Canada. We would never have known that Chinese police stations were operating in Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec. We would never have known that Liberal nomination candidates were elected thanks to and with the support of China. We would never have learned that messages attacking the Conservative Party and the former member for Durham were sent to members of the Chinese diaspora in Canada through platforms such as WeChat. Without the work of journalists, the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs never would have known that CSIS memos and briefings intended for the minister were not all being read, nor would I have learned in committee that if the person responsible was on vacation or off sick, the memo would be destroyed. We learned all these things in committee. We also would not have learned that the national security of a G7 country was being so grossly neglected by the federal government. We would never have known that this postnational Liberal Party ideal of excessive multiculturalism, a veritable doctrine for the Prime Minister, extended to a chronic lack of patriotism, so much so that Canada lags behind all other countries in terms of defending its strategic interests. I never could have received the CSIS briefing that I personally requested.

The government chose to brush off the interference files. The federal government demonstrated negligence with its extreme slowness. Yes, all western countries need to tackle this problem. Some, like Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union, have even passed legislation to fight it.

Quebeckers and all Canadians have a right to know the extent to which some members are being manipulated, by whom and why. This is a matter of safeguarding democracy.

• (1655)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would tend to disagree with the member's conclusion that the government did not take any steps. For the first time, we actually have a government that has recognized international interference is taking place, and there were modifications made in regard to elections. There have been changes in that different individuals have been called forward to look at ways we can deal with interference on the international scene.

Canada has been raising the issue among the G7 countries, and we have been very open and transparent. At the end of the day, NSICOP is the reason we have the report we have today. It is a cre-

### *Business of Supply*

ation by the government, in full co-operation with a majority of the members.

Would the member opposite not agree that NSICOP is why we have the report today and that this is something the House passed, with all members, except for the Conservatives, voting in favour of it?

[Translation]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Mr. Speaker, in my speech, I never said the government had taken no steps. In my speech, I said that there was negligence and complacency. In short, the alarm has been sounding for months. The government should realize that what is in place is not working.

The 70 meetings that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs held made it clear what steps needed to be taken. It still took the government a long time to come up with to the bill we are discussing, which does not go far enough, to be honest.

My colleague is right. The government did take steps. However, what it did is clearly insufficient, and it is shameful for us internationally.

[English]

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois has put forward the motion about foreign interference today, yet its leader has rejected previous offers to review foreign interference documents. In two rounds of the foreign interference inquiry, the Bloc Québécois failed to show up even once. Do its members even care about foreign interference?

• (1700)

[Translation]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Mr. Speaker, it was bound to come out. Yes, I am aware. When there is an invitation and there are barely 10 of us, perhaps there are reasons we are not there. However, it was not because we did not care.

As for choosing to get the security clearance, we need to think about it. I would say to my colleague that many things have happened in recent days. No decision has been made. I took part in all the meetings, and our wishes have not changed at all. We want to maintain confidence in our democracy and in our elections and get to the bottom of this matter so there will be no more interference in our elections.

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Bloc for putting the motion forward today. It is an important one. It needs to be supported.

*Business of Supply*

In the member's speech, she highlighted the point that there have been many failures of the government to act and to take foreign interference seriously. In fact, the NSICOP report raises a litany of examples of the government's failure to deliver. It has actually received information on the members of Parliament or elected officials who are alleged to have worked wittingly, knowingly and intentionally with foreign state actors. The Prime Minister knew that, but that information never came before the House. Members never knew about it.

To that end, is it not time now for the government to provide that information, not only to members of Parliament but to all Canadians?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Mr. Speaker, a leader is someone who is able to take responsibility. It is someone who also has the humility to change course. When a leader is worthy of confidence, which is not currently the case, they do what is necessary to prevent, act and correct. Right now, we have reached the limit. I can say to my colleague that we are at the end of our rope. The alarm sounded last week. We do not want any more. Now we are waiting.

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, democracy is a very meaningful word. It signifies power by the people, and I would add that it is also power for the people. Democracy has gone through changes since its very early days in ancient Greece, but the foundations remain. The people should be the ones making choices about their own future.

In light of the report on foreign interference, it behooves us to ask which people we are talking about, when we get right down to it. We may think that Quebec and Canadian parliamentarians represent the people of Quebec and Canada, but the report on foreign interference raises an important question: Are some members here for their constituents on Quebec and Canadian soil, or for foreign countries?

I think it is important first and foremost to clarify the difference between diplomacy and interference. Next, I will discuss certain troubling parts of the report. I will not discuss all of them, because we would be here until tomorrow morning. Lastly, I will go over some of the repercussions of this report.

Diplomacy is the branch of politics that concerns relations between nations. It involves representing a government's interests abroad, administering international affairs, and leading and conducting negotiations between nations. Diplomacy is the ability to resolve disputes. Diplomacy is also a skill. It is the tact involved in conducting state business effectively. Both definitions are important in our current situation. When we travel abroad for bilateral meetings with parliamentarians from other countries, we engage in diplomacy. We talk together to explain our realities. We share points of view and emphasize the important items to consider during negotiations between the governments concerned. Our ambassadors have the same duty to discuss and negotiate. Diplomacy serves the interests of nations and their people.

Interference occurs when one nation attempts to influence the domestic affairs of another nation. This definition illustrates the difference between diplomacy and interference. Interference is when one foreign state intervenes in another's domestic affairs. If we

were to look a little closer at the history of humanity as a whole, we would see that several wars over the centuries have come about because of one country interfering in the affairs of another. Whereas diplomacy serves the interests of nations and their people, interference serves the interests of just one nation, and sometimes not the interests of any citizens.

With these two definitions in mind, we can only conclude that Canada has truly been a victim of interference, as have other countries around the world. Certain people have attempted to influence this country's domestic affairs, either wittingly or unwittingly. The report contains a number of elements, but I will focus on two or three of them. On page 25, paragraph 55 states:

Some elected officials, however, began wittingly assisting foreign state actors soon after their election. [\*\*\* Three sentences were deleted to remove injurious or privileged information. The sentences described examples of members of Parliament who worked to influence their colleagues on India's behalf and proactively provided confidential information to Indian officials. \*\*\*]

It says that they provided confidential information. That is worrisome. Despite the redactions, we understand that members helped facilitate Indian interference. We also found out that consulates and embassies would coordinate the actions of their networks. During the 2019 federal election, 11 candidates and 13 campaign staffers had close ties to China, including several who appeared to be wittingly working for the People's Republic of China. Despite the redactions, we understand that candidates and staffers had close ties to China. In this particular case, the involvement of consulates and embassies is worrisome since they breached their duty, which is to promote diplomacy.

● (1705)

How does interference happen? There is a list of methods, including the use of social media. Countries can intimidate the diaspora. Disinformation and misinformation are also used. Countries can use clandestine networks. They can even buy influence. That is just a short list of methods that can be used.

What worries me about all this is the lack of interest from successive governments of all stripes. The current Prime Minister's entourage dismisses intelligence reports on the pretext that they contain only unproven allegations, while the Prime Minister himself admitted when he appeared before the commission that he did not even read intelligence reports. That is worrisome. The least they could have done would have been to meet with the people who were mentioned, to ask for some explanations. How can they know that the allegations are unproven if the reports are systematically dismissed? If the RCMP or CSIS are not being questioned, how can they be sure that they are just allegations? How can they be sure, when the Prime Minister does not even read the reports?

*Business of Supply*

When I first entered politics, one old-timer told me that a person cannot be accused of what they do not know. My own view is that, if I know about a problem, then I can act and improve it. Unfortunately, I see that the Prime Minister's team is very old school when it comes to a duty to act. They are like the three wise monkeys: see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil. However, now we all know, or at least, we know some things. The Minister of Public Safety raised an important point. We cannot mention people's names without making sure that the alleged offences are facts and not just unproven allegations. However, it is up to the RCMP and CSIS to determine that. It is not up to us.

I would like to know that these people will never again have the opportunity to facilitate foreign interference, either wittingly or unwittingly. I would like to know that real action is finally being taken to ensure the vitality of our democracy, without interference, without foreign interference. I want to be clearly, meaningfully and officially assured that the people of Quebec and Canada can have full confidence in their democracy. The current situation is just one more factor fuelling cynicism towards members who put their heart and soul into their work. The government is taking last-minute, urgent action because the report was released. The government quickly cobbled together Bill C-70. Here again, there was no planning, no preparation and no long-term vision.

In short, it is important to make sure that the people's elected representatives represent the people who elected them. They must be free from any collusion resulting in interference. This is essential to protecting our democracy. We are requesting that the terms of reference of the Hogue commission be expanded because we have a duty to protect our democracy. In doing so, we protect all the interests of our fellow citizens. In other words, we protect their confidence in us, and we protect our economy and its ability to provide good jobs and a bright future. We protect those who chose to make their home in Canada, far from strife. We protect people who left countries where they were being treated poorly.

Protecting our democracy transcends the walls of this House; it transcends politics. We must recognize that. I have said it before, and I will say it again: True statesmen and stateswomen protect human dignity, particularly the dignity of people of lesser means.

• (1710)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on what the member was saying toward the tail end of her speech.

One of the best ways we could counter foreign interference would be by building support from all sides of the chamber in not only recognizing the serious nature of foreign interference, but also acting as one strong voice, which would send a very powerful message. Often foreign interference is an attempt to promote and encourage public distrust. If people were to work together, partisanship aside, to combat foreign interference as a top priority, that is one way we can build public confidence in the system.

I wonder if the member would provide her thoughts on that.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola:** Mr. Speaker, foreign interference usually aims to divide us. How does the saying go? Divide and conquer. That is pretty much what foreign interference tries to do.

That said, I am sure we all agree that foreign interference is a problem we must stop, although we might disagree on how to stop it. That is why it is important to sit down together, because the beauty of a minority government is that we can take the time to negotiate and discuss before finally reaching a consensus that will truly and fully protect democracy and our constituents.

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the NSICOP report noted that the foreign interference actors, particularly those from China and India, are most pervasive. The implications are significant to Canadians, to our democratic institutions and to our processes. While the government has known about this for a long time, our system is deficient in addressing the issue.

Paramount to the motion today and to ongoing efforts to counter foreign interference activities is ensuring that the commission has access to all unredacted documents, most certainly the ones that NSICOP received and, as well, the information from cabinet. Would the member support the call for the government to release all unredacted documents to the commission?

• (1715)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola:** Mr. Speaker, there is a lot to unpack in my colleague's question.

First, maybe there should be no more working in silos. Right now, the problem is that everyone clings to their prerogative and runs their own show. They see certain information as belonging exclusively to them. Nobody talks to one another. That has to change.

They also need to stop being willfully blind. There are none so blind as those who will not see. They have the information. The Prime Minister had the information. His office had the information, but it refused to look at it or be briefed.

Now, it is important that the Hogue commission receive the documents it deems necessary and that it take whatever action is appropriate.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague whether the government has given any indication that it is willing to work with the other parties in the House of Commons on issues like this, particularly foreign affairs, and to provide more information to all Canadians, or whether it is a farce when our colleague opposite says we should be working together in this situation.

*Business of Supply*

**Mrs. Julie Vignola:** Mr. Speaker, once again, it is crucial that we work together. Is the government willing to do that? During question period, the government indicated it would support our motion. As we all know, however, supporting a motion does not mean implementing it. It will have to be implemented as well.

The government must show that it understands the beauty of a minority government. A minority government sits down, negotiates and engages in discussion in order to reach a consensus. In this case, the consensus is for the well-being of our democratic future.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in light of what happened today during question period, I think you would find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order or usual practice of the House, the proceedings on the opposition motion standing in the name of the member for Trois-Rivières shall conclude no later than 7 p.m. today.

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

[English]

**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY****OPPOSITION MOTION—FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my good friend, the member for Surrey—Newton, who is in fact one of the members who really tackle the issue head on.

Members will recall that Motion No. 112 received unanimous support from those who were inside the chamber voting. It also dealt with the issue of foreign interference.

I want to put things into perspective so those who are following the debate get an appreciation of what we are actually talking about and what led us to where we are today. It is important that we as parliamentarians recognize, and it does not matter what side of the House we are on, that an assault of any nature, anything direct or indirect, through international or foreign interference is an assault on all of us. We should all do what we can to dispose of international foreign interference.

As a government, we have taken a number of actions. Let me first put it in the context of the degree to which the current Prime Minister and, in good part, the government have been acting, even in 2015. Going back to when the Liberals had third party status in the chamber, there was Bill C-51. We argued that Canada needed to

be able to establish a security clearance standing committee of the House that would be able to take a look at all forms of information. It was nothing new. Canada is one of the Five Eyes countries, and we were the only one that did not have such a committee in existence.

At the time, the Conservative Party, which was in government under Stephen Harper, said no to us. It did not recognize, nor was it interested at all in proceeding with what we call NSICOP today. In fact, if we look at the history of the issue itself, we see that it was actually brought to the government's attention in 2013, knowing full well that there was foreign interference taking place in Canada.

Today's leader of the Conservative Party was in cabinet. Not only Stephen Harper completely ignored the issue, but so too did today's leader of the Conservative Party. When we brought forward the suggestion of changing the law to incorporate NSICOP, the Conservative Party opposed it. The federal election took place, and one of the first initiatives Liberals took was to establish NSICOP. We did a great deal of consultation on it, believing that it was in Canada's best interest.

When we put NSICOP in place after passing the legislation, the Conservatives boycotted it and withdrew some members. NSICOP as a standing committee has representatives from all recognized political entities in the chamber. It even has participation from the Senate. However, the Conservative Party did not support it. Fast-forward to today and listen to some of the quotes that can be provided, in terms of the degree to which the Conservative Party has actually politicized the issue. How many times have we heard the Conservatives stand up and demand that we release the names? Constantly it is "Release the names of the members of Parliament." Then, through social media, the Conservatives created the idea that the Government of Canada was trying to hide something.

● (1720)

There are Conservative members who sit on NSICOP. They would have just as much right to see the names as the government does. If the Conservative Party wants the names released, why do the Conservative members who sit on NSICOP not release them? I suspect it might have something to do with the fact that they are a bit concerned about potential charges or investigations, because it would not be appropriate for them to release the names.

Earlier today, the minister responsible indicated that he had a discussion with Deputy Commissioner Flynn about releasing the names, asking whether he could do that as a minister. He was told by the deputy commissioner, who is the second in charge, that if he were to do that he would be opening himself up to criminal prosecution. The Conservatives, on the one hand, are asking us to release the names, knowing full well that we cannot release them, but that does not prevent them from going around spreading misinformation on the issue.

It does not end there. The Conservatives are saying that they do not want their leader to be informed. The government has said that a leader of a political party can get the security clearance that would allow them to request the information. The leader of the NDP has done just that, but not the leader of the Conservative Party.

*Business of Supply*

It is interesting that just this past weekend, on the issue, the host of CTV's *Question Period* was conducting an interview. She quoted the national security adviser and the head of CSIS. Then she said, "Just because your leader is briefed on this intelligence does not mean that he can't act." In essence, she was saying that the leader can in fact be briefed and can act on the issue.

Let us follow what happens afterward. The host then asked the Conservative panellist, "Why not get briefed? Why could [the leader of the Conservative party] now not just get that information and then act on it?" The member for Wellington—Halton Hills, who spoke earlier today, responded with, "What the Prime Minister is asking [the Leader of the Opposition] to do is essentially tie his hands behind his back", even though the New Democratic leader had the same briefing. He goes on further to say, "That process would require [the Leader of the Opposition] to sign an undertaking and to swear an oath of secrecy not to divulge this information to anyone else, and, therefore, not be able to tell anybody else to act on this information to hold individuals accountable."

The host then poses this question: "Respectfully though, am I supposed to believe you over the director of CSIS?" Get this; this is what the member for Wellington—Halton Hills said: "Yes. Yes, you are." He said to believe him over CSIS. That is incredible. He said, "because I think the director of CSIS and the RCMP may not be as knowledgeable about the processes under the Reform Act that govern [our] party caucuses". Really?

