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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, November 22, 2024

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1005)

[*Translation*]

## FINANCE

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to making life more affordable for Canadians.

Therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) and on behalf of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, I would like to table, in both official languages, the draft legislative proposals to implement tax relief for all Canadians and a rebate for Canadian workers that will put more money in the pockets of Canadian families so they can focus on the things that matter to them.

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## ORDERS OF THE DAY

[*Translation*]

### PRIVILEGE

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

The House resumed from November 21 consideration of the motion, of the amendment as amended and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to continue this debate.

The reason I went into politics was, of course, the desire to make the world a better place but, above all, I wanted to bring to an end to the previous Liberal government, which deceived Canadians with the sponsorship scandal. Everyone back home was outraged.

After that, Canada picked itself up, tightened its belt and balanced the budget. However, today, in the devastating aftermath of a Liberal government, the situation is once again critical.

By trying to play nice, the Bloc Québécois made us miss the chance to have an election this fall, when the NDP finally had the courage of its convictions and tore up the agreement that had served it well and kept this illegitimate government in office to the detriment of Canadians.

Just when we thought we had seen it all, here we are, holding the Prime Minister's nose to the grindstone to get to the bottom of what happened with the green slush fund. This government will do anything to get around the rules of ethics. It even found a way to use the environment to fool Canadians. That is proof that nothing will ever stop this government.

As usual, when caught with their hands in the cookie jar, this government and its Prime Minister give us as little information as possible. What bothers me the most is that they never suffer any consequences. Canadians are the ones paying the price, with their hard-earned money and at the expense of their safety and security.

Despite everything, I am convinced that with hope and action, we can recover from the disaster the Liberals have left behind after nine years in power. Young people are our greatest hope. I am confident that young people have learned something from all the Liberal dirty dealings and that they will vote to bring home common sense.

Speaking of young people, I was pleased to learn this week that my riding, Lévis—Lotbinière, has the lowest child poverty rate in the country. We ranked first in Canada, according to the Campaign 2000 report, with a child poverty rate of 5.1%. That is something to be proud of.

Our young people have good values and the courage of their convictions, and our next Conservative government is going to make sure that their trust is never broken. Under our leader, Canadians can rest assured that the days of cronyism and back-scratching in return for cheques, special treatment or undeserved positions are over.

The pendulum is swinging back for the benefit of the people of Lévis—Lotbinière, Canadians, and the future of my seven grandchildren. That makes me very happy. We always believed it would happen, and here we are, on the threshold of a future government with integrity, a government that values transparency and is not about to hide things from Canadians. As an eternal optimist, I believe that the green fund scandal will give undecided voters the push they need to make the only obvious choice. At long last, we are going to elect a Conservative government that has the interests of Canadians at heart. Canadians can rest assured that no one in our government is going to pull a fast one on them. A Conservative government is not going to talk of division. Instead, it is going to work to bring Canadians closer together again, one day at a time, because the challenge will be difficult. We will have to clean up the disastrous Liberal mess, build housing, make our streets safer, and get the machinery of government working the way it should again.

*Privilege*

Again, I invite my colleagues across the way to hand over the unredacted documents to the police. It is very simple. It is not complicated. It is an order of the House. This is not about referring the matter to committee, but about submitting the documents to the House; nothing could be simpler. It is called transparency.

I sincerely hope that I will never have to address this topic in the House again and that the Liberals will see the light and obey the Speaker's order, as they should have done a long time ago. It is absolutely mind-boggling to see how indifferent the Liberals are about the shenanigans at Sustainable Development Technology Canada. Despite the long hours of debate, the government keeps ignoring the legitimate concerns of the House and is just brushing off the substance of the scandal. The police should have everything they need to get to the bottom of things. For the police to have both hands on the wheel, they need to have the unredacted documents.

Canadians' trust is at stake because this scandal involves the mismanagement of the taxes Canadians have paid. When their taxes are squandered and handed out to cronies, as was the case with the green fund, they feel less inclined to pay them. Only a Conservative government will manage public funds responsibly and be accountable for its spending.

Some people today are afraid of a recession. Others argue that we are already there but that demographic growth is masking this reality. Unemployment is rising at a rate not seen since the 1970s, indicating that the economic situation is not as rosy as other numbers might suggest. While GDP is rising, GDP per capita has fallen over the past year.

This phenomenon demonstrates the failures of the Liberal government's economic policies, as it struggles to provide services and a solid economy, despite all its uncontrolled spending at the expense of future generations. This is economic vandalism. To make a comparison, it is distressing to see that Canada's GDP growth rate has not kept pace with that of our neighbours to the south for the past nine years.

Along with the economic slump comes thinly veiled corruption. The indifference to their situation is causing young people across the country to turn their backs on the Liberals and the Bloc Québécois. These ideology-focused parties, with their lack of vision, are preventing young adults from envisaging a normal future ahead. The Liberals have turned this country into a testing lab for all kinds of experiments without giving a second thought to their potentially devastating effects. I am referring to the legalization of drugs, the carbon tax, the tax distortion resulting from the tax on capital gains, and out-of-control immigration. The list is long.

"Hard to the left", say the Liberals, swept along by the NDP. However, by constantly turning in the same direction, they end up turning in circles. The carbon tax puts Canadian businesses at a disadvantage by penalizing hard-working entrepreneurs at every step of the production chain. Then it penalizes Canadian consumers, especially the ones struggling to make ends meet.

As if that were not enough, while the entire industry is at a disadvantage compared to our neighbours to the south. The Americans have been reaping the benefits of all the growth we have been los-

ing since 2015. The Prime Minister of Canada is the best job creation minister that an American president could hope for.

Canadian businesses are grappling with arbitrary discrimination, as evidenced by the green fund scandal. In other words, under the Liberals, everyone has been penalized except Liberal cronies, who are entitled to receive grants even if their companies do not meet the proper criteria. Liberal patronage is throwing money out the window. It is also a waste of money to fund programs like the housing accelerator fund, which has cost Canadians \$4 billion without a single housing unit to show for it in a year and a half.

In Halifax, housing starts dropped by 75%, compared to October 2023, whereas in Kelowna they dropped by 87%. The same thing is happening in Ottawa, Quebec City and Toronto, where housing starts dropped by 42%, 37% and 33% respectively. This is a far cry from the Conservatives' common-sense proposals to eliminate the GST on the construction of housing, which would stimulate the construction of 30,000 additional housing units per year in Canada.

By combining this with other measures, we will encourage the creation of housing, not bureaucracy, like the Liberal programs do.

Today 70% of Canadians recognize that it has become impossible to be a homeowner. An entire generation is losing hope to achieve something that used to be the norm. Statistics show that 59% of Canadians and 75% of renters have to sacrifice essential needs such as food, clothing and education to be able to pay their rent or their mortgage.

More and more, Canadians are being forced to stretch their basic necessities budget so they can afford a roof over their heads when they go to sleep. While everything costs more and there is an unprecedented housing shortage, the Liberals manage to run record deficits. This is where we see that they are not short on money but on competence. The lack of seriousness of this government is so blatant we could not make it up. That is why Canadians are begging us to trigger an election as soon as possible.

● (1010)

However, the Liberals are still obstructing the work of the House by refusing to hand over the documents to the police. While the Liberal game of hide-and-seek continues, crime is skyrocketing across the country, particularly in the big cities, but also in the regions. I myself had the misfortune of learning that street gangs are preying on high school students in Lévis, in my riding. This situation has become all too common in Liberal Canada, where judicial laxness reigns and impunity is growing, compromising the health of our children.

The good news is that things were not always like this in Canada, and things will no longer be like this when the Conservatives are back on the other side of the House axing the tax, building the homes, fixing the budget and stopping the crime.

*Privilege*

• (1015)

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of sitting on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. My colleague seems to think that the police need the House to hand over certain documents. I wonder whether he is familiar with the term “search warrant”. I will read the definition for him so he understands. “A search warrant is a written order from a judge or justice of the peace. This order gives the police the right to search your home and take certain items that they find.”

The police do not need the House to hand over documents. The police will do their job. Let us let the police do their job. The commissioner wrote a letter to our committee on July 25, and the official opposition party is well aware of that. The Conservatives are misusing the House. They are filibustering so that we cannot introduce new legislation. That is what today is all about. This has nothing to do with SDTC.

When will they stop obstructing the House?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, the House asked the government to hand over unredacted documents. If the police had the unredacted documents, maybe they would have turned them over. The police have the documents redacted by the government. The House's order is to hand over the unredacted documents to the police to get to the bottom of the problem.

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. I agree in part with many of his statements. I definitely agree that the Liberal Party is inherently corrupt, secretive and wasteful with public funds.

However, I would like him to explain some things about his party, since he can answer for his party's actions. He was a member here when one of his cabinet colleagues, Tony Clement, diverted \$50 million in public funds in his own riding. That is some serious misconduct, and it was condemned by the Auditor General at the time. What is more, Tony Clement was not just any minister. He was the president of the Treasury Board, which is responsible for managing and overseeing the administration of all federal public spending.

I would like my colleague to explain to me in concrete terms why Quebeckers should trust a Conservative Party that displayed no transparency and mismanaged public funds when it was in power.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, I will be pleased to talk about Canada's economic action plan, which was created by the previous Conservative government following the 2008 economic crisis.

We decided to invest in the work of Canadians and in projects that made a big difference for communities. Rather than giving money directly to Canadians, to avoid high unemployment, we gave money to initiatives intended to get Canadians working, which enabled our country to fare better than all the other G20 countries. Canada was number one. Just a few months after Canada's economic action plan was implemented, the Canadian dollar was at \$1.10 relative to the U.S. dollar. We were doing better than our neighbours to the south. Now, we are lagging behind. We are last in both

the G7 and the G20. The Canadian dollar is barely worth 70¢. That is the difference between investing to get Canadians working and giving people money to mitigate inflation.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière for his speech and, of course, his experience. We just heard the member's response explaining what the Conservative government did to deliver concrete results rather than smoke and mirrors. In his experience, since he has been in the House since 2006, making him the longest-serving Quebec Conservative MP in Canadian history—I hope he will correct me if I am off by a few days—can he tell us if he has ever seen a government refuse to obey an order of the House?

• (1020)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, it really sets a precedent in the House for the government to refuse to provide documents, or rather for it to hide documents, since we can hardly even call it a refusal at this point, because it is afraid of what is going to come out as a result of the investigation into these documents. We are in the final days, perhaps the final months, of this Liberal government.

Canadians are eager for an election to be called as soon as possible.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, during my colleague's speech, which started yesterday, the Minister of Environment rose today to table the details of an announcement that the government made. When we look at the details, we see that nearly \$6 billion is being added to Canada's national debt. The surplus that the government promised in 2015 is nowhere to be seen. We know that there will be a bit of tax relief for Canadians, but it is for only two months. The government is using sleight of hand to hoodwink Canadians and taxpayers.

I would like my colleague to elaborate on yesterday's announcement, now that we have some details. What does the future hold for Canadians? We know that the carbon tax is going to be hiked again by \$15 a tonne on April 1. I would like my colleague to elaborate on that.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Although I commend my colleague's efforts to ask questions about a presentation the minister made this morning, we are currently debating the matter regarding SDTC. This morning's presentation and the question have nothing to do with what the House is seized with at the moment.

**The Speaker:** The Chair has some flexibility. I think this generally fits in this debate.

The hon. member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, I was part of a panel on Radio-Canada this morning along with members of the other parties. I clearly said that these measures are very misguided. Let me explain.

*Privilege*

The parents of my little Octave, who is eight months old, will enjoy paying less GST on diapers. However, little Octave is going to be facing a shitload of debt for the rest of his life, because that \$6 billion is not going to be paid off in five, 10, 20 or 100 years. Every 20 years, that \$6 billion is going to turn into \$12 billion, then \$24 billion, then \$48 billion. Octave is going to be paying for the rest of his life for a government initiative from 2024.

Imagine little Octave, my 8-month-old grandson, being forced to bear the burden of this debt.

**The Speaker:** Before we move on to questions and comments, I would like to remind all members about the importance of choosing the words they use in the House very carefully.

The hon. member for Joliette.

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, to continue on the same topic, it is clear that the Liberal Party is trailing in the polls, so it is desperate. It is going into debt to send people cheques right before an election. They might actually receive the cheques in the first week of the election campaign.

As some members might recall, Stephen Harper tried the same strategy in 2015, sending cheques to families in the summer right before an election was called, and we know how that turned out.

Does my hon. colleague think this is a proven electoral strategy that works?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government adjusted the amount allocated for family allowances. That is not the same as sending \$250 to 16 million Canadians right before an election. If sending 16 million Canadians \$250 is not electioneering, there is only one thing left for the Liberals to do, and that is to give every family a fridge.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Mr. Speaker, it seems that the Conservatives are jealous or opposed to a tax cut. There will not be an election this spring. We do not need an election to cut taxes.

I would like to know whether my hon. colleague will have the courage to stand up to his leader and support our measures, because he could support Canadians now.

• (1025)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Speaker, it would really not be difficult to vote against giving \$250 to a person who earns \$150,000 a year. If two people with that income live in the same household, they will get \$500, when their household income is \$300,000 a year. Meanwhile, a single mother who earns \$45,000 will get only \$250. This is a really poorly targeted measure.

[English]

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today on behalf of my constituents of London—Fanshawe. I am always proud to represent them. Every day I come to this place eager to work and create solutions and programs that will help my constituents. That is what they expect from me. Each person in London—Fanshawe depends on me to be honest, to act with integrity to the best of my ability, to improve this country, to expand upon the social programs and services upon which they depend, to help them and to address the issues they are struggling with.

Many of my constituents are worried about the cost of living, about feeding, clothing and housing their families, about their jobs, about their quality of life, about their health care and about their pensions. They worry about their families and friends down the street. Many worry about friends and families all around the world who want to come to Canada to share in the idea of what Canada is. Many of my constituents are terrified for their loved ones around the world, in Ukraine, in Sudan, in Gaza and in Lebanon. People in my area, in my community, are terrified. As a G7 country, they look to our government, expecting us to show leadership on the world stage to fight for a more just world.

I have spoken in this place often about how proud I am of the supports that New Democrats have gotten for Londoners and Canadians. The provision of dental care is actively helping so many in London—Fanshawe. Seniors have told me that they are relieved, because after having spent years of living in pain, they have the ability to get their teeth fixed. Also, with pharmacare, the provision of free diabetes medications and devices and free contraceptives will save millions of people millions of dollars. I am proud that I can be part of those supports, and many other New Democrats have negotiated them with the government for the people. New Democrats did that. We used our time here not to promote ourselves but for others.

I am frustrated beyond belief, because despite my being elected to help navigate these issues with my constituents, I am here today having to talk about the greed and corruption of the government. In the last month or so, I have been disappointed every day, because we keep coming back to a Conservative filibuster and a Liberal cover-up, and we continue to listen to Liberals and Conservatives compete over how bad they are. Every day in this place, Conservatives talk about how bad and how scandalous the Liberals are, and the Liberals in return talk about how bad and how scandalous the Conservatives are. Guess what. Both are terrible; they are both scandal-ridden. Here is a news flash: Each party, whether it is the Liberals or the Conservatives, has not used the power they have been given by their constituents for all of their constituents.

What so many members in this place do not seem to understand is that this place, Parliament, this access to power, is not about them. I am not here for them; I am here for the people who do not directly sit in this chamber and who do not represent billion-dollar interests or individuals who hoard the wealth and power of this nation for themselves. For the majority of their time in power since Confederation, these two parties have worked to undermine working people. They have worked to ensure that this system only benefits them and their closest friends, friends who already hold a great deal of power but are determined to never lose it.

*Privilege*

Up until this point, I did not want to enter this debate, but after weeks of listening to Conservative after Conservative and the member for Winnipeg North, I could not take it anymore. We are debating this issue of integrity again, or lack thereof, and I have entered the fray. I cannot imagine how many hours have been spent in the House over decades debating Liberal and Conservative scandals.

Under Stephen Harper, where many of today's Conservatives cut their teeth, including the current Conservative leader, we saw the other place stuffed with party insiders who treated the public purse as theirs. They lined their pockets, only to have the Prime Minister's Office try to cover it up. In 2011, the Conservatives used robo-calls to mislead voters away from the polls to try cheating their way into a majority government.

• (1030)

We saw the member for Peterborough—Kawartha's predecessor, Dean Del Mastro, carried away in handcuffs for breaking election laws to cheat and hold on to power. We saw Peter Penashue take illegal campaign donations and be forced out of cabinet. We saw Max Bernier, the Conservative leader's colleague at that time, forced out as the foreign affairs minister when he left classified NATO documents lying around. We saw the member for Parry Sound—Muskoka's predecessor take \$50 million out of the public purse to flood his constituency with gazebos and expansions under the guise of the G8. We saw the Auditor General's investigation showing that they refused to keep a paper trail.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am not sure if we have quorum.

**The Speaker:** I will ask the clerk to count the members present.

*And the count having been taken:*

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton. I am reassured that we do have quorum in the House.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Sarnia—Lambton for ensuring that there are many people in the House to listen to me. I also know the Conservatives were probably trying to cut down on my list of all the Conservative scandals. However, I am going to keep going.

The Conservative international aid minister was held in contempt when he lied about defunding Kairos and charities. The government was held in contempt for lying about the F-35 fighter jet program. The Conservative defence minister took a military Cormorant search and rescue helicopter for a joyride. Those helicopters are used for necessary rescue missions of Canadians.

Finally, the Conservative government refused to produce documents underpinning its so-called tough-on-crime legislation after a motion passed by a majority vote in Parliament, which is ironic. That is the same situation we are in today, in which the government did not respect the authority of Parliament, and that was because it knew what those documents would show, which was that Conservatives wanted to throw the book at youth or our fellow Canadians trapped in the cycle of poverty and petty crime while covering up for their white-collar crimes and corruption during their time in Parliament.

Canadians finally got sick of watching Conservatives cut our community services to fill their pockets. They threw them to the curb and elected Liberals, but the Liberal government has been no better. When SNC-Lavalin was caught bribing the Libyan government, the Prime Minister tried interfering to save his powerful buddies. When Canadians were making sacrifices to make it through the COVID-19 pandemic, the Liberals tried ramming through their convoluted program to refuse students relief while lining the pockets of the PM's friends, the Kielburgers.

The Prime Minister set up cash for access fundraisers in which the wealthiest and most powerful in Canada could pay the maximum amount legally allowed to have off-the-record face time with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister promised to be Canada's first environmentalist government and then bought a pipeline.

The Liberal government is once again accused of corruption, scandal and misspending. In this case, this time, it concerns the Sustainable Development Technology Canada fund, which was established in 2001. It was afforded over \$1 billion in 2021 to be delivered over a five-year period. Through an Auditor General report and a spot audit of this fund, 90 cases of conflicts of interest were identified, totalling about \$80 million of taxpayers' money. The question was raised of whether the people who were making decisions to allocate those funds, who were all appointed by the Liberal government, were actually giving it to companies that they themselves controlled or that were connected to them in some way. This would seem to be a significant conflict of interest.