It highlights how the members of the Conservative Party of Canada, the Conservative-Reform party, choose to be dumb on the issue intentionally, come up with lame excuses and then spread misinformation all over social media. Where is the sense of responsibility? The Conservatives are definitely found lacking when it comes to common sense and responsibility in dealing with an issue that Canadians are concerned about.

Why will the leader of the Conservative-Reform party today not take the government up on getting the security clearance so he would understand in more depth what is taking place?

• (1725)

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to hear my friend, the member for Winnipeg North, speak. I cannot believe that he can talk on any issue for 10 minutes to 20 minutes. He always has something to say, but nothing very serious.

We know for sure that in the House there are people who have been elected with the support of foreign countries that are not fans of Canada. We know that, but what we do not know is who they are. We think that it would be a good idea to have the names, which is not a position that my colleague supports. That is what democracy is all about. I understand what he is talking about, as I am sure he understands what I am talking about.

The point is, can the member assure this country that no cabinet minister is on the damn list?

• (1730)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I can assure the member across the way that there are two Conservative members of Parliament who sit on NSICOP. Those two members would be just as

entitled to know the names as anyone else. The Conservatives say, "Well, we do not want them to speak about it, but we want the minister to speak about it."

The minister said earlier today that he cannot share the names. All the member has to do is listen to what the deputy commissioner said, because he too would be eligible for prosecution. Therefore the NSICOP members are being responsible. The government minister is being responsible. The only one who is not being responsible is the Conservative-Reform party leader in the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like the parliamentary secretary to explain his vision. In his opinion, why are trust and truth so important in a democratic system like ours?

I would also like him to explain why his government does not act unless it is pushed into a corner. I do not think it is right that the Bloc Québécois was the one that had to move a motion on this matter. If there were effective governance, action would have been taken more quickly. I would like him to explain that to me.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the government and the Prime Minister have not been pushed on the issue. I would ultimately argue that, in a certain way, it is the government that has been pushing the issue. All that members have to ask about is why we have the report that we have today. The Prime Minister, when he was the leader of the third party, insisted that we should have a committee like NSICOP. In 2015, when we took over the reins of power, we actually started to take action to put NSICOP into place. We would not have NSICOP today except for the current Prime Minister and government. That is the report we are actually talking about today.

NSICOP has representatives of all political entities of the chamber. To say that we have not taken action is not true. There are more actions that I could talk about, but I am out of time.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, according to the NSICOP report, "foreign actors covertly supported or opposed candidates by exploiting vulnerabilities in political party governance and administration." It goes on to say, "This included interfering with nomination processes or attempting to influence or control electoral district associations. CSIS considers the nomination process to be a particularly soft target". Unlike Australia and the United Kingdom, Canada does not criminalize interfering in nominations, leaderships or any other political party processes.

*Business of Supply*

Would the Liberal government agree that it is time to do what our ally countries are doing to tackle foreign interference?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the report talks about the Conservative leadership itself. I think that, yes, we do need to look at ways, maybe working with Elections Canada and other agencies, in which we can protect the integrity of our democracy.

It would be nice to see all political parties get outside and do it in such a fashion that it reinforces public confidence in the system. In order to do that, we have to be prepared to put party politics at the time to the side.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as the members opposite and all hon. colleagues know, the Government of Canada is deeply focused on combatting foreign interference. Today, foreign interference poses one of the greatest threats to our Canadian society, our economic prosperity and our sovereignty.

Following the tragic killing of Mr. Hardeep Singh Nijjar at a place of worship in my riding of Surrey—Newton, a Canadian who was assassinated on Canadian soil, I introduced private member's Motion No. 112, which called for the government to protect diaspora communities from acts of political interference, violence and intimidation on Canadian soil by persons or agents of foreign states.

With Motion No. 112 receiving support from all members who had voted, our government also introduced Bill C-70, the countering foreign interference act, to further combat foreign interference. By giving our law enforcement and intelligence agencies enhanced tools and authorities, the countering foreign interference act would strengthen our ability to detect and disrupt foreign interference threats to our national security.

Activities such as spreading misinformation and disinformation through traditional and digital means undermine public confidence and spread doubt in our fundamental institutions, mainstream media and the legitimacy of elections. Not only are they spreading misinformation, but, as we know from testimony at the public hearings of the foreign interference commission, foreign state actors are monitoring, intimidating and harassing diaspora communities across Canada.

We also know from our security and intelligence community that a growing number of states have built and deployed programs dedicated to undertaking online influence as part of their everyday activities. Public Safety Canada is leading work across this community to identify and develop the right solutions for Canada. As well, we have this knowledge from numerous reports, such as from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service entitled “CSIS Public Report 2023”, Justice Hogue’s interim report of the foreign interference commission and, most recently, studies from the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians.

Through their deceptive online campaigns, foreign actors are attempting to reshape our policy-makers’ choices, our government relationships, and the reputation of our politicians and our country. The countering foreign interference act would further strengthen Canada’s ability to counter the foreign interference threat, while upholding Canadian interests, values and the need for transparency.

One of the main pillars of this bill and its commitment to transparency is the creation of a foreign influence transparency registry. This registry would require that all individuals or entities who enter into an arrangement with a foreign principal and who undertake activities to influence a government or political process in Canada would be required to publicly register these activities. The goal of a foreign registry would be to promote transparency from all people who advocate on behalf of foreign governments or entities, as well as to ensure accountability from those who would seek to do so in secret ways.

• (1735)

This would reinforce the seriousness with which we take the protection of our political and democratic processes and would align Canada with international best practices. This is what we would like to see for Canada. By aligning with international best practices, we could reassure our allies that our mutual security would be upheld and our shared values of democracy, openness and human rights would be defended.

Canada has remained open to learning from the experiences of our international partners. Many other nations have already adopted a similar foreign registry of their own. For example, foreign agent registries already exist in other Five Eyes countries, including the United States and Australia.

In Bill C-70, the government proposes Canada's registry be overseen by an independent foreign influence transparency commissioner, who would be responsible to independently administer and promote compliance with the act. However, the act is by no means a single solution to foreign interference. It is a complex national security threat that requires a multipronged approach.

This said, a foreign registry would build on the government's ongoing and long-standing efforts to protect our democratic institutions against the threat of foreign interference. While our security and intelligence community has been doing the hard work of detecting and countering threats and developing strategies to protect our country, we cannot become content or overly optimistic that these threats will decrease given the current geopolitical environment.

Targeted amendments to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act would better equip the government and other Canadian institutions and entities to build resilience and to counter the modern threats Canada faces today.

*Business of Supply*

When the Canadian Security Intelligence Service was first created in 1984, the federal government was the primary target of our adversaries. However, as we know today, foreign interference is widespread across all facets of Canadian society. Our adversaries boldly target not just the federal government, but provincial, territorial and indigenous governments, industry, academics, community groups and individual Canadians, both online and in person.

Among other changes, Bill C-70 would enable a broader disclosure of Canadian Security Intelligence Service information to those outside the Government of Canada. With appropriate safeguards, this information would help Canadians build resiliency to threats. This legislation would also increase the ability of CSIS to be more agile and effective in its investigation, by introducing new Federal Court orders and warrants. It would also enhance the capacity of CSIS to use datasets. These proposed changes incorporate the input we received during the consultations with individuals and entities across Canada and from diverse communities, industries and entities.

People in Canada have a high expectation of privacy, including the protection provided by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. These proposals have been developed with that in mind. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service already has multiple layers of protection to ensure it is accountable and that the rights of people in Canada are protected. The National Security and Intelligence Review Agency and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians also provide an important review function for CSIS activities.

I want to reassure my colleagues in the House and Canadians the government is and will be using every possible tool at our disposal to keep them safe.

• (1740)

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Madam Speaker, first of all, my colleague, who I work with closely on the immigration committee, talks about the importance of making sure democracy goes forward and that the foreign interference he has experienced, even in his riding, in the most egregious form does not continue across Canada. The NSICOP report, of course, indicated that is happening throughout the country. What was redacted in the report before it came to Parliament were certain things that parliamentarians should know. It is a choice that those things were redacted for Parliament.

Would the member go back to his leadership and ask if the redacted parts of that report could be unredacted and tabled in Parliament?

• (1745)

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my dear friend, the hon. member for Calgary Centre, for his friendship on the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration.

When it comes to members of Parliament, diplomacy is part of our service, but when we go beyond that, irrespective of which party MPs belong to, that is unacceptable. I have had discussions to see if the names can be released, but, today, the Minister of Public Safety clearly indicated in this House that he sought advice from the deputy commissioner of the RCMP and was told that if those

names are released, he can be criminally charged. That answers that question.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Madam Speaker, several Liberals are telling us that there is already a system of accountability because the leaders of the political parties could have gone to get their security clearance to get the information. That is what the member for Kingston and the Islands said in a televised interview earlier today. Now, if they have that information, they cannot use it or disclose it, so they cannot take action. There is no accountability, and as a result, the only one who could really act is the Prime Minister. By his own admission, the Prime Minister does not read the security reports because he does not want to know anything about them, or he asks the security service to amend the reports to ensure that he does not know anything.

Does my colleague not agree that it is time to change the terms of reference of the Hogue commission so that, from now on, it can introduce what the government has never been able to introduce, that is, a mechanism that will make it possible to anticipate and take action when elected officials are compromised? There is no such mechanism in place today, not in government, not in law, not in the Prime Minister's Office.

[*English*]

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Madam Speaker, regarding the question from the hon. member for Mirabel, I already answered it when the member from Calgary East raised the issue.

I can tell the member what the Prime Minister and the government have done. We set up the national security and intelligence committee, which is made up of parliamentarians. Members from all parties sit on it, do the work, know exactly who these people are and know their boundaries. I have introduced Motion No. 112, which the Bloc Québécois supported, and our government put forward Bill C-70 to further protect Canadians and Canadian democratic institutions from foreign interference.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the NSICOP report noted that the government was aware of the extent of foreign interference activities since 2018. In fact, the unredacted information was received by the Prime Minister about a year ago. Therefore, it is not like the Prime Minister did not have the information or the Liberal government did not know the extent to which foreign interference activities were taking place in Canada. It has taken these many years and months for the government to take action.

Why is it that the government is resistant to ensuring that Commissioner Hogue gets access to all unredacted cabinet documents related to foreign interference?

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Madam Speaker, as far as the information I have is concerned, I think the minister has made it very clear in the House today that Commissioner Hogue has access to this report and all of those documents the hon. member for Vancouver East is talking about.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is always a privilege to speak in the House. I want to begin by saying that I will be sharing my time with my respected colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. I say that it is always a privilege to speak because it is a great privilege just to be in the House. Out of more than 40 million people, there are 338 members. It is a prestigious position, and the people have put their trust in us. That is what I want to start with: The people have put their trust in us. What we are here to do, every time we stand up in the course of our work as parliamentarians, is work for the people who have put their trust in us, for the common good.

That is not always evident because we sometimes play partisan games, but things are worse than usual right now. We have learned that there are people who are probably working for foreign powers. It is completely mind-boggling, surreal even. It is like something out of a bad movie, especially considering the incidents that have already taken place in Surrey—Newton. I would like to tell my colleague that we stand in solidarity with the people in his riding who have suffered this horrible tragedy. If all the information we have is correct, it is absolutely atrocious. It is appalling that something like this could happen in a G7 country.

Not only is this appalling and surreal, I find it unbelievable that the Bloc Québécois is once again the only responsible adult in the room. The political party that seems best placed to govern is the only political party not interested in forming a government. How ironic. I do not understand why a government that claims to be responsible did not take stronger action than that to counter foreign interference. I will return to that later.

What our motion proposes is quite simple. We take note of the report on foreign interference. We note that some elected officials could be acting under foreign influence and working not for the people in their ridings, but for other countries with interests that, more often than not, are probably detrimental to our own. People are saying that this is outrageous, and that something must be done about it.

What we are saying is that the Hogue commission's terms of reference need to be expanded, that it should not just investigate the last two elections, for a few months, within the framework of a modest, very restricted mandate that requires a report to be tabled by Christmas. What we are asking for is a full investigation of this country's democratic institutions, including its members of Parliament and senators. We need to investigate all parliamentarians. We need to figure out what happened. We need to get this information out.

In the House, we are often caught between right-wing populism and left-wing populism. Some people want names, even though everyone knows perfectly well that that is impossible, as things currently stand, without facing a harsh penalty or even criminal sanctions. No names can be released. The Conservatives can create

sound bites for four days, demanding names, but everyone knows that is impossible. The way to get those names out is to expand the commission's terms of reference. That is what we want to do. I am pleased that all political parties in the House of Commons will be supporting this motion.

The revelations are extremely serious. People who likely received money, people who are in the pocket of foreign powers, people whose election was financed with money from foreign countries, it is all outrageous.

I am going to offer a bit of a solution to prevent foreign forces from funding electoral activities. I am going to suggest, once again, that Canada look to Quebec, which reformed its election legislation. Let us be serious, how many people, just ordinary citizens, are in a position to give a political party \$1,700? There are some. I know some, obviously, but there are not that many. How is that some ridings have so many of them? It may be because those people want something in exchange. It is at least an incentive. In Quebec, we solved that problem by setting the maximum annual contribution at \$100.

• (1750)

We have prevented that from happening. There is public financing. This public financing had been removed by the Conservatives, who found that the Bloc Québécois was too powerful. I will not get into that. That would be a solution that could help us prevent this type of foreign influence.

Earlier, the parliamentary secretary had the nerve to tell me that his government was very proactive, that it has done good things and that it established the commission of inquiry, which would not have happened were it not for this good, forward-thinking, serious and proactive government. I am sorry. First, CSIS agents had to leak information to get the ball rolling and to inform the opposition of what was happening, because we were not aware of it. Then, we asked questions for weeks and months. The good Liberal government did what it usually does and turned a blind eye and waited for the problem to go away on its own, hoping that everything would be okay, but that did not happen. After hearing it over and over, it seems to me that the government should be beginning to understand that there comes a time when it has to take action. When the government waits six months or a year to act, then it always seems to be behind and is never able to catch up. The next time something happens, the government should ask our advice if it wants our help. When a party forms the government, it has to take action. This is appalling. I cannot believe how many times we have had to repeat this.

I was a teacher for 25 years before becoming an MP. I always told my students that it is okay to make a mistake. There is nothing wrong with that. The important thing is being able to admit it. A person has to be humble enough to say that they missed that one. They have to look at what they did wrong and not do it again. This government has been dragging its feet on every file, all the time, for the nearly five years I have been here, and it was probably doing the same beforehand. It is appalling. The government needs to learn.



*Business of Supply*

I was told earlier that the government is taking action. First, it took leaks to get things moving. Then we insisted on an inquiry, but the government said we did not need one. They threw vague answers at us for weeks. Finally, one weekend, on a Saturday afternoon while barbecuing, they had a brilliant idea: They would appoint a special rapporteur who would say that there was no issue and who would put an end to the affair. For that task, they chose a good friend who had donated several thousand dollars to the party in recent years. Everything would be fine. Except that it did not work out that way. We asked questions for months. We questioned this person's integrity. By the way, he was an honourable person. I am not attacking anyone. It is mind-boggling to see the way the government is acting. Earlier I was told that if it were not for the upstanding Liberal government, there would not be an inquiry. Can we be serious for a minute? Why is it that the Bloc Québécois is the one saying today that we have to go further responsibly? Are we are the only ones who are able to do so? I wonder.

We have to clean house, because the people are watching. They are being accused of cynicism toward politicians and all that, but considering how this kind of issue has been handled, how could it be otherwise? This is serious. It puts us under a cloud of suspicion, a permanent cloud. Every time I talk to a member of another party, I wonder which country he or she is spying for. Am I in danger because of what I just said? Did I just compromise something? It is crazy. Knowing that some of the MPs among us are under foreign influence but doing nothing about it is unacceptable. The Bloc Québécois chose this as its opposition day topic because more must be done. Let us be serious about this. The grown-ups in the room are urging all 338 MPs to adopt this motion unanimously.