According to the Auditor General, the projects that were approved and did receive millions of dollars of taxpayers' funds overstated the environmental benefits that actually came to pass. In fact, over the past six years, SDTC approved over 225 projects, worth about \$836 million. Although the Auditor General did only a spot audit on a sampling of this, she found consistent, pervasive and repeated conflicts of interest, misspending and wasteful spending. The Auditor General put the blame squarely on the Liberal minister responsible for this fund and said there was a lack of oversight. I am shocked that a fund worth almost a billion dollars was running with such a significant lack of oversight by the Liberal minister, who was supposed to make sure that those funds were spent in accordance with the authorization of Parliament.

*Privilege*

The Ethics Commissioner is now investigating the former chair of SDTC, who approved two grants greater than \$200,000 to a private firm that she herself directed. She did not recuse herself. She participated in the decision of SDTC to approve the grant. That case is being investigated as we speak. This is important. I agree with all my NDP colleagues and all parliamentarians that this is horrible and that we have to condemn this kind of wasteful spending and scandalous corruption.

The official opposition has put forward a motion demanding documents from the government so we can get to the bottom of it, as is Parliament's right. The New Democrats joined with the official opposition, supported that request and demanded production of documents to the House so that Parliament can exercise its constitutional duty to scrutinize spending of government and hold it accountable. The Liberals, at first, did not want to deliver those documents, but the will of Parliament is supreme. Certainly, New Democrats demand that transparency and accountability occur. The government was prepared to produce the documents to the House, but it wanted to redact them to some degree.

• (1035)

Sometimes, the redaction of documents is legitimate, such as for national security reasons or to protect sensitive information. However, in this case, it is hard to know the reasoning for the redactions without further context. I worry that the government sometimes wants to redact information that it should not, but Parliament has yet to receive the documents, redacted or not. The official opposition members then decided they wanted all the unredacted documents to go to the RCMP.

This is where it gets a little confusing. The government has refused to do that, saying that although Parliament has the right to these documents, it is unprecedented to demand the production of documents to a third party. There is also an issue of whether the police forces, in this case the RCMP, might have its investigation compromised by having documents produced to it in that way.

I believe I am a reasonable person, although others might disagree. A reasonable person who has their constituents' best interests at heart and who respects Parliament and our democratic institutions would say it is fair enough that there is some doubt about referring these documents to a third party. In that case, let us have the documents come before Parliament, as is its right, to ensure that the Speaker's ruling is followed.

After six weeks, here we are still in a filibuster. Instead of responsibly doing what the Speaker directed and sending these documents to the procedure and House affairs committee, of which I am a member, so we can do our job and investigate this motion, we are instead sitting through a Conservative filibuster and a Liberal cover-up again. On top of everything else that most Canadians would shake their heads about, this filibuster is costing taxpayers millions of dollars. We are not doing the work we were sent here to do.

In London—Fanshawe last week, people were forcibly evicted from their homes because a greedy corporate landlord renovicted them. People were torn from their homes and from their community. We are not talking about that.

Two weeks ago, I sat with families who cried as they told me that they could not get their families out of Sudan. The government refuses to fulfill the promises it made to create special measures within the immigration system. We are not debating that.

Over a month ago, I spoke to constituents working in key community and public organizations that deal with mental health, addictions, housing, women's safety, the youth justice system and many more areas. They told me how difficult it is because they are not making a livable wage. Even though they love the work they do and the people they serve, they cannot make ends meet. They are worried that the federal and provincial governments do not value them or their clients. We are not debating that.

These are the issues of the people in my riding; they need to be debated in this place and need to be solved. They sent me here to deal with them. They want to know how we can make sure everyone has a secure, affordable and decent place to live. They want to be able to feed their families and build vibrant communities. People are struggling, and what are we doing? We are being filibustered about scandals and greed.

I will say it again: Both the Liberals and the Conservatives are terrible. Both have terrible records and terrible histories. Both have worked to ensure only that the rich and powerful are made more rich and powerful. Both are mired in histories of scandal, greed, lack of accountability and lack of transparency. They stand in the House and proclaim they are here to defend Canadians; the reality is that they are here because they are desperate either to hold on to power or regain the power they have lost. What they do not understand is that it is not their power.

The Conservatives stand in this place every day and call for an election, and they do it because they simply want that power back. They have a shiny new leader; this time, unlike in 2019 and 2021, they think they can actually win. They have spent a lot of money on advertising. They have rebranded their leader and given him a makeover. They have spent millions of dollars marketing their slogans and catchphrases, selling a leader and a party that will do the same thing Conservatives did last time they were in government.



• (1040)

If Conservatives were truly acting in the best interests of Canadians, they would work in collaboration to make real changes. They would put forward real alternatives. They would not throw out personal insults and contribute to the long list of scandals, the corruption and the waste of millions of taxpayers' dollars in filibusters. If Liberals were truly here for Canadians, they would release the unredacted documents to Parliament and not waste millions of taxpayers' dollars in scandals and corruption.

I will say to Canadians that they can demand more of their politicians. Canadians can make real change. We could have a government that disseminates power and wealth. We could have a government that puts people first and does everything it can to get results for people. New Democrats could be that government.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know the Conservatives do not have an environmental policy. They are against the price on carbon, ZEV mandates, an emissions cap on oil and gas, a clean fuel standard, a clean electricity standard and even planting trees. Their only platform is to fund green technology. That is all they have.

Does the member detect a hint of irony in the fact that the Conservative climate platform is solely focused on giving grants to businesses for green tech, or in other words, on picking winners and losers?

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Mr. Speaker, I do find it extremely ironic that, in all these conversations about Ms. Verschuren as a Liberal insider, she has actually donated quite a lot of funds to the Conservative Party of Canada.

I did reference in my speech that the Conservatives are not putting forward solutions. We see empty slogans with no backing. Slogans are easier to sell. My constituents ask me, "Well, then what?" There is this three-word slogan, and maybe it is a rhyme or it is catchy, but then what? We no longer have governments that consider anything other than the power they are trying to obtain. They also do not look much beyond a political election cycle. Government is supposed to look 10, 15 or even 50 years into the future. The Conservative Party is certainly not doing that.

• (1045)

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for London-Fanshawe for standing up against the corruption of the Liberal government, but it seems to me that it is moving past corruption into criminality.

Subsection 119(1) of the Criminal Code says that anyone who holds public office cannot take an action that benefits themselves, but we know the Prime Minister did so in the WE Charity scandal. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change has also done so in this green slush fund scandal, where he approved money from that fund, and then he got money for a company that he owns 270 million dollars' worth of, and it tripled the value. There is also the ex-minister from Edmonton, who was at the cabinet table taking decisions that benefited his company.

Would the member agree that the corruption on the Liberal side is escalating into criminality?

### *Privilege*

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Mr. Speaker, yes, all of those things are terrible, but what are we doing to help our constituents in this case? Are we moving forward to further investigate? Are we demanding that the government needs to release those documents to the procedure and House affairs committee? I am quite happy and willing to do my job on that committee to investigate that further and come to a conclusion on it so we can move forward and do what we have been sent here to do.

It is so frustrating to talk about who is worse. Again, I will say that both are bad. Both have taken Canadians for granted, decade after decade.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke a lot about the housing crisis and about the people in her riding.

Yesterday, the NDP and the government announced measures that will cost \$6 billion. The government is going to send a cheque for \$250 to people who earn up to \$150,000 a year, which seems completely unhinged to me. Combined with the GST measure, all this is going to cost \$6 billion. The Bloc Québécois asked the government to increase old age security for seniors aged 65 to 74, which would have cost \$3 billion. Now the government is throwing \$6 billion around.

Does my colleague not think that that money would have been better spent on building social housing units, which are sorely needed in this country?

[*English*]

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Mr. Speaker, it is a fallacy that there is not enough money for the things that people need. There is enough money for seniors. There is enough money to build social housing. There is enough money to ensure that we are expanding and strengthening our health care system. There is enough money to provide people with the dental care and pharmacare that they need. That money exists.

However, money, as I said in my speech, is being hoarded by a very small group of people. It used to be that government would insist that that money was to be redistributed and that that power was to be redistributed. The government does not do that now. It used to be that people would demand that. New Democrats demand that. New Democrats see it as a solution to this, but the government has not taken up our ideas entirely. One of these ideas is to cut the GST to provide moderate support to help people, which would be a support for my constituents and people across this country.

What we want to do is to ensure that we raise an excess profit tax to cover those expenditures. That is how we would find balance. That is how we would regain sense, order and balance in this country. We need to make things fair and make things equitable.

*Privilege*

• (1050)

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the speech my colleague just gave in the House of Commons is one of the best speeches we have heard on this question of privilege. The fact that she has stood up and repeatedly talked about what is needed in her community and how important it is that she does the work to represent the people of London—Fanshawe is remarkable.

Today is National Housing Day. The member spoke about how people within her community are struggling with housing and that that is something we are not debating in this House of Commons. I am wondering if the member could speak a little about what she would like to see the government focus on, instead of the scandals of the Liberals and Conservatives, what she would like to see in terms of housing for the citizens of London—Fanshawe who are struggling with the very high cost of housing right now.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Mr. Speaker, what I want to provide for my constituents is something that both Conservative and Liberal governments have failed to do since the affordable housing strategy was cut by a former Liberal government over 30 years ago. It has certainly not been brought forward by the Conservatives since then.

We are missing 30 years of a federal government building affordable housing. The Ontario government has not done it either. We need to focus on building more co-operatives and building more affordable housing at all stages, whether it is rent geared to income, social housing or whatever. We also need to eliminate the REITs. We need to ensure that the greedy corporations that are buying up all of those affordable housing units cannot do it anymore.

In London, we are making some strides on that, a bit, at the municipal level, but neither the federal government nor the provincial government has taken any sort of leadership in that regard. I have stood many times, desperate to put forward real solutions for funds that could be created to give to not-for-profit organizations to buy up those affordable units to keep them affordable. The government has not done that, and my constituents are the ones that suffer for it.