I hope that the inquiry will produce conclusive results and that we will be able to restore people's trust. That is what this is about: trust in elected representatives.

• (1755)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member made reference to the issue of providing names. He seems to acknowledge that it would not be appropriate for us to be providing names, whether of government or opposition members or of those who sit on NSICOP. I appreciate that comment—

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

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Is there no interpretation?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The interpretation is okay.

Maybe, if the hon. parliamentary secretary were to look this way, he would not get sidetracked by some of the actions others are doing.

• (1800)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the acknowledgement of not being able to reveal the names of the individuals in question. Does the member see the value of the leaders getting the classification so that they can get more information? After all, it is the leaders who sign off on candidates. Every leader

could make the commitment to the electorate that they would not sign off unless they were comfortable with a candidate and, obviously, being treasonous would be a good reason not to.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, the answer to his question is yes. That is actually what our leader decided to do, and I think that all the leaders should do the same to ensure that they have all the information.

Apart from that, what my colleagues and I wanted to say at the outset is that we thought that the parliamentary secretary thought we wanted names when we were asking questions. Obviously, we understood that he understood. It is very important for unilingual anglophones to listen with the earpiece to catch the subtleties of what is being said. However, my colleague is right when he says that it would be impossible to provide the names at this time. That is why we want to expand the Hogue commission's terms of reference so that we can get to the bottom of this matter and eventually identify these people to stop them from sitting in Parliament, because it is outrageous to allow people who work for other nations to sit here.

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would absolutely agree with the member that those who knowingly, intentionally, wittingly work with foreign states should not be sitting here as members of Parliament. They should not be running in the next election. There is no question about that.

At this time, because the NSICOP report has exposed that there are elected officials sitting around this table who are collaborating and working with foreign states to undermine Canada's democratic processes and democratic institutions, that means all of us are in a shadow. We are operating in such a way that quite possibly my privilege is being breached, and all of our privilege is being breached, because of this situation. Unless we were to know who they are, the privilege of all of us would be compromised. Would the member agree with that?

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, I am glad to know that at least one member listened to my speech from start to finish. We get along well and agree on most things.

That is why the commission's terms of reference need to be expanded, so that these individuals can be identified and each party leader can do their job and kick these people out of Parliament. I completely agree with my colleague that these members should not be sitting in this place. I agree with her that they should not be allowed to run again. We are on the same page. When she talks about parliamentary privilege, that is fine, but what I consider to be even more important is public trust in the government.

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Madam Speaker, the interesting thing is that we now have the report of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, which sits in camera. We also have the first report of the Hogue commission. We have all these facts and all these allegations before us, which brings us to our motion today.

We did not know these facts and most of us still do not know them. The Prime Minister knew them and the Prime Minister could have chosen to agree with the parties to expand the Hogue commission's terms of reference. Despite that, the Prime Minister rested on his laurels and did nothing. This brings us to an opposition day today where the Liberals seem forced to support us.

How does my colleague explain that it is the Bloc Québécois that ends up moving this motion? How does he explain the Prime Minister's lack of ambition for defending democracy?

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, I do not have a rational explanation. That is what I said for half my speech. The only explanation I have is that we are the adults in the room, we are the trustworthy ones. I am glad we are doing this. I am glad that the other parties support us.

When we have a Prime Minister who openly says that he does not read the CSIS reports, it makes us wonder. Does the Prime Minister know how to read or does he not want to read the reports? We know the real answer: He does not want to read them.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, Canada has a strange democracy. It is a monarchy, with an electoral system that is not proportional and a parliamentary system where the separation of powers is vague, to say the least, and difficult to define. It has a Senate, a chamber with decision-making capacity made up of unelected people who are appointed. It has a Constitution that was imposed on Quebecers, to which they are still not signatories to this day. It has a bunch of judges who have no problem eviscerating the statutes democratically passed by parliaments. Now we can add that this democracy is at the heart of a conflict, a confrontation between foreign powers trying to get their hands on candidates to influence parts of the political decision-making process.

Today, we are gathered not only as representatives of our respective constituencies, but as vigilant stewards of democracy and its sacred values and integrity, which is under threat. At least, that is how it should be. The Bloc Québécois is so concerned about safeguarding democracy, even a democracy as imperfect and as oligarchic as Canada's, that it has moved a motion of vital importance. If it resonates in the just and wise hearts of this chamber, this motion will reaffirm our unwavering commitment to sovereignty and freedom. It is our duty to respond to the pressing call of history.

The foreign interference commission under the leadership of Justice Hogue needs to have its terms of reference expanded, not to give into the temptation of suspicion or paranoia, but to respond firmly and with foresight to the troubling revelations of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, or NSICOP. These revelations shake the very foundations of democracy.

It is now clear that the tentacles of foreign interference extend far beyond what we had previously imagined. Not only do foreign states dare interfere in Canada's diplomatic affairs, but they have also found allies among the elected members of this House. This dark collusion is hidden behind a shroud of confidentiality, and it threatens the very stability of our two nations.

NSICOP members, muzzled by the Security of Information Act, bear the burden of remaining silent forever. The truth, my friends, will have to come out at some point. We are called upon to lift the veil of darkness, to unearth buried truths and to protect our democracy from the dark forces that seek to corrupt it.

In its preliminary report, the Hogue commission has already shed light on foreign influence activities in the recent election. This is just the tip of the iceberg. By broadening its scope, the commission could finally answer the burning questions raised by the NSICOP report. We could finally find out whether our representatives are truly serving their country, or whether they have sold their souls to the highest bidders.

The stakes are high. This is not just about restoring public trust, but also about preserving the very essence of democracy. The Bloc Québécois calls for action, courageous and resolute action, action that tells the world that freedom and sovereignty are non-negotiable, that the light of truth will drive out the darkness of deceit and betrayal. It is high time that we lift the veil of wilful blindness and face the reality of foreign interference in democratic institutions and processes. History has reminded us of the urgent need not to turn a blind eye to the threats that are eating away at the foundations of our two nations.

The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius said, "He often acts unjustly who does not do a certain thing". Recent circumstances have highlighted the Canadian government's failure to address this critical issue. In their insistence on ignoring the warning signs, government members have shown a disconcerting naivety. I use the word "naivety" quite politely, so as not to use another word. Only the weight of irrefutable evidence has persuaded them to admit that there is a problem of foreign interference, a problem that is poisoning democracy to its deepest roots.

The paltry attempts to cover up the matter are indicative of Ottawa's cavalier approach to this vital issue.

● (1805)

Delay tactics such as the appointment of a special rapporteur have only underscored the urgent need for a rigorous public inquiry. The Hogue commission, the result of relentless pressure rather than the government's initial will, is a step in the right direction. However, its restricted mandate and limited duration will not be enough to dispel the threatening shadows of foreign interference.

*Business of Supply*

The report of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians resonates like a thunderclap in a serene sky. These revelations, albeit redacted, suggest the insidious extent of foreign infiltration. Members of Parliament, blinded by the lure of power or darker motives, have compromised themselves in the service of foreign interests, undermining the foundations of national sovereignty.

The troubling ties between some elected officials and foreign governments, exposed with disturbing clarity, underscore the urgent need for action. The disdain shown by some members for the legitimate questions their peers asked about foreign interference reveals the extent of the complacency that reigns within this very Parliament.

We are faced with a huge moral and political dilemma. Foreign interference cannot be treated lightly, as it threatens not only security, but also the very legitimacy of institutions. By choosing not to act, Ottawa is shirking its primary responsibility to the people of Canada and Quebec. It is imperative that meaningful action be taken to counter this insidious threat. An educational program for politicians on intelligence and foreign interference could be a crucial first step in this fight.

It is only through widespread public awareness and determined political will that we can restore public trust and protect our democracy from outside attacks. It is time to rise above partisan interests and stand together against foreign interference. Our two nations, democracy and sovereignty are at stake. It is our duty as stewards of the political future to act with courage and determination to preserve the values we hold dear. Together, let us make our two peoples, the people of Canada and the people of Quebec, sure again that their voices are heard, that their will is respected and that democracy is preserved.

● (1810)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate many of the words that the member put on the record this afternoon.

NSICOP, which I commented on in my opening remarks as being a creation of the Liberal government, ultimately provided us with the report that we are tabling. Now we know that this is going to be reviewed by the Hogue commission.

The Hogue commission was put together in co-operation with all political parties. There will be a report, and through that report I hope to find all sorts of good pieces of information that will better equip leaders and others to deal with building confidence in the system in terms of minimizing indirect foreign interference.

I am wondering if the member could provide additional thoughts in regard to the public confidence and all political parties working together, in particular once that whole report comes out.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Madam Speaker, at least one can say that my colleague is consistent. He has asked the same

question about 15 times. Sometimes he changes the wording. He is tenacious. I admire that in politics. I respect that.

That being said, it is obviously not a bad thing to increase, enhance and expand the terms of references. That is the purpose of today's motion. I would remind the House that it has three components. First, we talk about taking note of the special report. The House needs to recognize the special report. Second, we are concerned that certain elected officials could be wittingly or unwittingly working in the interests of foreign powers. Now, here is the important part. We are asking that the commission's terms of reference be expanded. That is probably the most important of the three points, even though all three are fundamental. That one is important. I think that goes along with what my colleague just said.

However, I would like to remind him that this commission was not established because of a willingness on the part of the government. We had to hound the government non-stop to make that happen.

● (1815)

[*English*]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of the areas the member touched on is the timeline of the issue. Aside from the fact that the government, the Prime Minister, knew of foreign interference activities for a long time and did not take the necessary action to counter this threat to Canadian society, to our democratic system, the other issue the NSICOP report highlighted was that a former member of Parliament engaged in foreign interference activities, allegedly. Supposedly, the individual also set up meetings and collaborated with foreign agents.

To that end, would the member agree that we need to ensure that Commissioner Hogue has the full breadth and scope when looking into foreign interference activities and is not just restricted to just the last two elections?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Madam Speaker, it goes without saying that this commission must have the resources to do its job. It is as simple as that. That is fundamental. If a commission is set up, it must not be turned into a mere political show, a way of trying to shut down a debate that is starting to become a nuisance. We must give it the means to get to the bottom of things.

My colleague said, "the Prime Minister". Personally, I get the sense that there is more than just one prime minister who has turned a blind eye to foreign interference. I get the sense that we are witnessing a problem that is much more systemic and far more persistent, and that this is a problem with the system as opposed to a problem with the government. That is why I would also like us to look further back than just the last few years.

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot is our international trade critic, so there is something I cannot help but wonder. Some of our trading partners are obviously taking the foreign interference issue more seriously than we are. The United States would never have let something like this slide for so long, and neither would France. Here, in contrast, the second opposition party is the one asking the government to expand the terms of reference of a commission that the government itself created. In my colleague's opinion, how does that make us look in the eyes of our trading partners?

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Madam Speaker, I would say we do not look very good. As a matter of fact, the United States even monitors investments because of concerns that foreign investments could jeopardize economic security.

It goes without saying that, by failing to take this seriously, by being total slackers, we are making ourselves look bad. I say “we”, but I should actually be saying “Canada”, because I do not feel I am Canadian. It makes Canada look bad, and that is bad for businesses and entrepreneurs in Quebec, too. When Canada behaves this way, when it slacks off, that does not look good at all.

[English]

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is always an honour and privilege to rise in this honourable House. I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for the very near, and I say near because it is geographically near, riding of Ottawa—Vanier, who is a dear friend and great member of Parliament in the House.

We are having a debate on a very important topic, a topic none of us should take lightly and a topic we all need to think about, cooperate and opine on, because it impacts democracy in the country we live in. It is a topic that I know is very, very important to all of us and all of our citizens.

[Translation]

As the members opposite and all hon. senators know, the Government of Canada is firmly committed to combatting foreign interference.

Today, foreign interference poses one of the greatest threats to Canadian society, our economic prosperity, and our sovereignty. By giving law enforcement and intelligence agencies enhanced tools and powers, the countering foreign interference act will strengthen our ability to detect and disrupt foreign interference threats to our national security.

Activities such as the dissemination of false information and misinformation through traditional and digital means undermine public trust and sow doubt in our fundamental institutions, traditional media, and the legitimacy of elections. Not only do these activities spread misinformation, but, as we learned from testimony heard during the foreign interference commission's public hearings, foreign state actors are monitoring, intimidating, and harassing diaspora communities across Canada.

We also know from Canada's security and intelligence community that a growing number of states have developed and deployed programs to exert influence online as part of their day-to-day activi-

ties. Public Safety Canada is leading the work of this community to identify and develop the right solutions for Canada.

We are also aware of numerous reports, such as the “CSIS Public Report 2023”; the initial report of Justice Hogue's commission; and, more recently, the studies by the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians.

Through their insidious online campaigns, foreign actors are trying to realign our decision-makers' choices, our government relations, along with our politicians' and our country's reputations. The countering foreign interference act will strengthen Canada's ability to counter the threat of foreign interference while defending Canadian values and interests and respecting the need for transparency.

One of the key pillars of the act and its commitment to transparency is the creation of a foreign agent registry to ensure transparency when it comes to foreign influence. This registry will require the public registration of the activities of any person or corporation entering into an agreement with a foreign official and engaging in activities to influence a government or political process in Canada. The purpose of a foreign agent registry is to promote transparency for all those who advocate on behalf of foreign governments or entities, as well as to ensure accountability for those who seek to do so in secret. This will reinforce how seriously we take our political and democratic processes, and will align Canada's process with international best practices

● (1820)

By aligning ourselves with international best practices, we can assure our allies that our mutual security will be respected and that our shared values of democracy, openness and human rights will be defended.

Canada has remained open to learning from the experiences of our international partners. Many other countries have already adopted a similar foreign registry. For instance, foreign agent registries already exist in other Five Eyes countries, such as the United States and Australia.

With Bill C-70, the government is proposing that Canada's registry be overseen by an independent foreign interference commissioner to independently administer and promote compliance with the act. The act is by no means a single solution to foreign interference. This is a complex national threat that requires a multi-pronged approach. That said, a foreign registry would build on our government's long-standing and ongoing efforts to protect our democratic institutions from the threat of foreign interference.

*Business of Supply*

While our security intelligence community is working to identify and counter threats and develop strategies to protect our country and our citizens, we cannot become complacent or overly optimistic about mitigating these threats in the current geopolitical context. Targeted amendments to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act would enable the government and other Canadian institutions and entities to better strengthen their resilience and counter the modern threats that Canada is facing today.

When the Canadian Security Intelligence Service was established in 1984, the federal government was our adversaries' main target. However, as members know, foreign interference is now omnipresent in all spheres of Canadian society. Our adversaries boldly target not only the federal government, but also the provinces, territories, indigenous governments, industry, academics, community groups and individuals, both online and in person.

Among other changes, Bill C-70 would allow wider disclosure of CSIS intelligence to those outside of the Government of Canada. With appropriate safeguards, this intelligence would help Canadians build resilience to threats. The bill would also allow CSIS to be more agile and effective in its investigations by introducing new Federal Court orders and warrants, and it would also improve the ability of CSIS to use data sets.

The proposed changes take into account the feedback received during consultations with individuals and entities from across Canada, and from various communities, industries and entities. Canadians have high expectations when it comes to the protection of personal information, including protection under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is with this in mind that these proposals have been developed. CSIS already has several layers of protection in place to ensure accountability and respect for the rights of Canadians.

I welcome any questions and comments that my colleagues may have.

• (1825)

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and for his effort to speak in the language of Molière.

I would like him to explain something to me. If foreign interference and trust in democratic institutions are so important to his government, how come it took months for his government to take action? How come it is the Bloc Québécois that is moving a motion today to move things forward, so that we can get to the bottom of this and eventually remove the people who are here working for someone other than their constituents?

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Madam Speaker, my colleague's question is very important. I represent the riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge. Last year, I often said that it is very important to create a registry of foreign agencies. I supported that and I am in favour of such a registry. That is very important for our country. I am therefore very pleased that our government and the other parties in the House are moving forward with the creation of this registry.