There are so many incredible ideas that exist out there that we are not hearing because we are talking about how these two parties are mired in scandal.

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we do not disagree with the Speaker's ruling. We can let it go to PROC so we can move on, do the business of the House and debate important issues such as housing, poverty and climate change. Let it go to PROC. We do not disagree.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Mr. Speaker, the government should release the documents.

**Mr. Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are being greasy. They are the greasy Liberals. This is why we are here. For everyone watching today online or in the galleries, they are fighting to not turn evidence over to the RCMP. That is what this is.

We just heard from an hon. colleague from the NDP, which has been propping up the Liberals. Its members talk a big game that they are going to force that evidence over to the RCMP. We will see

if they stay true to their word, because we have seen it, time and again, when the NDP gets in a pickle. Do members know what its number one priority is? It is not Canadians; it is the leader's pension. We know we are not going to have an election until after February of next year if the NDP and the Liberals get their way. A part of that is to shut down debate and motions, such as the one we are debating today.

Let us recount what happened. There was a tech fund set up, the green slush fund, that functioned, before the Liberals arrived on the scene, quite properly. We had an independent board that did not have conflicts of interest. We had professional bureaucrats who administered the fund. We need to be thankful for those professional staff because it was through them that we found out how greasy the Liberals have become. We found out from whistle-blowers how badly this fund was mismanaged for the benefit of board members and the chair. We learned that over almost \$400 million was doled out improperly in 186 examples of conflicts of interest.

I am old enough to remember when a \$16 glass of orange juice, which was mistakenly expensed, was the headline news, from cover to cover, for weeks on end. If we fast-forward to today, it is not a \$16 glass of orange juice we are debating, but \$400 million of Canadian tax dollars that went to Liberal insiders, and projects that did not even qualify for the green slush fund got that money. If Canadians are upset, they should be, because the Liberals have been robbing them blind and are doing this now with the help of the NDP.

We are going to watch this closely because this is what will happen. The NDP leader loves his pension, and there is no way he is going to break up with the Liberals. We saw this earlier. We heard these big enunciations that he had ripped up the agreement. Just in the last 24 hours, we heard how the New Democrats are going to side with the Liberals just a little, only temporarily. That is the problem. There is no temporary divorce within the Liberal-NDP coalition. It has always been there. It is always there. It wants big government, a big taxing government, that spends money on everything and does not worry about who is picking up the tab.

There is good news for Canadians. Hope is on its way. Dawn is breaking and we are seeing the difference across Canada—

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

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, now we have the NDP—

• (1055)

**The Speaker:** I would ask the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni to please not take the floor unless he has been recognized by the Chair.

The hon. member for Saskatoon—University has the floor.

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, the member wanted to heckle about the \$250 bribe. That is what this is. It is a cheque that the NDP-Liberal coalition—

**Mr. Gord Johns:** Mr. Speaker, I was talking about the Leader of the Opposition's \$250,000—

**The Speaker:** That sounds like debate to me.

The hon. member for Saskatoon—University.

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, we can talk about the member's leader's pension and how ridiculous it is that a country is held hostage until his pension is vested in February. More and more Canadians are finding out about this. They think it is a travesty. It is an insult to democracy that an unholy coalition is holding this place hostage because of its members' ideologically bent ways. They would like to tax everything. For anything that moves in Canada, they want to make sure it is taxed. If it is still moving, they make sure they are regulating it. If it is not dead, well, there is MAID.

This is a little bit of what we are facing here in Ottawa. The Liberals are hell-bent on enriching their friends. That is what we are here debating, the green slush fund. We know that the chairwoman of that fund gave money to the company she owned. It is not just the Liberal insiders; the Liberal Minister of Environment gave Cycle Capital, his company, millions of dollars.

How are Canadians accepting this? Really they are not. That is why we are here today, for the countless people who have written in and emailed me, encouraging me to find the answers about where their money went. It is Canadians' money; it is their \$400 million. Canadians are waiting in line at food banks right now to get food to provide for their families. Where could that meal have come from? It could have come from some of the \$400 million that went to Liberal insiders. It had nothing to do with the program parameters that were set up. Real, Canadian tax dollars were being wasted.

Meanwhile, one in four Canadians is foregoing meals because of the cost of living crisis caused by the Liberals. The Liberals have spent money in ways that the green slush fund was not meant to, which is to enrich their friends and Liberals themselves, people from the governing party, which is wrong. That is why, in the second half of my speech, after question period, I am going to go through some of what the whistle-blowers have reported to us that transpired in this fund. Stay tuned; I will be back after QP.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1100)

[English]

### DENTAL CARE

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 8,365 is the number of people in my beautiful riding of Pierrefonds—Dollard who have benefited from the dental care program. Seniors aged 65 and above, young people aged 18 and under and persons with disabilities are all eligible for the dental plan right now.

### Statements by Members

[Translation]

It will be available to everyone as of 2025.

[English]

Canadians, including me, all have family and friends who have had to make tough financial choices to fix a toothache or not.

[Translation]

This is a real issue. As a Liberal, I am proud of this plan. It is a key component of our government's recent action.

[English]

The Conservative Party voted against the dental care plan. Conservatives are not here for Canadians. We Liberals, though, are committed to helping the people who need it most. I will continue to fight for the dental care program and for the benefit of all Canadians.

\* \* \*

### CHRISTMAS

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker,

'Twas the month before Christmas, and all through the House  
Nothing was moving, not even a mouse.

The slush fund had given the money away  
To Liberal insiders who all got the pay.  
Four hundred million went right out the door,  
And the papers we need might even show more.

But Liberals will not put those docs in the mail,  
Because someone is certainly going to jail.  
The ministers who owned even part of the scheme  
May end up again on the orange pyjamas team.

The scandals, corruption and schemes of this year  
Have not gone unnoticed by Santa, my dear.  
The naughty list is full of Liberal wrongdoing,  
And certainly more sketchy deeds will be brewing.

But we on the nice list are here to defend  
And bring to our country ideas to mend.  
From axing the tax to stopping the crime,  
We will build us the homes and fix the budget in time.

And so on towards the election on carbon tax we go,  
While Christmas is coming, along with the snow.  
And so what I would say to each one, if I might,  
Is Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night.

\* \* \*

### AFFORDABILITY MEASURES

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Ottawa Centre, it is my great privilege to speak to my constituents on a regular basis. I knock on doors almost every week in my community, and I have been hearing from my constituents, who tell me that the cost of living is real. They have seen the hardships of rising inflation, and even though inflation is coming down, they are seeing their budget stretched. They have asked the government to find ways to make it easier for them.

*Statements by Members*

That is why I am so excited that relief is on the way. We are going to be providing a holiday from GST and HST for two months during the holiday season on the most essential things, like groceries, children's clothing and toys, restaurant meals, beer and wine. All these things are important for us to enjoy our lives and to be able to enjoy the holiday season.

We are not stopping there. We are making sure that we are providing support through \$250 in the spring for all working Canadians. This is really important for Canadians.

\* \* \*

**SOUTH OKANAGAN—WEST KOOTENAY**

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I want to thank two wonderful women in my life.

First, I want to congratulate my assistant, Jennifer Ratz, who just this week was presented with her 30-year service award from the House of Commons. I can attest that there is no one on Parliament Hill who can navigate the bureaucracy better than Jennifer can.

Second, I have to thank my wife, Margaret, who has always been my rock, my moral compass and the love of my life. When someone called me out of the blue in 2012 and asked me to enter politics, I said no, but Margaret pointed out that we needed scientists in Parliament, and she urged me to take the plunge. Since then, she has supported me all the way and has all the while reminded me that I am here to make sure the government lives up to its moral duty to fight climate change with every power it has so our grandchildren will have a livable world in which to grow and thrive.

I thank Margaret and Jennifer. I love them both.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the holiday season approaches, our government is putting more money back into the pockets of Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Our new tax break and the new working Canadians rebate will help reduce costs when they are highest for Canadians. Starting December 14, prepared foods, restaurant meals, beer, wine and cider will all be GST-free for the holiday season. That means Canadians can celebrate the holidays with family and friends, support local businesses and keep a little more of their hard-earned cash.

However, people do not have to just take my word for it. Restaurants Canada said that our announcement means more Canadians will be able to celebrate with loved ones at a restaurant, have lunch with colleagues or treat themselves to a morning pastry on their way to work.

We do not need an election to cut taxes. Will the Conservative leader give his MPs the freedom to speak up for local businesses and put money directly into the pockets of Canadians? If not, will Conservative MPs have the courage to stand up for our local businesses?

• (1105)

[*English*]

**VOLUNTEERISM IN KELOWNA—LAKE COUNTRY**

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as we approach the Christmas and holiday season, I want to recognize the many amazing not-for-profits and charities and the generosity of our community, which I call the spirit of Kelowna—Lake Country. There is the Santa Bus, the RCMP Stuff a Cruiser Campaign, the Kelowna Santas and so many more.

Our local food banks and other organizations have record numbers of people coming to them looking for help. If people are able to, they should support local food banks or any number of the many not-for-profits and charities serving people or helping animals in our community. Volunteering time can be one of the most valuable gifts. I also encourage everyone to buy local and to support our local small businesses, including farmers and the many artists and entrepreneurs at Christmas craft fairs.

As we spend time with our loved ones this season, let us also reach out to those who may be by themselves. I thank all people who have servant hearts and who work tirelessly to help others.

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**INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the International Criminal Court has made a historic move by issuing arrest warrants for Benjamin Netanyahu, Yoav Gallant and Hamas leader Mohammed Deif. This sends a clear message: No one is above the law.