[*English*]

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we have heard some Liberals today claim-

ing that the government is leading the charge on this, yet a year ago the NDP put forward a motion for a national inquiry on foreign interference, and the Liberals voted against it. I am wondering what they were trying to hide back then.

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay is a long-time member and a very learned member of the House. I will speak for myself on this issue because it is an issue of national importance when we are talking about foreign interference, disinformation and what is happening in the world, especially geopolitically.

We need to be measured. We need to be diligent. We need to be judicious, and we need to move forward. We also need to seek advice from all parties and all entities in our country on how we protect our democracy and our institutions, and how to do it expeditiously in the right manner.

• (1830)

**Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his use of the French language. That was wonderful.

We all agree with the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians that the “Special Report on Foreign Interference in Canada's Democratic Processes and Institutions” is a very serious report. Every parliamentarian and, I would recommend, most people involved in anything to do with politics or civil society should read it.

Does my colleague not agree that it is important for leaders of the opposition to accept the offer to get security clearance so they can see the full, unredacted report?

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Madam Speaker, I am incredulous, if I am using the correct word, that any leader of any officially recognized party in the House would not have received security clearance to see these types of reports. That is called leadership. That is leadership 101, 100 or even 099. It is a complete failure in leadership for any leader in the House not to get that security clearance. If they would wish to be a responsible leader going into the future, they must do that. It is a real shame, and it is very disappointing.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I challenge my colleague on that hogwash. If he can name one instance in history when there has been a leader of the opposition who has had to be briefed on one of these matters in the background so he could do his job as the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition in holding the government to account, I would ask him to present that to me now.

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Madam Speaker, in the context in the world we are in today, it is imperative that every leader of an officially recognized party in the House receives that security clearance. The technology that is being used today, the online format and the sophistication of criminals both domestic and foreign, or whichever entities, demand that every leader in the House who is officially recognized receives that security clearance.

*Business of Supply*

[Translation]

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to discuss the government's efforts to protect our democratic institutions. As members know, Canada has an enviable international reputation because of the stability of its system and democratic institutions. It is important to remember that we have a strong electoral system built on a proven legal framework, and that Elections Canada is a high-calibre election administration agency that is the envy of many.

Obviously, we do not take the threat of foreign interference lightly, and it is essential that we continue to improve our approach. Last year was eventful to say the least, and a lot of attention was drawn to these important concerns. Just in the last few weeks, in addition to the Hogue commission's initial report, reports were also published by the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency.

I would like to remind members that these two agencies began their respective studies following the Prime Minister's announcement in March 2023. These accountability mechanisms are essential to ensure transparency and contribute directly to the government's commitment to continue to improve its response to this threat, which is also constantly evolving.

In that same announcement, the Prime Minister asked the hon. Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs and Janice Charette, the former clerk of the Privy Council, to present a report on the government's approach to implement certain recommendations on foreign interference. That report was presented to the Prime Minister a month later. The approach set out in that report centres on four specific themes.

The first of these themes is communication with the Canadian public, meaning the need for transparency and the need to equip citizens with knowledge in this area. Communication is a key element in the fight against attempted interference in Canadian democracy. The government recognizes the importance of better communicating information about the threat of foreign interference and the measures taken by the government to deal with it. Much has already been done in this regard. For example, intelligence agencies have been publishing reports on foreign interference in elections since 2017. In addition, one component of the plan to protect Canada's democracy is the digital citizen initiative, overseen by Canadian Heritage, which aims to build the resilience of citizens and Canadian society against online disinformation.

Our work did not stop there. Since the release of this report, rapid response mechanism Canada, located at Global Affairs Canada, has released two reports exposing foreign actors' disinformation campaigns targeting elected members of the House. The Minister of Public Safety also announced details on the funding for the Canadian digital media research network to further strengthen Canadians' resilience to the increasingly complex information ecosystem. The minister also released tool kits to resist disinformation and foreign interference for elected officials, public servants and community leaders. These tools have been shared with several partners, including provincial and territorial ministers.

These initiatives are just a few examples of how the government is communicating with Canadians on these important issues. We recognize that more work needs to be done in this regard, and we are continuing our efforts. It is important to remember that this kind of communication comes with significant challenges. While we recognize the need for transparency, it is important that it not come at the expense of national security and the safety of those who risk so much, sometimes even their lives, to enable the collection of intelligence that is essential to our efforts to combat foreign interference. In her recent report, Commissioner Hogue aptly explains how difficult it is to strike a balance.

● (1835)

As members of the House can see, we have already made considerable progress on this first theme, as highlighted by the minister and Ms. Charette. The same is true for the second theme, which concerns governance and legal frameworks. This report demonstrated the government's commitment to considering improvements to the legal framework supporting the capacity of intelligence agencies, in particular the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, or CSIS, and our electoral process.

The Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs recently introduced two important bills in the House in support of these commitments.

First, Bill C-70, an act respecting countering foreign interference, proposes important measures, including an update to CSIS' mandate. I would like to highlight the addition of offences related to foreign interference in democratic processes to the Security of Information Act.

The minister also introduced Bill C-65, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act. This bill continues to improve our electoral processes, including by implementing many of the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations. This bill builds on the 2018 Elections Modernization Act as part of our efforts to counter foreign interference in our elections. I hope that all members in the House will support this bill.

The minister promised to advance these priorities and he did. Now it is up to members of the House and the representatives at the other place to ensure that these bills are adopted swiftly. The government continues to advance the commitments in the report discussed this evening that was submitted to the Prime Minister in March 2023. Our work continues.

This brings me to the report's third theme. It highlights the requirement for the government to have the ability to evaluate risks and vulnerabilities resulting from the growing threat posed by foreign interference in order to be able to adapt the government's tool kit to the evolving threat.

*Business of Supply*

The recent reports, as well as the deliberations of the public inquiry into foreign interference in federal electoral processes and democratic institutions, provide valuable information that we can use to further improve existing measures for countering the threat of foreign interference. Among other things, this includes measures introduced under the plan to protect Canada's democracy.

As the report states, our government will continue to explore further enhancements to this plan. This will include an examination of making the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force a permanent entity, with a mandate to conduct regular reporting on foreign interference activities.

Lastly, I would be remiss not to mention the final theme of the report, which involves engagement to raise awareness and improve resilience to foreign interference. I have already mentioned some of the government's efforts in this regard, including the publication of information kits to resist disinformation and foreign interference. The work on this is also ongoing, and resources have been invested to ensure active progress on these efforts.

The Government of Canada also created the Protecting Democracy Unit within the Privy Council Office to coordinate, develop and implement government-wide measures. These teams are working with other agencies and partners within government and with stakeholders to advance these efforts.

Perhaps I should remind my colleagues that, when we swear our oath or affirmation of allegiance, we are swearing allegiance to democratic institutions and the principle of democracy. That means we have to take our responsibilities seriously, and I find it reassuring that the government is committed to better informing partners about the threat of foreign interference.

• (1840)

I am ready for questions.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I listened closely to my colleague, who is also a wise fellow member of the Standing Committee on International Trade. That is what I want to talk about, in fact. Unfortunately, I ran out of time at the end of my speech earlier, but my colleague from Mirabel asked me an interesting question that I would also like to put to my Standing Committee on International Trade colleague.

Several of Canada's trading and economic partners are justifiably suspicious, because, if there is interference, there is also the possibility that Canada is nothing but a conduit for foreign interests. Does the member sense that Canada's partners are worried or afraid?

**Hon. Mona Fortier:** Madam Speaker, I work very well with my colleague across the way at the Standing Committee on International Trade, and I think that we are still in the process of ensuring that we are doing the right things. Obviously, we have concerns. With the bills we are discussing this evening, we are making sure that we have the right tools to reduce any fears that companies may have and address the threats that they believe the country is facing.

We will continue to work together to build this trust that will allow us to continue to prosper and work together.

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, in the NSICOP report, the committee noted that NSICOP tabled its first report indicating concerns around foreign interference activities back in 2018. Since then, there have been two other reports with this latest one. The government said that it would take action, but there was a huge gap when no action was taken. As a result, we saw that leaks surfaced in the media, which propelled the government to action. The NSICOP report actually noted that, because of the gap, we are sending all the wrong messages; we are basically saying that there is no deterrent for foreign interference actors and that they can carry on with business as usual. Therefore, in light of this and the severity of foreign interference into Canada's democratic institutions and processes, would the member agree that Commissioner Hogue should be given unfettered access to all unredacted documents, both within cabinet and what was provided to NSICOP, so that we can get to the bottom of the situation?

• (1845)

[Translation]

**Hon. Mona Fortier:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question and the context she provided. As we can see, the government did take steps to set up the Hogue commission and ensure that the mandate it was given had parameters.

These parameters are numerous, and they are being followed. We will leave it to Commissioner Hogue to continue to write her report and make recommendations. The government is taking action. We see that with the introduction of Bill C-70 and Bill C-65.

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Speaker, the reality is this: The commissioner is not able to get access to unredacted documents. In my view, that is impeding the ability for the commission to do its work, to rebuild trust in the hearts and minds of Canadians and all parliamentarians. Again, is it not time for the government to do what is necessary and give the commissioner unfettered access to unredacted cabinet documents, as well as intelligence documents?

[Translation]

**Hon. Mona Fortier:** Madam Speaker, again, I am sure that Commissioner Hogue will be able to do her work and that she will ask for everything she needs to be able to finalize her report and make recommendations to the government. I am sure that this will happen within the scope of the mandate she received.

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to see my colleagues here this evening to debate the important issue of foreign interference in Canadian elections. Today, our democratic life has reached the very heart of the House of Commons.

*Business of Supply*

The report that the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians released last week, which is a redacted version—we do not have access to all the information—is literally a bombshell. I will read the part of paragraph 55, on page 25, that we are allowed to read: “Some elected officials, however, began wittingly assisting foreign state actors soon after their election”. Obviously, some sentences are redacted, but there are reportedly several members of Parliament who provided—not would provide—“confidential information to Indian officials”.

When we pick up a version of this document in the lobby and start reading it on our way to the House, and we come across that, it means we are in crisis. What is surprising is that the party proposing a solution to the crisis, so that the public can regain confidence in its elected assembly, is the Bloc Québécois.

Let us be clear: This is not about protecting the Canada of today. It is about defending a fundamental principle that is supposed to be universal. I am talking about the representation of elected officials and the representation of democracy. All of that hinges on trust.

Every riding is important. I say that as a token of esteem for my colleagues. Every riding is important and every elected member in the House is important. That is why we have a hard time trusting the Prime Minister to take action. That is why we are trying to push the Prime Minister. He has a lot to answer for. We read in the Hogue commission's report that there was interference in the riding of Don Valley North and that the Prime Minister knew about it. The testimony showed that he had the reports, he had the information. We do not know whether or not he read them. It still looks like he is not interested. The Hogue commission's report said that the Liberals claimed they did nothing because they expected to win the riding.

Every elected representative is important. Independent members are important. Green Party members are important. The Conservatives are important. The Liberals are important. What would we do without the member for Winnipeg North? All elected representatives are important, but the government does not seem to think so, based on the way it is dealing with the issue of foreign interference. Its actions do not reflect that.

The Prime Minister has given us every reason to doubt his seriousness. Earlier, I was listening to the member for Ottawa—Vanier recite the litany of measures they have taken. The reality is that the information had to be released. The reality is that these measures are insufficient. Journalists only got the information because of CSIS data leaks. At that time, there were calls for a public inquiry.

I was elected in 2021. That was one of the first major incidents I witnessed. Everyone was rising in the House every day and calling for a public inquiry. The Prime Minister refused to call one, eventually deciding that it was untenable. The government is always in reaction mode. That is what it is doing today. We welcome the government's support, but it is reactive.

The Liberals appointed a friend. Everyone knows that a friend is a friend. They appointed their friend Mr. Johnston, who is a respectable individual. I, for one, would not want my friends to put me in that type of situation. A real friend would not put a person in the situation that the Liberals put Mr. Johnston in. No one needs

friends like that. In passing, I do not have many Liberal friends. Mr. Johnston's finding was that nothing was going on, that nothing went on and that all is well. We were just supposed to carry on and act as though nothing ever happened.

The member for Ottawa—Vanier just gave a speech that was likely written by the Prime Minister's Office. Those are the same people who were saying that nothing was going on, that we needed to carry on and that that was the least of their concerns. How long has it been? It has been a year, and today we are living with suspicion in the air.

● (1850)

First, the Hogue commission gave us some information. We are starting to wrap our heads around it. I know there are allegations. I know that there are secret agents' reports, intelligence reports and so on. There could be rumours or unsubstantiated information in there. However, almost everything lines up. They say that there is no smoke without fire. Well, there is enough smoke to fill the sky right now. We know something is going on. There is suspicion in the air.

Personally, I respect my colleagues. We have differences of opinion, different political choices. We come from different places politically, geographically and linguistically, but we respect each other because we represent those who elected us. This affair does not sit well with me. For me, it is a violation of my privilege not to know whether the person in front of me represents Indian, Chinese or Russian interests. That is why we absolutely must expand the commission's terms of reference.

The government did not want that commission. It had to be negotiated last summer. The negotiations went on for some time. Eventually, a commission was struck. At the time, the terms of reference were fine. They suited us because the issue was election interference. We wanted the commission to cover the most pressing, urgent issue, because there was the prospect of an election. The NDP wanted something else, but that was the thinking at the time. People thought there might be an election, so it made sense to focus on that. Today, we know that there are people sitting here among us who are doing things that cannot be undone. These people no longer belong among us in this assembly. We do not know who these people are. Now, the Conservatives want a list of names.

The day after the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians report was released, we asked some questions here. The NDP asked questions. Everyone asked questions. Two parties were less interested. There were the Conservatives, who were probably asking about the carbon tax because that is all they know how to do, and then there were the Liberals, who, when we asked questions about foreign interference, wanted to talk about the interest rate. The Liberals have changed their tune since then. They probably realize that they cannot survive if they do not support this motion. That leaves the Conservatives.



*Government Orders*

At some point, the Conservatives will also have to stop spreading disinformation. As everyone knows, we are fighting against foreign powers that may co-opt organizations here, that may even co-opt elected members of the House, though we do not know how, and that can engage in disinformation campaigns and fundraise through local election campaigns. We are now dealing with a situation where the Conservatives are spreading disinformation by saying that the government has the right to release a list of names, when in fact that would be against the law. It is not right to fight fire with fire in these circumstances.

The Hogue commission, which is already at work, must have its terms of reference expanded. It needs more resources, more time and expanded terms of reference so that it is not limited to analyzing the last two elections. Even before the NSICOP report came out, we were asking for more time for the Hogue commission because we felt it needed it. Today, I think we will be able to achieve that if the government honours the will of the House and respects the motion, assuming it is adopted.

Now the Conservatives have a moral duty. If democracy is important to them and if the facts are important to them, they have a moral duty to support this motion. The Conservatives have a troubled history. Lying has become their trademark as of late. Fabrications have become their trademark. Misquoting reports from the Parliamentary Budget Officer has become their trademark. If, for once, the members of this party are able to show that they have a shred of respect for the truth, for facts, for democracy and for our institutions, they will support this motion. I have every confidence that, between now and the vote, all members of the House will shoulder their responsibilities and unanimously adopt the Bloc Québécois motion.

• (1855)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, given the power and authority that all leaders of political parties have in terms of even signing off on the ability to be nominated and run in a federal election, would the member not agree that all leaders should take advantage of the opportunity to get the security clearance, so that they can actually take a look at the documents and see the information, a lot of which is information that the member has been talking about as critical information? Leaders do have that opportunity, yet the Conservative leader continues to say, “No, I do not want to know.”

I am interested in what the member's thoughts are in regard to when he made reference to moral responsibilities. Is there a responsibility for the leader of the Conservative Party to get the security clearance so that he can actually see the information we are talking about?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Madam Speaker, the leader of the Bloc Québécois said that he was thinking about the opportunity of such a briefing. At one time, it was seen as a trap. Agreeing to this security briefing means getting the information and the names. However, those who obtain the names are not allowed to disclose them, not allowed to talk about it and not allowed to act on this information.

We are effectively being shut down. I think that the NDP leader received the security briefing, but so what? Do we know anything? The answer is no.

To me, I think that the leaders should calmly and seriously think about receiving this briefing, making their decisions and, legally, take the necessary measures within their party. However, that is no substitute for the Hogue commission, which has to get to the bottom of things and report publicly on what it can.

• (1900)

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It being 7 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

[*Translation*]

The question is on the 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.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Madam Speaker, the Bloc Québécois requests a recorded division.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the recorded division on the motion stands deferred until Tuesday, June 11, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

\* \* \*

#### THE PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND REVIEW COMMISSION ACT

**Hon. Filomena Tassi (for the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs):** moved that Bill C-20, An Act establishing the Public Complaints and Review Commission and amending certain Acts and statutory instruments, be read the third time and passed.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to speak to Bill C-20 this evening. This is a piece of legislation that the government thought was fairly straightforward. When we take a serious look at the essence of the bill, it would provide a sense of public confidence in our bureaucratic system.

For many years, there was an independent commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, where, if there were complaints or issues surrounding them, the public knew they had a way they could address a grievance of one form or another by going to the commission. I thought that it was fairly well established and that people had a basic understanding of the true value of having something of this nature. It has done well. If we look at the different agencies across Canada, particularly law enforcement agencies, we often hear about the importance of having some sort of checks in place to ensure a higher level of accountability.

*Government Orders*

In Manitoba today, for example, there is a sense of independence in offices, where it is not necessarily the police checking on the police or holding the police accountable when there is a grievance, but it is an independent board. It is important that it be independent for the simple reason that there would be far more confidence in the person bringing forward the grievance or the complaint. That is really important to recognize. Whether it is for provincial jurisdictions or for the RCMP, this has been deemed by all aspects of society as absolutely essential.

When we look at the Canada Border Services Agency and the fine work that border officers do, day in and day out, at the end of the day, there was no independent body at the same level as the RCMP. It makes sense. The government had a choice. We could have a stand-alone independent body for the RCMP and we could also have a stand-alone body for the Canada Border Services Agency, but it was determined that the best thing would be to bring the two agencies together.

I should have started my comments by highlighting that, even though we are bringing forward this legislation, it is not a reflection on the fine work that the border agents or the RCMP members do. The vast majority of the work is done in an outstanding fashion. Countries around the world often look at what is happening in Canada, through these two agencies. Unlike in many other countries, these institutions are held in high esteem, particularly the RCMP. I have travelled to nations where the confidence level in their national policing agencies is nowhere near as high or as respected as it is in Canada because of issues such as alleged corruption, whether real or perceived.

● (1905)

Periodically, I talk to individuals who came from another country, and they talk about the RCMP being the difference between Canada and some other nations. The RCMP, especially when one puts on that red uniform, is something that is highly respected. Historically, it might not necessarily have been a shining gold star. Yes, there have been many mistakes, but we have been able to overcome those mistakes, and in good part, still today, we look at ways we can compensate for those mistakes.

A good example of that is the record with the RCMP and indigenous people of Canada. There has been a great deal of effort through truth and reconciliation, with all forms of gestures and actions, to deal with some of those issues. By doing that in a public way, it does what the board has actually been doing; it helps build confidence in the institution. I believe we should all strive to see that. Fast forward to today, where we have the legislation that recognizes the importance of having these independent agencies. Through this legislation, we would create the opportunity for the Canada Border Services Agency to be incorporated into a new entity both for the RCMP and for the CBSA.

I thought this would have been universally well received by all members in the chamber. I was surprised at the degree to which members of the official opposition have resisted passing the legislation. I was not participating at the committee level, so I could not tell members how they performed at the committee level, but I was here during the report stage and the second reading stage. The lack of goodwill in recognizing the legislation was somewhat disap-

pointing. When we actually got to the report stage, in fact, the Conservatives moved an amendment to it. It was what I would classify as a silly amendment; it was to delete the short title. When I look at the legislation, it suggested, in an amendment at the report stage, that this act may be cited as the public complaints and review commission act. That is the short title.

When one looks at the short title, one questions the benefit of moving that amendment. The reality is that the only purpose of moving that amendment was to delay the passage of the legislation. That is the reason that they moved that amendment and the reason that we see some of the behaviour of Conservative members, in particular, dealing with second reading, whether it is Bill C-20 or other pieces of legislation. That is why we see many of the concurrence reports brought through. Time and time again, and Bill C-20 is an excellent example of this, the Conservatives are more determined to try to prevent legislation from passing.

A lot of that legislation is solid, tangible legislation that would make a difference in the lives of Canadians. When I look at this piece of legislation, I look at the many benefits of it, and I fully expected that the legislation would have passed relatively quickly. I know that Conservatives are going to be following my comments this evening, so it will be interesting to hear where their objections to the legislation actually are. Do they not feel that the principles of the legislation are something that could have warranted us passing the legislation sooner?

● (1910)

That principle applies on a number of pieces of legislation, but I think that has a lot more to do with the politics inside the chamber than the actual substance of the legislation. That is a determination that has been made by the House leadership of the Conservative Party.

I am glad we are at this point today because it would seem that there is a very good chance that the legislation is going to pass third reading, and for a very good reason. When we think about our border control, all one needs to do is to look at the number of people who travel back and forth to the United States or, for that matter, to any country in the world. I have an active interest in trying to help facilitate people coming to visit Canada.

In the area I represent, every month, I write literally hundreds of letters. In some months, it is probably four hundred or five hundred letters, and in other months, it is probably closer to eight hundred letters, trying to get individuals to be able to come to Canada to visit, whether they are attending weddings, funerals, graduations or just visiting family members who may have immigrated from countries like Philippines, India, Pakistan, and many other countries.

Every time someone comes in, they have to deal with border control officers. We are getting numbers that go into the millions. Our border control agency and its officers are dealing with literally millions of people coming into Canada every year. They have a lot of authority.

I have had the opportunity to take tours of our detention centres, through customs, where people are going through without the appropriate papers, for example. Our officers actually have the ability to detain or to prevent someone from leaving the airport. That is a fairly serious responsibility.

With that responsibility comes the need for accountability and transparency. It does not mean that we are saying that there is something wrong with the system because that is not the case. All in all, the system works exceptionally well. We are talking about tens of millions of people coming and going every year.

If we look at the actual number of complaints we receive, it is but a small fraction of the overall number of people coming and going. However, that small fraction does warrant the need for us to be able put something in place so that if people have concerns, maybe it is the manner in which they were treated at a border or at an airport, wherever it might be, they have an opportunity to be able to express themselves.

If I was going through the Canada-U.S. border, an agent could ultimately make a decision that items I have brought with me are going to be kept or that something is going to be applied to them, and I might not feel that it was appropriate. It could also be something that greatly offends someone, anything from a racial incident to a wide spectrum of other behaviours that one might see.

• (1915)

At the end of the day, I would suggest that establishing a place that people can go to in order to express their grievance is absolutely critical. For those individuals who feel intimidated by it, as I said, it is not a reflection on the vast majority of the people who are performing this service. It really puts into place the opportunity, as I have said and as I have tried to amplify, that those agencies will in fact be better off because there will be a truly independent commission that actually deals with what is coming up. This legislation enables the commission to investigate complaints and take a look, for example, at levels of service, or even conduct a CBSA employee investigation where it is actually warranted. The commission does have the powers to review the activities of the CBSA. It would exclude things such as issues related to national security and other sensitive types of areas, but it has significant powers to look into, to review, to come up with recommendations and be able to take actions.

At the end of the day, what we do know is that it has been very effective for the RCMP. I believe that it will be just as effective for Canada border control officers. Canadians must have confidence in our law enforcement agencies, and having an effective civilian review is central to implementing public confidence and trust.

Let me just add to that. Bill C-20 would establish the PCRC, which would function as an independent review body for the RCMP and the CBSA. Through this review body, we will ensure that all Canadians can expect consistent, fair and equitable treatment. We will do that through strengthening the review body's independence and discretion, requiring annual reports from the RCMP and the CBSA on the implementation of PCRC's recommendations, which is a really important aspect, receiving those annual reports. Often we are able to make good, solid policy decisions based on the types of reports that we receive, collecting and pub-

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lishing disaggregated race-based and demographic data to help assess and address systemic racism in law enforcement. All of that is part of our commitment to making Canada a safer place for anyone.

There are a number of points dealing with the legislation. The one that I would highlight is that the government is proposing to invest well over \$100 million over the next six years, and about \$20 million per year ongoing, in order to support the actions that the legislation is taking.

As I indicated, this is legislation that could have very easily passed a whole lot earlier. I am glad that we finally have it at a stage today where it would appear as if it will be passing. I do look forward to comments coming from, in particular, the Conservative Party, realizing, of course, that all the amendments and so forth have actually been dealt with. It is just a question of allowing it to ultimately come to a vote so that it can become law and add more value to building public confidence in two outstanding institutions.

• (1920)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I was glad to hear that the hon. colleague mentioned the importance of addressing systemic racism within the proposed bill in particular, but I am concerned. Could he explain why his party did not support the NDP amendment to set up a service standard timeline for specified activities such as systemic racism? This is something that the National Council of Canadian Muslims specifically called for, along with many other organizations. I would like to hear his response to that.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the legislation itself is a follow-up to a commitment that we actually made in the 2020 throne speech. Since then, we have continued to look at ways we can deal with the discrimination that takes place. I believe that the commission would actually be empowered through a complaint-driven process that would help by providing the type of information that would be essential as we move forward. We would get reports coming into government that would reflect what is actually taking place at our border controls and our RCMP. We will have to wait and see what kinds of policy directions might come out of those reports.

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

Before I begin, I want to recognize someone who recently passed away in the riding, and that is a gentleman by the name of Anton Frasn. My condolences go to his family, particularly his daughter, whom I know very well. May perpetual light shine upon him.

My colleague just said that this was in the throne speech. I may have misheard him when he said “2020”. I think that is what he said, but really, he should have said “2015” because this was a 2015 electoral promise. However, here we are in 2024, and the Liberals are saying they are delivering on their promises.

How can my colleague possibly say that when there was a prorogation and, simply put, a lack of putting this forward and a lack of a desire to get this done?

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**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, this is the reason I provided some comment in regard to how the Conservative Party goes out of its way to prevent legislation from ultimately passing. The member heard correctly in regard to the throne speech. It was a throne speech. It was also in the mandate letter in 2021 for the minister, and we have been talking about it, but there is a finite amount of time for debates in the House of Commons.

When I take a look at the sense of commitment, whether it was going through the pandemic with the numerous pieces of legislation or all the different budget bills, not to mention all the other important pieces of legislation that were brought through, including this one, there is a limited amount of time. The opposition knows that, and that is one of the reasons the opposition chooses to bring in concurrence report after concurrence report, tries to adjourn debate, cries if we want to sit too late and uses all sorts of tactics in order to prevent legislation from passing.

Sadly, that does make it a bit more of a challenge. We might set the legislative agenda, but I do not underestimate the role the Conservatives play, in terms of that whole destructive force, in preventing legislation from passing. However, I am glad and grateful that it would appear as though we might be able to get it passed today.

• (1925)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen:** Madam Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to stand again to ask further about the parliamentary secretary's response to my question on having the commission take in some of those complaints, hearing them and learning from them. That may be all well and good, but would it not be better for the legislation to help address the issues before they happen and deal with them proactively so that we could prevent someone from coming to harm in the first place?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, as the member is likely aware, I was not necessarily sitting on the committee, and so I am not that familiar with the NDP amendment. However, I would be interested in hearing how that amendment was worded. I think that would go a long way in enabling me to provide more of a detailed comment.

The point I was trying to amplify is the fact that we all are very much aware of the types of incidents that take place at our border controls, and I would even include the RCMP. We know there are serious issues there. The advantage of having this arm's-length, independent review, both of government and of the agencies it is holding to account, is to ensure that there is a venue for people who have had some sort of a violation against them in one way or another to be able to express their grievance to this truly independent commission or board. I think that is the true value of it, because they will also be presenting reports that will enable all members of Parliament to then better reflect on the types of issues that are taking place. Not only do we need to be aware of those issues, but we need to look at other forms of action that might be necessary in order to be able to deal with the very serious issue that the member is talking about.

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, before I begin my comments, I request unanimous consent to split my time with the member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely pleased to have the opportunity to rise today to speak to Bill C-20, an act establishing the public complaints and review commission and amending certain acts and statutory amendments. This legislation would rename the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to the public complaints and review commission.

Under its name, the commission would be responsible for reviewing civilian complaints against the Canada Border Services Agency; codified timelines for the RCMP and CBSA responses to PCRC interim reports; reviews and recommendations; information sharing between the RCMP, CBSA and the PCRC; mandatory annual reporting by the RCMP and CBSA on actions taken in response to PCRC recommendations; mandatory reporting of disaggregated race-based data by the PCRC; public education; and a statutory framework to govern CBSA responses to serious incidents.

On the surface, it may appear we are discussing the specifics of some new entity the government is creating to expand the bureaucracy. I would not blame anyone for assuming that, given it is often how the bloated Liberal government responds. However, the sentiment behind this bill is a good and responsible one.

While Conservatives may still have some concerns with this bill, I believe our amendments made at committee did improve it. This legislation seeks to increase people's confidence in the justice system and hold to account those who ensure our safety and who secure our borders. Anyone put in a position of authority can either use it appropriately or inappropriately, including public servants entrusted with protecting Canadians. They are responsible for properly exercising their duties and must be held accountable for their actions.

This includes employees at the Canada Border Services Agency, an agency entrusted with supporting national security, public safety priorities and dictating who and what enters or leaves our country. CBSA is the only public safety agency without an independent oversight body for public complaints. This has been deeply concerning for all those who cross our borders and interact with border officials, including CBSA employees themselves, which is why Bill C-20 seeks to correct this.

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Frankly, this piece of legislation is long overdue, as we have heard. The Liberal government introduced this bill in the 42nd Parliament as Bill C-98 and in the 43rd Parliament as Bill C-3. However, it was never given priority in Parliament by the Liberals. I would be remiss not to mention it was a promise in their 2015 platform. This speaks to either their disingenuousness or their incompetence when it comes to addressing important issues and following through on their commitments. It is also very telling of the NDP-Liberal government's priorities when it puts off initiatives that would protect Canadians in order to focus all its energy on finding new ways to spend taxpayers' money.

While I will be voting for this legislation, I still have some concerns about it. The first is that Bill C-20, in its current form, does not reflect many of the recommendations offered to improve it. This bill was studied at committee to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to raise their concerns and flag various problems with it to members of Parliament and even make recommendations, not so that Liberal MPs could have an audience to watch them give the impression they cared. When indigenous chiefs and the National Police Federation, on behalf of the RCMP, suggested changes be made, Liberals voted against Conservative amendments that reflected the experts' recommendations.

Another concern that remains unaddressed is the lack of independence. The current complaint process results with most complaints about the RCMP being referred to the RCMP. Given the Liberals' record, they clearly do not understand the need for independence, and so I will explain it for their sake.

- (1930)

The reason the police cannot investigate the police is pretty much the same reason that a prime minister should not investigate himself or herself. An independent body is necessary to ensure professionalism and impartiality and build public trust. If the investigator has no vested interest in an investigation, their only allegiance is to the truth, thus ensuring Canadians can trust the process. The PCRC not only ought to, but needs to, be able to conduct its own investigations using its own investigators, which must be reflected in Bill C-20.

Even if self-conducted investigations were always completely honest, there is still the problem of perception. If people are afraid to file complaints or believe that, in doing so, they do not have any hope of their complaints' being dealt with, the issues that should be raised will not be addressed. I cannot think of anyone who would file a complaint to the person whom the complaint is about, for obvious reasons. To build trust, investigations must not only be internally transparent, fair and independent, but they must also appear so externally. A fully independent commission is not only good for those filing complaints, but for all Canadians, including the RCMP themselves.