As Canadians, we take pride in our commitment to human rights and the rule of law. I thank the Prime Minister for affirming that Canada will uphold the decision of the ICC. As a nation that helped establish the International Criminal Court and ratified the Rome Statute, it is our duty to uphold and abide by international law, ensuring that the people responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity are held to account.

Canada must continue to stand firmly with international law and be clear that violations of human dignity will not be tolerated, no matter where or by whom they occur. Let us always stand for justice and the rule of law.

\* \* \*

**AFFORDABILITY MEASURES**

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am excited to share some good news. Yesterday, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister announced the GST tax break for all Canadians and the new Canadian workers rebate, \$250 in the spring. Both measures will help Canadians afford the things they need and to save for the things they want.

The measures demonstrate our government's commitment to ensuring that Canadians can keep more of their hard-earned money, while sustaining a strong and resilient economy. By focusing on practical and targeted solutions we are helping to put money directly into the pockets of middle-class Canadians.

On the other side of the House, the Conservative leader will not allow his MPs to speak their mind and fight for their community. Instead they are left parroting his empty slogans to please him, to the detriment of their constituents, whom they are supposed to represent.

Yesterday's announcement is a real and tangible step to support Canadians, and I encourage all members of the House to support the affordability measures, which will surely make this Christmas more merry and bright.

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#### HOLODOMOR MEMORIAL DAY

**Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this week we observe Holodomor Memorial Day, remembering the millions of Ukrainians who fell victim to one of history's most horrific crimes. Stalin's brutal Communist regime deliberately starved families, silenced voices and waged genocide to destroy the Ukrainian people and their culture. My grandfather fled this oppressive regime in 1929, escaping a fate that claimed so many of our extended family. They were left to suffer under a system that showed no mercy or regard for life.

Nearly a century later, Ukraine still endures aggression, as Russia's illegal invasion just surpassed 1,000 days. However, just as during the Holodomor, the Ukrainian people stand unbroken. They are resilient and courageous in the face of tyranny.

Canada will always stand with our Ukrainian allies in their fight for freedom and sovereignty.

*Slava Ukraini .*

\* \* \*

• (1110)

#### WIM TEN HOLDER

**Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a pillar in our community, Wim ten Holder, who passed away on November 1.

Ottawans know Wim mostly as an entrepreneur and as the owner of Café WIM in the ByWard Market. He brought a little bit of Dutch *gezelligheid* and warmth to our community for more than two decades. Everyone who met him was struck by his wit and his charm.

Wim was born in the Netherlands in 1932. At the age of 18, he met the love of his life, Iris, and they immigrated to Canada. They were married for more than 67 years and had five children. Iris in fact worked in this place for 25 years in the committees section.

Wim was the president of the Netherlands-Canada Society, where he gave joy to many children by playing *Sinterklaas*, St. Nicholas, every year. Wim was also very well known and respected in his community of Britannia.

#### Statements by Members

I ask the House to join me in giving sincere condolences to Wim's family.

**The Speaker:** I rarely do this, but I must say that I passed many an hour in my university days at Café Wim.

The hon. Member for Edmonton West.

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#### CARBON TAX

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when we tax the farmer who grows the food, tax the trucker who delivers the food and tax the retailer who sells the food, then we tax the food itself. Is it any wonder a record number of Canadians are lining up at food banks every month? Two million every month rely on food banks just to get by. The child poverty rate has seen its highest jump on record. In Edmonton alone, we have two food banks just for veterans. What has been the Prime Minister's response to this crisis? Well, he says families concerned about household budgets are simply falling for propaganda.

What is propaganda, though, is the Liberal claim that Canadians are further ahead with the carbon tax. This is right from the Parliamentary Budget Officer: "the average household...will see a net cost, paying more in the federal fuel charge and related Goods and Services Tax, as well as receiving lower incomes (due to the [carbon tax]), compared to the...Carbon Rebate".

Canadians need help. Canadians want to be able to feed their families. Canadians want to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. Canadians want a carbon tax election.

\* \* \*

#### LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are tired of the Liberals' incompetence and high taxes. They want the Prime Minister to call an election so they can show him the door, but the leader of the NDP keeps propping him up. The NDP leader said "the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people," but he keeps propping them up.

Merriam-Webster tells us a hypocrite is "a person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings". Does that describe the leader of the NDP? More than 24 times he has voted for the carbon tax that is sending Canadians to food banks in record-smashing numbers. There have been more than two million visits in a single month. Every day the Prime Minister remains in power, it is because of the leader of the NDP.

They must call a carbon tax election and let the people decide.

*Statements by Members*

**The Speaker:** It is important to remind all members to be very careful and very judicious about the way they describe other members in this place.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Châteauguay—Lacolle.

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**MEMBER FOR CHÂTEAUGUAY—LACOLLE**

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the people of Châteauguay—Lacolle, now Châteauguay—Les Jardins-de-Napierville, did me the immense honour of putting their trust in me when they elected me as their federal MP in 2015, 2019, and 2021.

I am proud of our Liberal government, under the visionary leadership of our Prime Minister, and of all the outstanding, transformative measures that our government has passed and continues to put forward for all Canadians.

[English]

There are too many measures to list here, but of note are the two-month GST holiday, accessible dental care and major projects in housing, critical infrastructure and economic development, all while reducing greenhouse gases.

I am proud to have contributed my part in this great work, but I must now inform the House that I have made the difficult personal decision not to run again in the next election. Instead, I now look forward to seeing a new Liberal member of Parliament take the seat for Châteauguay—Les Jardins-de-Napierville.

\* \* \*

• (1115)

**ECONOMIC ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, November 26 marks economic abuse awareness day, recognizing a form of domestic violence that all too often goes unnoticed. Financial abuse occurs in 99% of all domestic violence cases in which the abuser controls the finances, causing many victims to feel trapped and unable to leave the abuser due to lack of resources. The serious impacts of economic abuse can follow survivors long after they leave a relationship, affecting not only the survivor's mental health and well-being but also that of their children.

Many people, particularly women, gender-diverse people, BIPOC folks and the disability community, face additional risks of economic abuse. To end this abuse, we must invest in research, remove structural barriers, enable economic empowerment and ensure survivors have the resources they need to regain control of their lives and financial health.

By proclaiming November 26 as economic abuse awareness day, we are taking a stand for survivors across the country. Together we can work together toward a future where no one experiences economic abuse.

[Translation]

**STACY-ANN OLIVER**

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, also known as CALQ, gave its artist of the year award for Nord-du-Québec to visual artist Stacy-Ann Oliver, from Lebel-sur-Quévillon. The CALQ artist of the year award recognizes artists or writers whose dynamic careers and outstanding recent achievements have made them stand out.

Since 2016, Ms. Oliver's work has been showcased at various solo and group exhibitions. Her artworks often consist of installations that combine a number of media, such as photography, painting and sculpture, that coexist and merge into a cohesive whole. Her practice explores the concept of housing and documents the vastness of this land.

I congratulate her on her bold journey and her success, since this award honours her work, which reflects where she comes from.

\* \* \*

[English]

**NDP-LIBERAL COALITION**

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are suffering under the NDP-Liberal coalition that has doubled housing costs, doubled the debt, doubled food bank use and doubled gun crime. Food prices in Canada have skyrocketed 36% faster than in the United States due to the Prime Minister's carbon tax on farmers and truckers. Despite promising to stand up to the Prime Minister, the NDP leader and his obedient caucus have sold out Canadians again, extending the costly coalition until his pension kicks in next February. Its temporary two-month tax trick will not help Canadians facing a permanent quadrupling of the carbon tax to 61¢ per litre.

My constituents are clear. They want a carbon tax election. They can choose between the costly NDP-Liberal coalition that taxes their food and doubles their housing costs or the common-sense Conservatives who will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. We will take the GST off new homes, saving Canadians up to \$50,000 and building 30,000 more homes every year.

As prime minister, the leader of the Conservatives will fix what the costly coalition broke and bring home the promise of Canada.

## GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians need to know who the leader of the Conservative Party really is. Conservative MPs are the voice of their leader to their constituents.

Let us contrast that to Liberals. We take the issues from our constituencies and bring them here to Ottawa. I can give many examples of that. We can talk about the national dental care program, the national school food program or the national pharmacare program. Yesterday, we announced the GST break for the holiday season for Canadians on selected products and services. This is all about supporting Canadians. Come springtime, the 18 million-plus workers of Canada can anticipate a \$250 rebate. This is good news.

The issue is what the leader of the Conservative Party is going to dictate to his minions about how to vote on that particular issue.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1120)

[English]

### TAXATION

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister tried to distract Canadians with a sudden two-month temporary tax trick. The NDP-Liberals have doubled housing costs, doubled food bank use and doubled the debt. In just a few months, the NDP-Liberals plan to raise taxes on all the very same items they claim they are giving Canadians a tax break on. Common-sense Conservatives will axe the carbon tax on everything for everyone, forever, and take the GST off new homes sold to stimulate homebuilding and save families money.

Will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election now?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it seems the Conservative member has invented a new slogan to oppose what is a tax break for Canadians. I am not sure I understand the Conservative position on this. In fact, what we are doing is lowering taxes for Canadians so they can keep more money in their pockets, yet the Conservatives are opposing it. It is interesting. The Conservative leader actually called this a “trick”. I think what we are seeing is the Conservative leader trying to be the Grinch who stole the holidays.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal coalition is back. Do members remember when the NDP leader said, “Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people”? He should win an acting award. He announced his confidence again in the Liberal Prime Minister, and together they will continue their plan of quadrupling the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre. Here is a common-sense solution: axe the carbon tax on everything for everyone, forever; cheaper gas, groceries, and home heating and everything that is shipped.

Will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election now?

### Oral Questions

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we just announced a tax break for Canadians. In fact, Canadians will see that they are not going to be paying federal taxes on everyday items, like takeout food, beer, wine, children's toys and children's clothes.