The Liberal-NDP government's soft-on-crime policy has led to skyrocketing rates of violent crime and auto theft. Many Canadians, especially those in rural Canada and remote areas like my riding of Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, look to the RCMP for protection of their persons and their property. The Liberal-NDP government's policies are creating chaos, making the RCMP's job more difficult.

The RCMP is essential to keeping our country and its people safe and to maintaining law and order. To do this, RCMP officers need to be on the front lines, doing the important work that they were trained to do. The bureaucratic paperwork that comes with dealing with complaints is taking up our valued officers' time. The RCMP officers cannot protect Canadians if they are stuck behind a desk in a cubicle somewhere. Clearly, supporting a commission independent of the RCMP not only ensures fairness, but efficiency as well. The intent of this bill is to lighten the bureaucratic burden of the RCMP and ensure justice and transparency. However, the execution is not the best. It can be better, and that is where the heart of this debate lies.

The Liberal-NDP coalition refuses to take constructive criticism. Conservatives embrace legislation that makes positive changes for the good of the country. We listened to stakeholders and worked with other parties when they put forward good suggestions. We introduced amendments. Obviously, we were not going to agree on everything, but our goal should be, and indeed it is our duty as parliamentarians, to ensure the safety and security of Canadians. These are all important issues and I am sure that the members of the cost-ly coalition would say that they agree that the safety and security of Canadians is the most important. However, actions speak louder than words. By doing nothing for nine years after promising to put the bill in place in 2015, refusing to improve the bill by listening to stakeholders and addressing their concerns and now rushing this legislation through because of their own incompetence, the Liberals show how unserious they are and Canadians will not be fooled.

Conservatives are committed to continuing to work on these important issues. The question truly is, are the Liberals committed? If they are, can they organize themselves enough to put aside their other pointless endeavours and fix their flawed legislation so that it can be passed, once and for all?

- (1935)

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's always well-spoken and well-thought-out comments on the legislation before us tonight.

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I echo the concerns that my colleague raised about the long and delayed process the Liberals have in managing a lot of the legislation they bring forward. It is their inability not only to get legislation through to make fundamental changes, many of which we have argued and thankfully some have been taken up, but more, I would like my colleague to perhaps elaborate a bit on the frustration we constantly have that when a piece of legislation is passed in the House and in the Senate, it is the actual implementation of it in a timely manner.

There is strong support across the country and here in the House for this commission to proceed, but if it is like other commissions, like other promises made in the past by the Liberals and NDP in legislation, it often costs a lot of money, takes a lot of time and produces more frustration than results. Could my colleague elaborate as to whether she shares that same concern post this legislation passing and not just in the process of seeing it through right now?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely, I agree with the member.

We have spent many years in this place under the Liberal government, watching the Liberals' inability to manage their own legislative agenda and then taking far too long to implement what has been passed into law.

I would absolutely agree with the member's comments. I would have to say that the only people to blame for this bill not being passed already are the Liberals themselves.

● (1940)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find it truly amazing that the member would say that, given the fact that the Conservatives moved an amendment at report stage to delete the short title. Who are they really trying to kid? Do they think Canadians are that stupid?

At the end of the day, this bill could pass if the Conservatives would stop playing their games. That is all that has to happen. The Conservatives just have to allow the legislation to pass, and stop playing games.

Then the Conservatives have the tenacity to say, "Well, it is the government that is not passing the legislation" or that we are dragging the legislation. No. Duh. It is the Conservative Party not understanding or trying to fool Canadians.

Why does the Conservative Party want to try to trick Canadians into believing that it is the Liberals, when in fact it is the incompetent Conservatives across the way?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, I absolutely know that Canadians are not fooled by the Liberal government, its incompetence, unseriousness and its inability to manage its own legislative agenda.

As for putting forward amendments in regard to a short title, all parties in this House have put forward amendments to change a short title. That member knows it, should just come clean with Canadians, and stop pretending that this has anything to do with more than just the Liberals' own incompetence.

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

One thing I want to highlight is that the Liberal government is just not working for Canadians these days. Not only are the Liberals not working for Canadians, they are just not getting things done.

This bill was put forward in 2015, and it did not pass. The Liberals prorogued in the 43rd Parliament. Here we are now, and they think, "Oh, we've got some time to kill, so let's just do this." This is during a week when foreign interference is at an all-time high and the Liberals just do not seem to care about naming names of people in this House who are working with foreign governments. This is at a time when people are paying double the rent, and the Liberals will pontificate that Canadians have never had it so good.

What message does this send to Canadians, with this bill passing and the other things I mentioned?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his observations and for the fact that he has been shepherding this bill through the House most recently.

The member opposite spoke about the importance of checks and balances, and of having this independent body in place. However, he then went on to say that they even understood the need. Quite frankly, I find that rich, knowing how long it took them to actually get it done.

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise on behalf of the people of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry and eastern Ontario and to have the opportunity tonight to talk on the bill before us, Bill C-20, the public complaints and review commission act, and actually localize it a little bit. It is an important piece of legislation for our part of eastern Ontario, and I am proud to not only to represent the great people of the city of Cornwall and most of the united counties of SD&G, but also the people of Akwesasne.

I would be remiss, as I begin my comments here tonight, if I did not acknowledge the leadership of the retiring and outgoing grand chief of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, Abram Benedict, who has been, for many years, a great leader and a great partner to work with. In my role before as a warden of the united counties, as a mayor in our community and most recently as member of Parliament, Grand Chief Abram has become a friend, and I had seen him recently on the weekend at community events. He has been such a positive advocate for the people of Akwesasne and the unique challenges they face.

The geography of Akwesasne alone is enough of a challenge for him and council and their staff, team and residents to navigate on a day-to-day basis, which is why Bill C-20 is very important to the riding of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry. The bill would create a commission that would do independent reviews of civilian complaints of the RCMP to a certain jurisdiction and also CBSA on the interactions that Canadian residents may have with CBSA on the front lines or otherwise.

We have a port of entry in the city of Cornwall that goes through Cornwall Island and Akwesasne into northern New York. The community of Akwesasne is unique geographically, as I mentioned, because the community straddles both Canada and the United States, which creates a very interesting logistical challenge on many fronts. If that was not unique enough, the geography also stands unique east and west by encompassing both Ontario and Quebec. So, on provincial jurisdiction, there are often a lot of complexities about working with the respective provincial governments, and having an international border between two countries certainly makes things strained at our port of entry. The strain, frankly, around the CBSA port of entry has been well documented and known for years.

As I mentioned, the grand chief has always been a great advocate for the residents and council in Akwesasne, and on Bill C-20, he has been no different. He spoke in previous Parliaments. Actually, this started two Parliaments ago when then Minister Ralph Goodale tabled similar legislation, and it was tried again in the last Parliament. Again, I will say that it is the inability of the Liberals to manage their legislative calendar and see legislation through that, here we are again, in the final days of our sitting before rising for the summer, the bill is up for debate again and then has to go through. However, the grand chief spoke at the public safety committee last year and provided the context of why this new and needed commission is going to be important and much supported by council and the community in Akwesasne, and not just them but the City of Cornwall, partners and neighbours of the port of entry as well.

Here is the thing that is interesting about the port of entry in our part of eastern Ontario. It is the 10th busiest in all of Canada, but 70% of the traffic is actually residents of Akwesasne going back and forth between Cornwall Island and the city of the Cornwall more often than not. That equates to about 1.4 million trips through Canadian customs by Mohawks travelling in Akwesasne, or more than 100 trips per member per year. Sadly, that puts quite a strain and tension in the community when there is somebody, a Canadian citizen, residing in Cornwall Island looking to take their kids to school, go to a medical appointment, go out for dinner or go shopping and having to go through customs each time they leave Cornwall Island to go to Cornwall and vice versa. This has created a lot of tension and frustration over the years, and rightfully so.

If the port of entry and CBSA is not enough of an issue, there is the location of the tolls. I have been on record before, and will continue to be on record, to say that, itself, is another barrier when it comes to Akwesasne and our neighbouring communities being able to partner more on economic development, travel and tourism.

● (1945)

I spoke to local residents in Akwesasne who worked very hard over the course of the last couple of years to fundraise and build a beautiful skate park on Cornwall Island. They raised money through a variety of ways. The construction of the project and the ribbon cutting were, rightfully, well documented on social and local media, and were a source of pride in our region.

What continues to be frustrating is this: It is one of the best skate parks for young people to experience, but there is a barrier that continues to be in place. If someone living in Ottawa wants to go down to check out the skate park for the afternoon with their children,

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they have to bring their passports, go through CBSA and pay a toll just to go to Cornwall Island. Therefore, the commission is necessary.

My colleague from Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek said it very well: Police investigating police, complaints against complaints within, is the equivalent of the Prime Minister's investigating the Prime Minister. People would look at that and say it is not a proper recourse nor an appropriate one. It is the same thing we have seen with the RCMP and the CBSA. We need to require what we have done in that regard. We need the commission in place, and it is time for the Liberals to finally move forward.

I want to take the opportunity to lay out some of the further concerns that were raised by the grand chief in his testimony at the public safety committee. The assurances have yet to be provided from a technical side of things when it comes to the legislation. The community does support Bill C-20, but there need to be assurances from the Liberal government on the implementation, and that is going to be key for the commission to be a success.

The first is that it has to be set up in a timely manner. There needs to be specific training when it comes to our area, our port of entry, and the uniqueness that we face, as I have outlined in this speech tonight. However, at the same time, we need to make sure that when a citizen, a civilian, wants to bring a complaint forward to the commission, it would be easily done. The grand chief raises the example of ArriveCAN. Many elders in Akwesasne do not have a smart phone. They did not have the ArriveCAN app. That in itself presented a lot of challenges in navigating during the COVID world of going back and forth between the port of entry, Akwesasne, Cornwall Island and the city of Cornwall.

However, it needs to be the same way with the commission; the government needs to realize this and commit to a simplified process for an individual to make a complaint. It could be done by paper, by phone or through another means such that regardless of one's age or access to technology and ability to use it, one would have the right to file a complaint in a simple manner, in order to be heard.

The other part that would be key is making sure the process, from an HR perspective and an operations perspective, would ensure, first, that the civilians and citizens who do initiate a complaint are heard in a timely manner, and, second, that there is a clear resolution and outcome to the complaint they file.

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If the legislation comes to fruition, I believe, based on the set-up of our port of entry, that sadly we are going to see a significant number of the complaints come from the Cornwall-Akwesasne area. We need to have full commitment from the government, not only on the legislation itself but also on what I call the regulations and operations around it. Canadians deserve to know that there would be a fair and simple process through which they could file a complaint. All Canadians need to be assured that their voices and complaints would be heard, responded to and dealt with in a timely manner. My role as a member of Parliament for our community is to make sure that does happen.

I look forward to questions and comments from my colleagues, and I appreciate the time to add my voice and thoughts on the issue.

• (1950)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak, for the last time I hope, to Bill C-20, which we have helped to improve over the last few weeks and months.

As I said last week, this was one of the first bills I had the pleasure of working on in the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, and we were indeed able to improve it.

Last week, I talked about the amendments proposed by the Bloc Québécois that were adopted and made this bill more transparent. I will come back to that briefly, but this evening I would like to focus on the amendments that we adopted as a committee.

Amendments were proposed by all the parties, meaning the NDP, the Conservative Party and the government. It always makes me smile or even laugh a bit to see the government proposing amendments to its own bills. It is as though they did not take the time to think bills through properly before introducing them, and when they saw the result, they figured they could have done things differently and therefore decided to propose amendments to their own bills.

Nevertheless, I believe that, when we have an opportunity to make something better, we must do so. The government helped improve its own bill. So much the better. The parties actually did work well together. Last week, I talked about how long it took for the government to make this bill a priority. It was the third attempt. Two bills had been introduced in previous parliaments.

There was also a lot of systematic obstruction by the Conservatives, who wanted to focus on another study instead of Bill C-20. We got a lot of emails because of that. A lot of people who were keeping a close eye on the work of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security and watching this bill progress reached out to us.

They also contacted the clerk of the committee and to the chair of the committee, saying it made no sense for parliamentarians to talk about anything and everything except Bill C-20, when people, citizens and Canadian travellers had been victimized by the behaviour of certain Canada Border Services Agency officers and were entitled to some justice. They had a right to be heard, at least, and to have their complaints processed in a timely manner.

We were finally able to study this bill. I hope that it will be passed as soon as possible and that the Senate will complete its work quickly so that this commission can finally get off the ground.

What is more, it has been said many times that the CBSA is still the only Canadian public safety organization that does not have an independent or external public complaints commission. Establishing one is long overdue. In fact, Justice O'Connor recommended this, as has been mentioned here a number of times.

He recommended that 20 years ago. He said back in 2006 that an independent process was needed to manage public complaints. The government finally heeded that call 20 years later, and we are examining that bill today.

This new commission will handle public complaints regarding the CBSA, which does not already have such a process, as well as complaints about the RCMP. The Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP, or CRCC, already exists. Representatives from that body appeared before the committee. The government simply decided to combine the two into a single commission.

I heard my government colleague say earlier that combining the two commissions into one seemed quite simply the best thing to do. It is not a bad idea, I admit, but the current chairperson of the CRCC told the parliamentary committee during the hearings that she already does not have sufficient or adequate resources to deal with all the complaints within a reasonable timeframe. We were talking about financial resources, of course, but also human resources.

I am wondering how the government is going to create a single commission to deal with complaints for both the RCMP and the CBSA. I hope that, in creating this new commission, the government will give it the resources it needs to do its job properly so that victims are heard quickly.

• (1955)

This process can already be long and complicated. When a person is the victim of harm caused by a border services officer, they may not decide to file a complaint until a few months or even a year or two later. They may not be ready to file a complaint the day after the harm is done. All of these processes can be extremely long. If the commission does not have the necessary resources to deal with a case in a timely manner, that will obviously make the process even longer. That is not pleasant for those who decide to file a complaint.



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In recent years, the media has reported on many cases of misconduct on the part of some CBSA officers. These officers have a lot of power, as we know, because they can detain and search Canadians and they can deport people. It is therefore rather surprising that there is still no commission to review public complaints.

Conducting internal investigations in this type of organization is always an option, but the process is not wholly transparent and some of the information is not available. For the public, being able to turn to an external organization that is independent of these security organizations could help boost confidence in Canada's public safety institutions.

The media has reported numerous cases involving searches of travellers' electronic devices and racist and rude remarks made by some officers toward clients and travellers. We also cannot ignore the many other situations that likely occurred but were not reported in the media. Some organizations told the parliamentary committee to imagine all the people who decide not to file a complaint out of fear of harm or consequences. For example, an immigrant or a refugee who would be sent back to their country of origin in the meantime may feel they lack the necessary tools or may fear that complaining could hurt their immigration application, so they choose not to file a complaint. All of these specific cases were worth examining to determine effective ways to change or improve the bill to make it a more transparent piece of legislation.

I touched on why it was important that this commission be created. Obviously, it will allow people to benefit from a truly transparent process. If someone is not satisfied with the results of the internal investigation by the CBSA or the RCMP, they will be able to ask the commission to look into the complaint. The commission will be able to present its findings or recommendations. However, it is important to understand that the commission will not have the power to compel the CBSA or the RCMP to take disciplinary action. Then again, these organizations will have to report to the minister and justify their response to the commission's recommendations. A report will then be tabled in the House and the Senate. This will ensure a certain degree of accountability, even if the commission cannot take any action in response to the acts committed. It will be up to the CBSA or the RCMP to take those measures, for example, with respect to the employees identified.

An interesting aspect of Bill C-20 is that it aims to reduce the RCMP's existing complaint processing times and make the complaint processing time for the CBSA as reasonable as possible.

Who will sit on this commission? As I said last week, it will not be former members of the RCMP or the CBSA. The proposal that was adopted by the entire Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security is that the members who sit on this commission should reflect the diversity of society. When I spoke about this last week, my colleague from Rivière-du-Nord asked if we had moved an amendment to ensure that the members of the commission were bilingual. I told him that that was a good question, but that I had not tabled such an amendment because it seemed to be a no-brainer. This is Canada, there are two official languages, and I figured that the members of this commission would obviously be bilingual.