What also came out is that BMO and many others are significantly revising their growth forecasts for Canada in the next few months. This is good for our small businesses. This is good for our economy. It is good for Canadians. I guess it is just bad for Conservatives.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the Prime Minister, Canadians cannot afford to even feed themselves. Food Banks Canada reports two million visits in one month. The 2024 report card on child and family poverty in Canada showed the largest jump in child poverty on record. Food prices rose 36% faster in Canada than in the U.S., a gap that opened after the Liberal-NDP carbon tax.

Axe the carbon tax on everything for everyone, forever; cheaper gas, groceries and home heating and everything that is shipped. Will the Prime Minister just call a carbon tax election now?

**Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it never ceases to amaze me that the Conservatives do not really seem to understand, and vote against, every measure we have taken to help Canadian families, whether it is the Canada child benefit, \$10-a-day child care across this country or the GST holiday we just announced yesterday. We are there for Canadians. We invest in them each and every day.

I would like to know why the Conservatives continue to vote against Canadians, vote against the things they need, whether it is pharmacare, dental care or anything else. We are here for Canadians and we will continue to fight for them.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yes, my little Octave's diapers will cost less this holiday season, but he will be paying for the rest of his life. This inflationary spending comes on top of the \$500 billion in Liberal budget appropriations, supported by the Bloc Québécois. It seems that the Liberals' next step is to buy everyone refrigerators.

When are the Liberals going to give Canadians back their purchasing power, stop the electioneering and permanently axe the carbon tax?

*Oral Questions*

• (1125)

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what the Conservatives are proposing is an austerity plan. By opposing our school food program, the Conservatives are showing they are against helping vulnerable children. By suggesting they would tear up the agreement we have with Quebec, the Conservatives are showing they are against investing in housing construction.

The Conservatives are even opposing a tax cut. They are against our plan to give Canadians a GST break. It is good for the economy, and it is good for Canadians. It is just not good for the Conservatives.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have found yet another way to favour their close personal friends. They are going to be able to celebrate in style at a restaurant or at home by paying no GST on wine, beer and alcohol of all kinds, while the average family is struggling to pay their heating, gas and grocery bills.

When will this Prime Minister show some judgment and give Canadians permanent relief by calling an election?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable. For the Conservatives, partisanship always comes first and Canadians come last.

Now the Conservatives want to oppose a plan to make life more affordable for Canadians. Canadians have been going through a tough time lately. We are offering a tax break.

How can the Conservatives be against that?

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**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Donald Trump's mass deportation plan is already having an impact. Radio-Canada reported that immigration lawyers and organizations in Ontario are receiving calls from Americans and asylum seekers who want to cross the border. The director of a temporary housing organization said they are anticipating an increase similar to what we saw in 2016 and 2017. The report also points out that, as of last Monday, the feds had reserved rooms in 11 hotels in Ontario.

Is this really the government's plan, to go back to what happened with Roxham Road?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we want to avoid what happened at Roxham Road.

Here we are again, with the feigned outrage of the Bloc Québécois rising in the House, while in April they opposed our asylum seeker reforms and the asylum system reforms we proposed in the budget plan. It is quite ridiculous.

If Bloc Québécois members were really being consistent, they would support the reforms to the asylum system that we plan to introduce very soon.

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the immigration department states in the news report that it is going to support temporary, sustainable housing for asylum seekers in addition to using hotel rooms.

Let me be very clear. When the federal government is being asked to prepare for a wave of migration, what it needs to do is increase its workforce at the borders. The government is being asked to support the RCMP and border services, which have said that there is a shortage of between 2,000 and 3,000 officers. The government should not be renting hotel rooms. It is certainly not being asked to reopen new intakes like Roxham Road.

We have been clear. Will the minister present a plan that is also clear?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the member is being incredibly naive. The Bloc wants to lay out on the floor of the House of Commons a plan to prevent people from seeking asylum.

We have a safe third country agreement with the U.S. that has been in place for a very long time. It is working. It does need to be renegotiated at times. We have been able to renegotiate it with two different administrations. We will continue to do this. Obviously, we have to work with the United States without compromising our principles.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are cutting back on their grocery lists and struggling to pay for essentials, but the Liberals' new plan misses the mark. Seniors and people with disabilities struggling to make ends meet will not be getting the \$250 cheque to help pay their bills at this difficult time. While Conservatives always want to cut people's pensions, Liberals are letting people on fixed incomes down yet again. Why are Liberals excluding seniors and people with disabilities from the real help they need this holiday season? Why will Liberals not help them too?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all Canadians are going to benefit from the tax break that the Liberal government is offering, and I thank NDP members for their support for this measure. I think that every single Canadian will feel the difference at the cash register when they are paying for their groceries, when they are buying their Christmas presents and especially when they are looking to buy children's clothing. We know that Canadian families have had challenging times, and we are helping them with a tax break.



*Oral Questions*

• (1130)

**HOUSING**

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, over the past two weeks, four unhoused Edmontonians were found dead in a bus shelter. Homeward Trust says that there are over 4,000 people in Edmonton who are unhoused. Neither the UCP nor the Liberals have invested enough in shelter space or housing. Winter has arrived in Edmonton, and this is an emergency or more people will die. When will the minister realize that Danielle Smith is not going to help and that federal funding needs to go directly to the organizations that will save lives in Edmonton this winter?

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all levels of government have a solemn responsibility to respond to the scourge that is homelessness. That is why this federal government has responded to the issue by putting forward, among other things, \$250 million for encampment response, something the Government of Alberta recently committed to matching. That means getting people out of camps and into homes. That is on top of 87,000 people being taken off the street as a result of the Reaching Home program, this government's signature response to homelessness that the Conservatives have committed to cut.

\* \* \*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadians are falling far behind. The government has dragged our economic performance down to just two-thirds of that of the United States. This is costing Canadians on everything they buy, and paycheques have not kept up with the inflation the government has caused. A recession is defined as two quarters of negative economic growth. Canada has seen per capita declines in eight of the last nine quarters. This is failure.

Will the Liberals call an election so Conservatives can start to fix Canada's budget?

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the things my hon. colleague forgot to mention was that Canada has sustained a AAA credit rating and the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7 and has repeatedly seen inflation decreasing, to 1.6% in September. My hon. colleague mentioned GDP per capita. I take the point. We will continue to examine our economic supports, including making sure we have a tax-free holiday for Canadians, including we give money back in cash for workers.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, even a Prime Minister who does not think much about monetary policy told us this past May, "As soon as you [send people extra money], inflation goes up by...that amount." The government is now proposing to increase inflation and punch our deficit and debt higher. That is like a pyromaniac dressing up as a firefighter. The most inflationary tax is the carbon tax.

Will the Liberals call a carbon tax election so Conservatives can start to fix Canada's budget?

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, what we believe is that investing in people, investing in our economy, leads to greater economic growth. That is why Canada leads the G7 in terms of net debt-to-GDP ratio, that is why independent credit rating agencies have said that we should maintain our AAA credit rating and that is why Canadians have elected us numerous times, defeating many leaders of the official opposition. Let us make sure we continue to support Canadians, and this time with a tax-free holiday.

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**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, well, folks, the NDP-Liberal coalition is back. Did it ever really break up? I do not think so. Remember when the NDP leader said, "the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people"? He just announced that he has confidence in the Liberal Prime Minister until February 2025. I wonder what happens then. Canadians cannot afford this. Now the government is trying to bribe Canadians with their own money with a sudden two-month temporary tax break, but Canadians will not be fooled. Here is a common-sense solution: Axe the carbon tax on everything, for everyone, forever.

Will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election today?

**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, there is only one thing Conservatives hate more than Canada's economy doing well, and it is Liberals putting real and tangible affordability measures to the House of Commons that really help support Canadians. We have done that time and time again, and what did the Conservatives do? They opposed. When we proposed to do a middle-class tax cut way back in 2015, it was one of the first things this government did, they opposed it. Today they are opposing a GST break for the holidays. How cruel can the Conservative Party be?

*Oral Questions*

• (1135)

**Mr. Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Liberals have been ripping off Canadians for the last nine years, and Canadians will not be tricked by this most recent trickery. Food prices have risen 36% faster in Canada than in the States. We have over two million people using the food banks every month. In Saskatchewan, food bank use is up over 42%. Now the Liberals are promising a temporary two-month tax break. Here is a little solution for these guys. What they need to do is axe the tax. That is all we are calling for: the carbon tax to be axed.

Will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election today?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that every time the Conservatives talk about climate change, they never talk about the cost to Canadians of climate impacts.

We have seen record levels, just for this year, in the months of July and August, of \$7 billion in climate costs to Canadians, which makes it the costliest year ever on record. What is their solution? Let the planet burn. The Conservative Leader of the Opposition has voted 400 times against clean air, clean water and a clean environment for Canadian communities. On this side of the House, we will be here to support Canadians and to fight climate change.

**The Speaker:** Once again, I am encouraging all members, please, not to take the floor unless recognized by the Chair.

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP leader once declared that Liberals were “too weak, too selfish, and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people.” However, today, he is singing a different tune, backing a plan to quadruple the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre.

With food bank visits hitting two million in a single month and a quarter of Canadians living in poverty, how many Canadians need to choose between heating and eating before the Prime Minister realizes his carbon tax coalition is simply a recipe for disaster?

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what it is a recipe for is supporting Canadians during a difficult time with tax-free essential goods, diapers, clothes, essentials, groceries and prepared foods.

Canadians are going to have support from our government through the holidays. That is, if the Conservatives could decide to actually support Canadians, rather than filibustering, being obstructionists and making sure they are playing their own partisan games. How can they claim to speak for Canadians when they cannot even speak for themselves in this caucus?

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we cannot make this up. The Liberals are saying a PlayStation 5 is an essential good.

With 30% of food banks running out of food, and 35% of Canadians feeling worse off financially, the government's appetite for higher carbon taxes seems to be the only thing that is well fed. Now, is the Prime Minister so desperate to cling to power that he is resorting to tax tricks, sending people pennies while he crushes Canadians every April 1, moving towards a 61¢-a-litre carbon tax?

When will the Prime Minister realize his carbon tax coalition is not just running on empty, it is running on fumes?

**Mr. James Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, crusading against tax cuts over the holidays. Merry Christmas from the Conservative Party of Canada.

Let me tell the House about the reaction from constituents in Etobicoke—Lakeshore, who I represent. They are very excited and very grateful. Let me talk about the small business owners throughout the City of Toronto, who are very grateful for this opportunity because it is going to help their businesses and get them through the holidays. The Conservatives need to support this and stop the nonsense.

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[Translation]

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to the Tax Justice Network, Canada is now the world's fifth major tax haven for multinationals and the uber-wealthy. That means Canada is worse than Bermuda and the big Swiss banks. Every year, the federal government deprives us of \$15 billion because of accounting schemes. In the meantime, it keeps telling us that paying fair old age pensions to all seniors costs too much.

Does it not have any shame at all?

[English]

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are over 60,000 employees with the CRA. There are massive strategies that are being worked on with international partners to ensure that tax avoidance and tax evasion are being prevented.

I look forward to working with all members in this House to make sure that we are providing the right amount of support to the CRA to ensure that we are working on this very important issue. Tax fairness is a pillar of our democracy, and we need to ensure that that continues to happen.

• (1140)

[Translation]

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that is not really consistent with the facts.

*Oral Questions*

Canada was once the 12th major tax haven in the world and this year, under this NDP-backed Liberal government, it ranks fifth. Worse still, Canada is one of eight countries causing actual harm by preventing the UN from developing a framework for international co-operation to crack down on tax havens. Not only is Canada's climbing the ranks of the worst of the worst, it is holding on to its top-place position.

While the federal government is condoning tax avoidance to the tune of \$15 billion, it is also bickering with Quebec over releasing \$50 million for the homeless, with winter just around the corner.

Is that is what a left-leaning government is all about?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have invited Quebec to invest with us to combat homelessness in cities and towns across Quebec. I hope that the Government of Quebec will accept the Government of Canada's help so that, together, we can fight homelessness in our cities.

As for tax avoidance, the Government of Canada has made major investments in that regard. The Canada Revenue Agency strives every day to reduce tax avoidance, and we will continue that fight.

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[English]

**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's desperate temporary tax trick proves he will do anything to save his own skin and tank the Canadian economy no matter the cost. Economist Trevor Tombe says that this will not address the economic challenges we face and that "By doing this, the government invites valid critiques that it is not taking these...issues seriously."

The leader of the NDP will keep the Liberals in power and permanently quadruple the carbon tax again. Conservatives will axe the tax on everything for everyone. Will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election?

**Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what we know about Conservatives is that they will cut. On this side of the House, we invest.

Just now, we announced that Ontario will be able to feed nearly one million students, 75% of the province's schools, as of today. Every child in Canada deserves a chance at a good, healthy life, nutritious meals and a good start to the day on their education. We are investing \$1 billion over five years in our kids to provide nutritious meals. That is 400,000 children across this country who will have a better start to their day. That is what matters.

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my constituents do not believe anything from that side, and neither do most Canadians. Tovi from Langdon writes me, "As owners of a small trucking business in Alberta, every time the Liberal carbon tax goes up, our fuel goes up, and we have to charge more."

If the NDP-Liberals cannot understand that taxing people who grow the food and transport the food makes the food more expen-

sive, can the common-sense Conservatives explain it to them in a carbon tax election?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is fascinating that it seems the Conservative Party is listening to economists. Let us listen to what economists are saying. More than 300 of them have said that the best way to fight climate change is to put a price on pollution. Interestingly enough, one of those 300 economists is the economist the member just quoted, Trevor Tombe, who has said on multiple occasions that the best way to fight climate change is to put a price on pollution. This is exactly what we are doing, and we are returning more money to the pockets of Canadians in the process. The Conservatives want to take that away from Canadians.

**Mr. Rob Morrison (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal coalition is back. I am sure members remember when the leader of the NDP said, "the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people." Today, the NDP leader announced confidence in the Liberals. The NDP-Liberal coalition will continue in quadrupling the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre. All of this is while the Cranbrook Foodbank Society is struggling with food supply coming up to the holiday season. There is an enormous increase in people, resulting in handing out one bag instead of three bags of groceries.

The Conservatives will axe the carbon tax. Will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election?

● (1145)

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can hardly believe that the Conservatives are talking about food insecurity, especially today. We just announced a deal with Ontario to bring the national food school program to thousands of children in Ontario, who will benefit. This is going to ensure that kids have a good start to their day. This is going to help vulnerable families. This is going to be a huge difference for Canadians, and the Conservatives are against helping vulnerable kids. I cannot believe it.

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**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is scrapping the iconic Royal Canadian Navy march *Heart of Oak*, the song of our navy for over 100 years. No one is asking for this change, except the out-of-touch Liberal elites. Meanwhile, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, the Canadian Forces lacks the subs, ships and sailors needed to fulfill its mission.

### Oral Questions

Instead of going woke, the government should keep our military from going broke. It is time for the Liberals to put their new “heart of woke” away and focus on the real priorities. When will they get our sailors the equipment they need to defend our country and our values?

**Mr. Charles Sousa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has the largest coastline in the world, and protecting that coastline is critical. Unlike what has happened with the Conservatives in the past, where they cut supports for our army and navy and supports for our servicemen on the front lines, we are increasing them. At the same time, we are looking at replacing the Victoria-class submarine, which is scheduled to depart in 2030.

Meanwhile, we continue to look at requests for information to seek a renewal of the fleet. We are continuing to support our forces. We are continuing to support Canadian security.

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### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, what is happening in Gaza is horrific. Canadians have watched in shock as death tolls mount. People have starved to death and hospitals are being bombed. They need justice now. The International Criminal Court recently issued warrants for Prime Minister Netanyahu, former minister Gallant, and Hamas leader Deif.

It is time for a government that is clear and unequivocal, because this one has let people down before on international justice and human rights. How can we trust that the Liberals will enforce the ICC rulings and arrest warrants?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government respects the independence of the International Criminal Court. There is no equivalency between Hamas and Israel. However, let me be clear: All parties must abide by international law.

We know that an immediate ceasefire is urgently needed. Hostages must be released. Hamas must lay down its arms. More aid must get into Gaza. The violence must stop.

I find it really disturbing that on an issue as important and serious as this, I am being heckled by the Conservative Party of Canada.

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### FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, people who live near Union Bay on Vancouver Island have been telling the government for years to stop allowing the unsafe ship-breaking of massive ships. Now there is a hydraulic oil spill. What did the Liberals do? They issued a warning that does not stop anything. This jeopardizes this sensitive ecosystem, which includes half of all of B.C.'s shellfish.

The Liberals have let people down. First nations and local governments are frustrated at the lack of action and enforcement by the government. Warnings simply are not enough. Why are the Liberals refusing to do anything about this?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans takes this issue very seriously. We are working with all involved parties to find a solution as rapidly as possible.

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### TAXATION

**Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians just received good news to kick off the festive season. A tax break for Canadians will put more money in their pockets at a time when they need it most. Inflation and interest rates are coming down, but my constituents are not feeling that in their pocketbooks yet.

Can the minister please share with this House what this new tax break means for Canadians.

**Hon. Gudie Hutchings (Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the past few years have been challenging for hard-working Canadians. They deserve a break and we are delivering on it. We are putting money back in Canadians' pockets with the GST/HST exemption for two months all across the country on groceries, kids' clothing, diapers, books and more.

We are helping folks with the cost of living while the Conservative leader opposes tax relief for workers and would cut services that folks rely on every day. The question is, will Conservative MPs stand up and support tax breaks for Canadians or will they stay muzzled by their leader?

\* \* \*

● (1150)

### ETHICS

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have millions of dollars in fraud, the other Randy still in hiding, numerous lawsuits, business addresses connected to cocaine trafficking and people being held in contempt of Parliament. What a few weeks it has been for the disgraced former minister from Edmonton Centre.

After he arrogantly lectured other members in the House about their morals and integrity when it comes to their identity, his resignation from cabinet this week is what I call karma. However, as the Liberals lectured others on reconciliation, it was Jody Wilson-Raybould who called their actions “shameful and extremely destructive”.

*Oral Questions*

Do the Liberals have any integrity left? He should not only have resigned from cabinet. Why has he not been booted from the Liberal caucus?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the House leader indicated yesterday, we have been very clear in the House that the company was not on the list and that indigenous procurement is for indigenous groups.

What we see day after day is a gross amount of exaggeration coming from the Conservative ranks. If they really want to do something in Canadians' best interests, they need to look in the mirror and ask themselves this question, referring to the leader of the Conservative Party in particular: What is he hiding that is preventing him from getting a security clearance? Canadians have a right to know. He is hiding something. What is it?

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, they are still defending the member for Edmonton Centre. How unethical does someone have to be to get the boot out of the Liberal Party of Canada these days? It is crazy.

He says he is indigenous. He is not. He says he is not the other Randy working at his company. He is. His company is not supposed to get contracts from the government. It did. Now his business is under multiple criminal investigations, and it shares a mailbox with a cocaine trafficker, yet the Prime Minister said on Tuesday that he is “happy that he is continuing to lead on issues”. He has issues all right.