• (2000)

He went through something during the study of Bill C-40, which seeks to establish the miscarriage of justice review commission. He moved an amendment to ensure that decision-makers under this act will be bilingual. Believe it or not, some committee members rejected it. It is unbelievable. Personally, I thought it was not even worth moving that kind of amendment because those people would definitely be bilingual. Interestingly enough, if this act is reviewed in the near future, I will make sure to move such an amendment. At the very least, when this commission is set up, I will look at it very closely. I want to ensure that the people appointed to the commission are representative of society, obviously, but also bilingual. That is a very important point, and I thank my colleague for bringing it up.

One of the amendments presented during the study seeks to authorize third parties to file complaints on behalf of citizens or travellers. I explained it in this way. For immigrants and refugees, there may be a language barrier. There may be people outside the country who fear reprisals, as I mentioned. Maybe the individual can turn to someone they trust or an organization that takes care of complaints. For example, members of the Quebec Immigration Lawyers Association can do this work on behalf of people who want to file a complaint. It is their job. They have the necessary expertise and they can support these people. Adding this to the bill was essential. To us, third parties have to be able to review specified activities. Fortunately, this was adopted by the committee.

We also removed a paragraph from the bill requiring the commission to be satisfied that it had sufficient resources to review a complaint. There was something vague about the wording. I talked about a lack of financial or human resources earlier. We were afraid the commission might say it could not review a particular complaint because it lacked the necessary resources. There was something unclear or missing there that we wanted to clarify to make sure the commission always gets sufficient resources to examine every complaint it receives. We certainly hope the government will put its money where its mouth is and give the commission the funds it needs to carry out its mandate.

We also added a requirement that copies of the commission's correspondence be sent to the complainant's legal representative. Earlier, I talked about third parties that can be involved in the process. The same thing applies to legal representatives. For example, if an organization is representing the complainant, but correspondence is always sent to the complainant instead of the legal representative, that is a problem, so that has to be fixed in the bill.

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Finally, some aspects of the refusal to investigate were amended thanks to the Bloc Québécois. The commission will now be able to refuse a complaint rather than being required to refuse it. Sometimes a few words can make a big difference. This applies to cases where other recourse would be available to an individual. The commission can choose to refuse the complaint, but it will not be required to refuse it. We felt it was important to amend that.

I am going to talk about what I feel are the most important amendments the committee adopted to make this whole complaint process more transparent. Unions were included in establishing standards for handling complaints, and a one-year time limit for handling complaints was also added. One year may seem like a long time, but given the number of complaints filed per year, it was enough to give the commission time to investigate a complaint. Knowing that it will not go on for longer than a year may take some stress off the complainant. If the commission decides that it really needs more than a year to review a complaint, it will be entitled to that, as long as it explains why it needs more time.

- (2005)

We then adopted an amendment that forces the minister to provide a copy of the commission's report to the organization in question, either the RCMP or the CBSA, on the same day the minister receives it. Previously, in the bill as originally drafted, the minister would only do so if the minister considered it appropriate. In terms of accountability, we thought it would be a good idea for the agencies concerned to receive the reports as quickly as possible, so we amended that.

The government also made a suggestion that the number of national security-related complaints be stated in the annual report. We thought that was an interesting suggestion. We adopted it, again for transparency. Next, the chairperson of the commission has to publish the memorandum of understanding respecting access to protected information on the website. I am obviously getting into the more specific details of the bill, but we adopted this amendment, once again to ensure more transparency. This enhances the availability of certain information on the commission's web site.

We also added a two-year deadline for filing a complaint. As I was explaining earlier, a person will have up to two years after the harm to file a complaint. Sometimes people hesitate out of confusion, then realize that the deadline has passed and they cannot file a complaint because the incident happened too long ago. We extended the deadline to give complainants some flexibility. The commission will have the option of extending the deadline for filing a complaint and, if it chooses not to, it will be required to provide the reason it is not extending the deadline.

The NDP proposed a very worthwhile amendment. I will give the NDP credit where credit is due. The complaints that are filed cannot be subject to non-disclosure agreements. Members will recall the case of Janet Merlot and the class action lawsuit filed by hundreds of women who were the victims of sexual harassment, intimidation and discrimination during their career with the RCMP. Under the act governing the RCMP's Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, complaints could be dealt with out of court and non-disclosure agreements could be signed. We made sure that

this legislation banned non-disclosure agreements outright in order to keep things as transparent as possible.

The second-last amendment that I want to mention is this: If a complainant decides to withdraw their complaint, they have to explain to the commission why they are doing so. That is for feedback purposes and to help the commission understand why a complainant would want to withdraw their complaint. Is it because the process is taking too long, for example? That would enable the commission to improve how it deals with complaints. We thought it was a good idea to add that. Finally, the union representatives of an RCMP or CBSA employee will have the opportunity to make representations to the commission, which was not the case before. The unions were somewhat neglected in this bill, so we found a way to include them because it is important to get their opinion.

Overall, Bill C-20 was an interesting, well-crafted, long-awaited bill, but I think all the parties helped improve it in the best possible way, making it as transparent as possible. As I have mentioned before, we already have ideas on how to improve it even more once the act is reviewed. The goal is to pass it as quickly as possible so that complainants, the people harmed by border services officers, can receive a hearing, get their complaints processed as quickly as possible, and gain trust, especially in Canada's public safety institutions.

I hope this bill will be passed as soon as possible.

- (2010)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to speak to Bill C-20 at third reading.

We worked hard on this bill at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. We are finally at third reading, about to send this bill to the other place. It is extremely important that we do just that.

Our role as members of Parliament is to improve bills. It must be said that this bill was introduced by the government. This was its third attempt. Before now, it did not really put in the work to set up a review and complaints commission. We have seen this in previous bills. The government introduced bills so late in the parliamentary session that they never passed. There is a clear need for a complaints commission. Everyone is calling for one. So far, the government has failed to make it a high enough priority to get it through all stages of the parliamentary legislative process.

The bill passed second reading and was referred to committee for study, where there were several delays. It was not the government that caused these delays, it was actually the Conservatives who, on several occasions, prevented amendments from being considered and witnesses from being heard.

*Government Orders*

Happily, after spending hours considering each amendment, the bill was passed. All the witnesses said that it was really important to improve this bill. At the same time, it needed to be adapted. I want to say that finally, after several delays, my colleagues on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security and I have succeeded, by working together, in getting this bill passed and improved.

I would like to take a few minutes to talk specifically about how the NDP worked to improve the bill. The NDP got approximately ten amendments passed, all of which are quite crucial. We worked with the other parties, the governing party, the Bloc Québécois, the Conservative Party, to pass amendments that had been submitted by the other parties.

Even though the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security had to meet several times, and the Conservatives moved a completely separate motion rather than hear from witnesses and hear such important evidence, even though all these delays slowed down the study of the bill, we are now getting to the final stage. We even hope the bill will pass unanimously this evening and be sent to the other place.

First, this complaints commission will cover more than just members of the public. Internal employees should be well represented. We put forward an amendment, NDP-6, to ensure union representation. When you work in the labour movement, it is important that unions be represented. Workers must have a representation process.

● (2015)

We amended clause 28 of the bill, allowing union representatives of Canada Border Services Agency and Royal Canadian Mounted Police employees to jointly set service standards for the review timelines specified in that section of the bill. We set a one-year deadline for resolving these representation and timeline issues. It is a victory for union representation and assurance of union representation in the service standards initiative.

We did not stop there. We also pushed for greater transparency and accountability. The committee heard from a number of witnesses, including the Breaking Barriers coalition, which wanted to see more transparency and accountability in the bill. We asked that copies of the reports submitted be distributed. The transparency issue was raised in amendments NDP-7 and NDP-14. We wanted all this information to be available, and we worked hard to get these amendments passed.

We also wanted to contribute to the reconciliation process with indigenous peoples, and we submitted amendments NDP-9 and NDP-9.1 to include all reconciliation issues in the bill.

We also wanted to give complainants more time to bring forward complaints, which is key. Initially, before it was improved in committee, the bill said that complaints had to be brought within a year. We wanted to extend that period to accommodate organizations that testified, such as Amnesty International, the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, the Canadian Bar Association, the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, and all the other organizations, including the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group.

We wanted to ban the use of non-disclosure agreements, an issue that was brought up in connection with the Hockey Canada scandals. We wanted to ban non-disclosure agreements, which prevent victims from speaking up. Amendment NDP-23 on that subject was agreed to.

We wanted to definitively prevent intimidation and know why a complaint was withdrawn. The monitoring group suggested that a complainant could provide reasons for withdrawing a complaint, which would be another way to better protect victims. Other proposals of ours were adopted, making the version of the bill amended by the committee more transparent than the original version.

● (2020)

There were other extremely important improvements. I would like to list the organizations that played an important role in improving this bill: Amnesty International Canada, both the francophone and anglophone wings; the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association; the Canadian Council for Refugees; the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, the Canadian Muslim Lawyers Association; the Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council; and the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group. Because of them, Bill C-20 will pass at long last, but with extremely important improvements.

[*English*]

We are now hopefully coming to the end of the House saga around Bill C-20, a bill that would establish the public complaints and review commission, which is so important for both the CBSA and the RCMP. We want to have in place a public complaints commission that does its job. We want to make sure those who serve our country at the RCMP and CBSA are subject to the appropriate oversight but at the same time have protections as well.

The bill, as improved by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, would achieve that mandate. We have managed to improve the bill and provide for more transparency and for a better set of checks and balances to ensure victims have more rights and that labour representation is acknowledged and upheld in the bill itself. Also, providing for a longer complaint period is something that is extremely important, as well as banning the use of non-disclosure agreements to silence victims.

There are so many organizations that provided valuable testimony. I am hoping the bill will pass tonight by unanimous consent, despite the delays that took place through the committee process. The reality is that this bill is much better coming out of committee than it was going into committee. It is necessary. It is important to put this into place. I am hoping that all members of Parliament will vote to send it to the other place this evening.

*Government Orders*

● (2025)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, debate is moving at a rapid clip, and I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to Bill C-20.

I will pick up on the point of the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby that, my goodness, this bill has been in front of us for a long time. First reading was more than two years ago. The bill is long overdue.

I will also put on the record early that I will vote for this bill. I am very pleased to see it head toward the Senate.

[*Translation*]

I do have some comments, though, because I still have some concerns about the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency.

[*English*]

We have had a public complaints commission for the RCMP for some time. I think it is fairly shocking that it is only now that we will have a public complaints commission of any kind for the Border Services Agency. The number of complaints about systemic racism within CBSA is legend. It is certainly distressing and disturbing, and no one has had any place to take those complaints until and unless Bill C-20 gets through this place.

There is no question, as other members have mentioned, that the bill was much improved in committee. There were amendments that improved the bill on many scores for the RCMP public complaints commission, which is steadily being improved. I will never forget that when I was first elected to this place, the RCMP public complaints commission did not have the right to subpoena witnesses. Things have improved. CBSA needs to have this available for people who are dealt with roughly by CBSA.

At some point in the future, certainly not tonight and certainly not before we pass Bill C-20, it would be very useful to reflect on the recommendations of the Mass Casualty Commission in relation to the single biggest mass shooting in Canadian history, as the Speaker will certainly recall as a member from Nova Scotia. The shootings in Portapique remain with me and sit with me, and I do not think we have done enough as a House of Commons to deal with the report of the Mass Casualty Commission.

I certainly hope the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security will pick up on unfinished business relating to what happened in the circumstances there. The Mass Casualty Commission made broad and sweeping recommendations for reforming the RCMP, and as far as I can see, in response to alarm bells, the RCMP has hit the snooze button. I really hope that we will return to that at some point in future.

Certainly, the Canada Border Services Agency needs to make improvements. When I spoke to the bill at second reading, I shared an extraordinary story in which I was involved, as a member of Parliament. There was a man from outside my riding. He was indigenous. CBSA, without any warning, showed up at his door right before Christmas, arrested him and put him in leg irons. They took him away from his indigenous wife, a survivor of residential schools, threw him in the back of the van and told him he was being deported to the United States, which is where he was born,

without any regard to his rights as an indigenous person under the Jay Treaty and with no previous attempt to connect with him. He had been living in Canada for decades. He had been married for decades. He was a member of the Penelakut first nation, a grandfather and a pillar of the community, and, but for the grace of God, he would have been deported.

I cannot tell how much it stuck with me, the notion that CBSA officers were, at least at that time, some many years ago, probably around 2013, if memory serves, being encouraged to find people whose papers might be a bit irregular and get them out of Canada. I think they also had a TV show to follow them, so they could have real-life examples of what it was like to arrest someone who did not belong in Canada.

I thank God for a minister at the time who is no longer in this place, Chris Alexander, who was the minister of immigration. I managed to convince him to regularize the status of this wonderful man who has since passed away. Also, I have to say there was work that was done quickly to get him released from what was then a holding cell under the Vancouver airport. It has since been relocated to a more proper facility.

We are making improvements. The proposed bill would be one. I want to see it pass and will certainly be voting for it. I know we are expediting things this evening, but I do not think it is proper to skip over. We have more work to do to ensure that we root out systemic problems of racism at CBSA and in the RCMP and, when the complaints commission is up and running, as it has been for the RCMP, but with renewed vigour thanks to Bill C-20, and for the first time for the Canada Border Services Agency, that we as parliamentarians stay on top of this.

The bill is going to the other place. This is another concern: If there are amendments there, as we know, it will come back to us. We should keep our eye on the ball to make sure that Canadians, or for that matter, those who are crossing our border and are not Canadian, receive the protections of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as they should from any federal agency.

I thank my colleagues for the opportunity to share some thoughts and to encourage us all to pass this, but not to see this as the end of the story in ensuring that all federal agencies respect each human being with whom they deal, regardless of prejudices that exist within both of those services against racialized people and against indigenous people.

Our work here is not done, but for tonight, let us hope Bill C-20 passes expeditiously.

● (2030)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is on the 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.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division, please.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, June 11, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been some consultations with House leadership and members in regards to winding down the session for this evening. I would suggest that there is unanimous consent to call it 12 o'clock midnight so that we can begin Adjournment Proceedings.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

### HOUSING

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, indigenous housing remains a critical issue. Too many Inuit, first nations and Métis live in mouldy, overcrowded homes without access to running water. Far too many Inuit, first nations and Métis are compelled to leave their homes. Too many end up homeless on the streets in urban centres. These realities are a direct result of decades of underinvestment, a pattern continued under the Liberal government.

I highlight the work by the federal housing advocate. Her report on Inuit housing emphasizes that the right of Inuit to adequate housing is being violated. None of the seven elements of the right to housing have been upheld in Nunavut and Nunatsiavut. In Pangnirtung, the advocate found that 120 families are on the waiting list for public housing. With a population of 1,500, that means that 28% of all families are on a housing waiting list. The true number is likely even higher, as many people see little hope in applying for housing.

I have spoken many times about the heartbreaking conditions I see when I travel to Nunavut communities. These are conditions the federal government imposes on Inuit. Families of eight are living in two-bedroom units with no place to sleep. They have to sleep in shifts because of a lack of beds in a single unit. Children have no space to do homework. Mould and tuberculosis are present in so many homes. Addressing the housing crisis should be a top priority.

The NDP has used its power in Parliament to fight for indigenous peoples. In budget 2023, the NDP fought for the creation of a \$4-billion urban, rural and northern indigenous housing program. The earned housing funding would give money directly to housing providers to help the most vulnerable Inuit, first nations and Métis

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living away from their home communities. More than a year later, housing providers are still waiting to receive funding from the government. That is not because of a lack of work by first nations, Inuit and Métis, as hundreds of applications have been completed. If funding does not flow soon, we will see another summer building season in the north lost. This will delay the start of projects by another year.

Indigenous peoples are dying, while the Liberals continue their delays. Having repeated all of this here once again, I ask this simple question: When will the desperately needed funds for urban, rural and northern indigenous housing be released so that we can begin closing the housing gap?

• (2035)

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking the hon. colleague for her question and her tireless advocacy.

I also want to acknowledge that I am standing on the unceded traditional territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin people.

The negative impacts of the legacies of colonialism are numerous and wide-reaching for indigenous peoples. Poor housing conditions, overcrowding and homelessness are just a few of the lasting impacts of the historic mistreatment and persistent racism indigenous peoples experience.

With a commitment of righting past wrongs and building for the future, Canada has embarked on a journey of reconciliation with indigenous peoples to address a long history of colonialism, which is why indigenous housing priorities are being co-developed with and led by indigenous people.

Since 2016, Canada has supported the construction, renovation and retrofit of almost 34,000 homes in first nations communities. In 2018, the Canada-Métis Nation Housing Sub-Accord was signed, outlining the design, delivery and administration of housing services such as buying new homes, repairing existing homes and providing rent supplements to families most in need. This was the first time the Government of Canada provided federal funding to Métis for housing, empowering the Métis Nation to manage funding to address their needs. They decided how to use those funds.

As of September 2023, governing members of the Métis National Council and the Manitoba Métis Federation have bought or built 1,575 homes and renovated 4,600 housing units. They have also provided down payment assistance to 1,537 households and rental supports to 9,528 households.

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada is working with the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Inuit treaty organizations to deliver Inuit-specific investments and implement the co-developed Inuit Nunangat housing strategy.

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Canada began providing direct funding to Inuit partners for self-determined housing delivery in 2016. Since then, over 500 new units have been constructed by Inuit, with many more units repaired and critical Inuit-led housing programming expanded.

Working as partners with indigenous peoples on solutions to housing is having a real impact and improving conditions for first nations, Inuit and Métis every day. These impacts remain possible with the significant financial investments from the federal government.

Budget 2021 allocated \$50 million to the governments of Northwest Territories and Nunavut, as well as \$18 million to first nations off reserve without modern treaty, Northwest Territories Métis, to address the issues of housing availability and quality, which disproportionately affected northerners.

Budget 2022 allocated \$150 million to territorial governments to address critical housing needs. Budget 2022 also invested an additional \$4.3 billion over seven years, starting in the year 2022-23, to accelerate work in closing indigenous housing gaps. There is more in that budget, with \$2.4 billion over five years to support first nations housing on reserve, \$565 million over five years to support housing in self-governing and modern treaty holder first nations communities, \$845 million over seven years to support housing in Inuit communities, \$190 million for housing in Métis communities, and \$300 million over five years for the urban, rural and northern indigenous housing strategy.

● (2040)

**Ms. Lori Idlout:** *Uqaqtittiji*, I struggle to appreciate the past investments of this government. According to the Assembly of First Nations, the infrastructure gap stands at almost \$350 billion. With Inuit and Métis, this number reaches over \$425 billion. Of that, \$135 billion is just for housing. We urgently need to build more than 150,000 new homes, as well as repairing 55,000 existing homes. These are astronomical numbers that will require generational investments to achieve.

What has the Liberal response been? It is a commitment of just \$918 million over five years in budget 2024, which is less than 1% of what is needed. That results in pennies.

It is clear that the Liberals will not come close to meeting their target of ending the infrastructure gap by 2030. When will these promises become action, so that investments become real and the infrastructure gap is addressed?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that the Government of Canada takes the issue of housing for indigenous peoples very seriously. We know that indigenous people are more likely to experience poor housing conditions and overcrowding than the general population is. That is why housing in first nations, Inuit and Métis communities is backed by significant funding from the federal government, which I outlined in my speech.

By working hand in hand with indigenous partners to co-develop and implement strategies and policies, we can come up with practical solutions that will work best for their communities. Through this approach, we are seeing results. All Canadians should have access to safe and affordable housing, which is why the government

has been taking concrete action with partners, building more homes and improving the housing situation for indigenous people across the country. That work is led by indigenous communities, and we think that is essential for how we close the gaps.

THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up tonight on my previous question to the government about the skyrocketing use of food banks in this country. It is going in the wrong direction. We have seen the national statistics, but tonight I want to provide an update on the local scene, which is not much better.

Let us remember what Food Banks Canada said in its recent report: Two million Canadians are using a food bank per month. That was last year. Looking ahead, it is expecting one million more visits to food banks in 2024. There are numerous food banks in every part of this country that are not only sharing heartbreaking stories of Canadians, many for the first time going to food banks for help, but are also talking about the increased pressure and demand on their staff, volunteers and suppliers to provide such a basic necessity to Canadians in their time of need. We know that this year alone, with inflation continuing to be a problem, numbers building on even worse numbers from previous years, the average Canadian family will be paying \$700 more on their grocery bill.

I am grateful every single day for the not-for-profits that are working in my community of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, the city of Cornwall and Akwesasne helping those people who need some support. There was a local group that supplemented many of the national reports that paint the picture of how food insecurity is not just an issue in big cities but is also hurting our part of eastern Ontario. The “Voices United II” report by Food Banks United used data created by the Agapè Centre in Cornwall; the Community Food Share in Winchester, Morrisburg and Finch; the House of Lazarus in Mountain and Ingleside; and the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Alexandria.

Here are the statistics from that report: Forty per cent of survey respondents in the area are personally hungry and do not have enough food, and 38% are missing meals in order to pay their hydro, heat or rent instead. Thirty-three per cent of food bank clients in our area are going whole days every month without eating, and 34% of food bank clients in eastern Ontario are children.

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The scary part is the growing number of people who are employed, working hard to make a living and make ends meet; there is a 37% increase over just the last year in the number of people who are employed and still cannot make ends meet. Their rent or mortgage, food bill, or whatever it may be, is becoming too much to bear.

We are seeing a correlation revolving around the carbon tax. The more that the government increases the carbon tax, the farther it is putting people behind, and the more people are using food banks. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, if Bill C-234 passes, the common-sense conservative bill, it would save Canadian farmers \$1 billion in carbon taxes in the coming years, with zero rebates.

No one believes the Liberal and NDP math saying we could put \$1 billion on the agricultural industry and not have that passed along to consumers. Putting more carbon tax on truckers, grocery stores and small businesses, without the rebate, cannot help but drive up costs.

When will the government get with the program and understand that the carbon tax is hurting families and driving them to food banks? It should axe the tax, provide some relief and finally bring down food bank use and food prices in this country.

• (2045)

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his advocacy for families and children. It is good to see. I spent my whole career working with non-profits and charities; specifically, I worked on ending food insecurity. However, it is good to hear that Conservatives are finally noticing that food insecurity is a problem in this country. It is too bad they voted against a national school food program that would take 400,000 kids out of food bank lines. I do not know how the Conservatives can maintain a position in which they seem to empathize with individuals standing in food bank lines but will not feed the children of those families.

Supporting families, improving their quality of life, is one thing that our government has set as a priority from day one. We have taken steps to make life more affordable because we believe every Canadian deserves a real and fair chance to succeed.

Let us take one example. The Canada child benefit helps low- and middle-income families with the costs of raising their children. The benefit, which is indexed to inflation, supports over 3.5 million families and over six million children. Thousands of families across my riding of Whitby receive upwards of \$91 million a year to support their families, which far outweighs the costs that the member opposite had mentioned in terms of what families are bearing today as their bottom line. That is close to \$25 billion, tax-free, in the hands of families each year from the Canada child benefit.

In 2021, the Government of Canada made a transformative investment to create a Canada-wide early learning and child care system, which we knew would give children a strong start in life. Tens of thousands of families and children are already benefiting from

reduced child care fees, enabling mothers to rejoin the workforce, which builds family incomes.

Since 2022 and until June 30, families with children under 12 have benefited from the Canada dental benefit. With the new Canadian dental care plan, the Government of Canada would continue to help families access the dental care that they and their children need and deserve.

There is no question that food insecurity affects many Canadians. No child should go to school on an empty stomach, but the rising price of groceries makes it difficult for many families to afford nutritious food. That is why, in budget 2024, our government put in a \$1-billion investment over five years to create a national school food program. The program would increase access to school meals for an additional 400,000 schoolchildren a year and help more Canadian children get a better start each day. It would ensure that children can focus on learning rather than being hungry, and it would take some of the pressure off family budgets, helping make life more affordable.

We are also helping deliver relief at the grocery checkout counter in three ways. First, we have amended the Competition Act; this is something our government has done in three rounds of changes. I have been a part of that process and have seen a lot of collaboration with parties opposite. It is great to see us strengthening competition, which will ultimately lower and stabilize prices. Second, we have secured commitments from Canada's five largest grocery chains to help stabilize those prices. That was months ago. Members mocked that initiative, but it certainly had some impact. Third, we have set up a grocery task force to supervise the big grocers' work and investigate unacceptable grocery sector practices, such as shrinkflation.

These are all great examples of government working for Canadians. Since 2015, we have enhanced the Canada workers benefit, increased old age security and the guaranteed income supplement, and implemented a new Canada disability benefit. There are many more examples to come. We are strengthening the social safety net in Canada to ensure all families are taken care of.

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● (2050)

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, the member and I have had an exchange before about the Liberals' promises of a national school food program. We are both from the class of 2019. For years, the Liberals have been standing up and promising help. How many children have been fed after nine years under the current Prime Minister? That is not nine days and not nine months, but nine years. Zero children have been fed through the Liberals' national school food program. The only people getting fed are in the growing bureaucracy here in Ottawa; this is not helping families.

We talk about the carbon tax, and the Liberals say, "Oh, it is not punitive; it is not a big deal at all, because there is so much more money going back to Canadians than before. So many families are getting more money in the rebates than they are paying in the carbon tax." If that were the case, why is food bank use in this country up 79% in the last five years or so? Why are there now two million visits to a food bank per month in this country? Why are a million more people going this year? If things are so great, why are the Liberals' numbers so bad?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, obviously, feeding children in schools through a national school food program, in which there is an investment of \$1 billion over five years in this year's budget, is going to roll out in the coming years and months. It has not fed children in the past because it was not in existence in the past.

School food programs exist all across the country, but they have needed an injection of additional funds. We have heard their cries for more funding to help feed more children. That is exactly what we are doing. We have put it in this year's budget. The member opposite does not seem to want to support that. They are voting against a budget that helps feed 400,000 more kids. I cannot understand it. It is so ironic and hypocritical of them to stand here and say that Canadians are not doing well and are standing in food bank lineups. Yes, we empathize with that. That is why we are trying to feed children in this country.

## CARBON PRICING

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a story that is going to blow the hats right off our heads. I know we are not allowed to have props in the House of Commons, but let us pretend that we have binoculars. I can see the Deputy Speaker. I can see, way over there, the member for Whitby, who is going to get up shortly.

Why does this matter? I cannot see the CN Tower in here. I cannot see the CN Tower in my riding of York—Simcoe, but the Liberal government over here has classified York—Simcoe as part of Toronto when it comes to the carbon tax.

Why does that matter to people in my rural riding? We are not eligible for the 20% rural top-up. Think of that. The Chippewas of Georgina Island are 70 miles from Toronto, in the middle of Lake Simcoe, which one has to take a ferry to. It is the only way one can get home. In the middle of winter, one has to use a Scoot to take kids to school. They are not eligible to receive the 20% rural top-up under the carbon tax we have now.

Think about that. For people in downtown Toronto, as the Deputy Prime Minister said that she can just go out of her house, walk out and get on the subway. She can get on a streetcar. We, in

rural Ontario, where my riding is, have none of those options. We do not have a subway. We do not have a streetcar. The closest hospital is a 45-minute drive, and it is over an hour if one wants to take the ferry from the Chippewas of Georgina Island.

When I was coming here tonight, I ran into a gentleman coming up the stairs. He had his hard hat on, and he had his lunch box. He asked me if I worked in Parliament, and I said that I did. He told me that he was just beside himself, making \$1,000 a week, \$4,000 a month. With his fixed expenses at \$3,800 a month, he had \$200 to spare. This is the plight of many Canadians now. He said to me that if his fridge breaks or his car breaks down, he would be upside down under water. Again, this is the plight of many Canadians.

In my riding, the millions of dollars, since 2017, which people of York—Simcoe are entitled to under the rural top-up is what we have been denied by the government. That is why I am here tonight. I have talked about this for over two years with the Liberal government.

At my last adjournment proceeding, my hon. colleague's answer was to get up and ask if I had heard about the 20% rural top-up they are giving Canadians in rural Ontario. The point of the matter is that York—Simcoe does not qualify for that 20% rural top-up. Many communities in rural Canada, right across Canada, do not qualify for that top-up. How does one make the government understand this?

● (2055)

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government does not shy away from the facts, and the facts are that climate change is real. The Canadian Climate Institute points to how much climate change will cost our economy in the year 2025, which is \$25 billion a year and 50% of projected GDP growth in one year. That is the estimated loss in damages due to climate change next year.

I know the member opposite comes from a riding he is very proud of, the soup and salad bowl of Ontario, or of Canada, he calls it. I know the Holland Marsh well. It is a beautiful asset to our province of Ontario. I wonder what he would say to the farmers in that area when the derechos and other climate-related events are happening. I am sure he wants them to have a sustainable future for their farms.



Carbon pricing, obviously, is one essential tool in our government's comprehensive climate action plan. It is estimated by many reputable sources that up to one-third of Canada's carbon emissions reductions will come from the price on pollution. That is a significant amount. Our government is making evidence-based decisions that will serve the health of Canadians, of the planet and of the economy for decades to come.

Why is carbon pricing so important? It is because, of course, it deters certain types of behaviour and promotes other types of behaviour. It is a market-based mechanism that the Parliamentary Budget Officer and over 300 economists have signed a letter saying is the most cost-effective way to reduce emissions. When I talk to people, they say that this is actually a small "c" conservative policy. Conservatives ran on a price on pollution in their last election platform, under their previous leader.

I get that they have a new leader now, who denies climate change is real and would do everything to take us backward in time, but honestly, does the member really care so little about the farmers and the people in his riding, and about the children and grandchildren of future generations, that he will literally leave the planet to burn? I do not understand how one can oppose the most cost-effective market-based mechanism for reducing emissions in this country as one of the tools in the tool box to reduce emissions.

Does the member opposite actually believe in climate change, or does he just want to abandon all hope for a sustainable future? I think what he is advocating for is that we not address climate change at all, because he wants to abandon the most cost-effective method for doing so and on which economists around the world and the International Monetary Fund agree. I do not know what the member opposite wants us to do. Whether he wants us take a hiatus just because he does not like it for the moment, I am not sure, but I just do not think that he really takes climate change seriously.

● (2100)

**Mr. Scot Davidson:** Mr. Speaker, what I can say to the member opposite is this. I have stood in the House of Commons in hip waders and in Lake Simcoe in hip waders, calling this government

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

out because it cancelled the Lake Simcoe cleanup fund. The Liberal government does not care about common-sense climate change initiatives.

The NDP-Liberal government voted against my bill, Bill C-204, to stop the export of plastic waste to developing countries for final disposal.

I can tell the member right now that I will fight for every nickel that is owed to my constituents in York—Simcoe. With more than two million people going to food banks right now and housing prices and rents doubled, Canadians are out of money and I will fight for every nickel that is owed to them.

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I note the member opposite talked about food bank lineups again. It is really a shame that he would not vote in support of feeding hungry children. I do not know how he can say over and over again, as his party does every day in question period, that Conservatives care about the people in the food bank lineups, but they are not willing to support a national school food program. I just do not get that.

I understand that the member opposite is ideologically opposed to any action on climate change. Our government takes climate change seriously. Honestly, we have a commitment to addressing climate change because the people of Canada voted us in, in multiple elections, because they want to see climate action. Statistics have shown that the Canadian public cares about addressing climate change.

The member opposite makes it sound like we are trying to make life unaffordable. I have listed many things we have done to make life more affordable for Canadians, to address inflation and to invest in building a sustainable future.

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 9:04 p.m.)



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