He should not only not be in cabinet; he should not be in the Liberal caucus. Have some integrity and give him the boot.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, talking about unethical, how unethical is it for the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada to be the only leader not to get a security clearance? We know of allegations of foreign interference in his own leadership race. We know that there are issues the leader of the Conservative Party should be aware of, but he turns a blind eye to Canadians. Out of pure self-interest, he refuses to get a security clearance.

What is in his past? There is something there that he is not sharing with Canadians. What is it? Why will he not get a security clearance?

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**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, mired in allegations of fraud and conflict and having faked an indigenous identity, this week the Liberal member for Edmonton Centre resigned from cabinet in disgrace. Also this week, the Edmonton police confirmed that they have launched a criminal investigation into the ex-minister's company for fraud.

In the face of an active police investigation, why is it that the ex-minister's company continues to be green-lighted by the Liberals to bid on federal contracts?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that question has already been answered.

Interestingly enough, the Conservative caucus has guidelines and criteria if someone wants to be a summer intern: They have to get a security clearance. That is such an incredible thing to believe given that the leader of the Conservative Party believes he can put his self-interest ahead of the safety and concerns of Canadians.

It does beg this question, and I will repeat it for those who do not understand: What in the leader of the Conservative Party's background is preventing him from getting a security clearance?

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member for Edmonton Centre's company is under police investigation. This is a company that has been ordered by Alberta courts to pay back \$8 million to clients for ripping them off. This is a company that fraudulently represented itself as indigenous-owned in a disgusting attempt to steal government contracts from real indigenous businesses.

This is not complicated. All the Liberals need to do is put the company on a blacklist. Why will they not?

• (1155)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will share with members a Conservative tweet that went out. They should listen very closely: “Apply for the CPC Summer Internship today and be the future of the Conservative Party.” However, they have to get a security clearance. Maybe the leader of the Conservative Party should apply for the internship program, thereby obligating him to get a security clearance. That is how ridiculous this issue is.

Why will the leader of the Conservative Party not commit today to getting a security clearance? That would put Canadians ahead of himself.

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[*Translation*]

**CANADA REVENUE AGENCY**

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, taxpayers have been robbed of over \$100 million this year because of an epidemic of fraud at the Canada Revenue Agency, or CRA, but the last thing the Liberals want is for people to talk about it. On Wednesday, in committee, the Minister of National Revenue even threatened her own public servants with jail time if they continue to tell the media about the problems at the CRA. Her priority is not to go after tax cheats, but to go after journalists' sources.

Does the minister realize that the fraudsters are the ones who should be threatened with jail time, not journalists' sources or whistle-blowers?

[*English*]

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the CRA takes the issue of fraud very seriously.

### Oral Questions

With respect to what the member has talked about, we have supported whistle-blower rights, as shown in our support of the member's caucus bill, Bill C-290, which aims to increase protections for whistle-blowers. However, we need to find the right balance when it comes to making sure that Canadians' data is protected while also ensuring rights for whistle-blowers.

The CRA has an internal process for reporting, and we look forward to continuing to work with all members in the House and the CRA to strengthen that process.

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, without whistle-blowers, we never would have known that the CRA had been robbed of \$100 million. We never would have known that 62,000 taxpayers had had their personal information stolen or that the CRA has been aware of flaws in its security system for a year now. It was only when journalists began taking an interest in the problem that the minister took an interest in it too.

Instead of threatening the whistle-blowers, should she not be thanking them?

[English]

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, we have the highest respect for whistle-blowers and support the private member's bill, Bill C-290, put forward by the member's caucus to protect whistle-blowers. Again, we also have to ensure that Canadians' data is protected. We have to make sure that tax avoidance and tax filings carry fairness within our country and within the system.

We look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen that, and I look forward to working with the member for his ideas as well.

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### ETHICS

**Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC):** It is another day and another Liberal scandal, Mr. Speaker, this time centred on the member for Edmonton Centre, including the member having falsely identified himself as indigenous to try to qualify his business for government funds. However, somehow, until the point of the member's resignation from cabinet, the Prime Minister maintained full support for him.

Jody Wilson-Raybould, who was removed from the Liberal benches for speaking the truth, described the Prime Minister's inaction as “shameful and...destructive”. This begs the question of why the government is so quick to remove an indigenous woman for speaking the truth and so quick to support a fake indigenous man who misled Canadians.

**Mr. Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it seems the only time Conservatives want to talk about indigenous issues in the House is when it fits their cut, cut, cut agenda. While they attack the indigenous procurement strategy, the fact is that under the Harper government, under 1% of procurement was going to indigenous business. Our government has raised that to more than 6%.

On this side of the House, we are going to stay committed to economic reconciliation moving forward.

**Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with respect, none of that answers the question I raised.

Again, Jody Wilson-Raybould, a former Liberal minister, stated, “A Prime Minister committed to true reconciliation would have removed [the member for Edmonton Centre]...from Cabinet long ago”; instead, the Prime Minister chose to stand side by side with the member. As Wilson-Raybould put it, “[W]e get to watch white people play ancestry wheel of fortune.”

Again, why is government so quick to remove an indigenous woman for speaking the truth and so quick to protect a fake indigenous man who misled Canadians?

● (1200)

**Mr. Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, indigenous communities have fought for decades to enshrine the ability to determine their own citizenship and membership. UNDRIP's article 33 is entrenched in law, and it confirms the right of indigenous people to determine who is a member of their community.

However, the Conservatives have a different idea. They want to tell indigenous people who is eligible and who is not. No first nations leader, no Métis leader, no Inuit leader is asking for the Conservative Party of Canada to determine who is eligible for indigenous identity moving forward.

\* \* \*

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government has thrown Jasper's recovery into chaos. The hand-picked minister from Edmonton, who was tasked with leading the effort, has resigned in disgrace after numerous scandals. The town is left without federal assistance in its time of need. Meanwhile, the radical environment minister ignored years of warnings, failed forest management and let a third of Jasper be destroyed.

Will the Prime Minister really put the same radical environment minister who let Jasper burn in charge of its recovery?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for five consecutive years, the Harper government cut funding for fire prevention in Jasper by \$30 million per year. I would be happy to table the documents in the House if they do not want to believe it.

We have been there for Jasper. We have invested more than \$60 million. We are ready to do more to help Jasper with reconstruction. Unlike the Conservative Party of Canada, we will not let Jasper down.

*Oral Questions*

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

**The Speaker:** To the hon. member for Edmonton Manning, please do not take the floor unless recognized by the Chair.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

\* \* \*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives weep crocodile tears when they talk about affordability for families. However, when the time comes to help all Canadians, they are missing in action.

Our government has brought in \$10-a-day child care, a national school food program and dental care, all measures that the Conservatives do not support. However, we need to do more.

Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance explain to the House how the government is supporting Canadians this Christmas?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the member for Ottawa—Vanier, who advocates for her constituents every day.

What she said is absolutely true. The Conservatives are once again opposing a tax cut, this time in the form of a tax break on goods and services. It will give Canadians a bit of breathing room and allow them to keep more money in their pockets. It is good for small businesses. It is good for the economy. It is good for Canadians.

It is just not good for the Conservatives.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of this Liberal government, crime is the only thing thriving. Canada is being hit by an unprecedented wave of auto thefts. In Montreal, a victim whose car has been stolen twice now has to pay more than \$7,000 for insurance. Quebec has set a new record for most stolen vehicles, with more than 1,213 vehicles intercepted at the port of Montreal.

When will this government finally take action to curb crime and ensure that Canadians and their property are safe?

[English]

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, we have been working with all orders of government and making investments specifically dealing with auto thefts, whether that is more technology, such as scanners, or investments at CBSA.

What I find ironic is that the Conservatives actually asked that question. We have been working at the public safety committee on an auto theft report with very real recommendations, which the

Conservatives are actually blocking. If the Conservatives are serious about dealing with auto theft, perhaps they will want to let us deal with that report.

• (1205)

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' soft-on-crime policies have plunged Canada into chaos. Thousands of vehicles continue to be stolen and shipped out of the country, yet the Liberal government is not lifting a finger to restore order. Meanwhile, Canadians are paying through the nose for insurance and worrying whether their property and their families are safe.

Can this Liberal government stop sitting around and finally take Canadians' safety seriously?

[English]

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, we have made significant investments, including investments at CBSA, investments in technology and investments with our police forces. The public safety committee also did incredible work to look at ways that we can help support Canadians, just as the member opposite was trying to reiterate. However, what happens in committee is that we do the work to put forward proposals to help support Canadians, which they speak of, and Conservatives block that work. They would rather criticize than actually produce results that have impacts for Canadians.

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' Bill C-83 allows serial killer Paul Bernardo to be transferred out of maximum-security prison, and Liberal policy allows child killer Terri-Lynne McClintic to have access to children through a mother-child program. This is shameful. The Liberals' "soft on heinous killers" policies are devastating to the victims' families. Will the government immediately reverse these policies?

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what is truly disgusting in this place is this: Number one, that policy and that program have been in place since 2001; however, Conservatives feel the need to bring it forward now as some sort of political weapon and bring up victims.

The mother-child program is done with a rigorous protocol ensuring the protection of children at all costs. In addition, within facilities, there are strict measures to ensure that only those who have been approved for this program would ever come near that facility.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. This is where we get into trouble every time we speak out of turn.

*Routine Proceedings*

I am going to ask the hon. member to please withdraw a word that was used out of turn; it was clearly unparliamentary.

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell:** Mr. Speaker, I withdraw.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member.

The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the holidays are nearing and being able to take some time to spend with family and loved ones is a joyful opportunity for all. However, for some, this time of year also means tough choices on what we can purchase and how much we can spend.

Can the government tell the House what it is doing to make sure all Canadians and their families can better make ends meet this year?

**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, Canadians work hard for their money and for their families; they deserve a break. This Christmas, we will be giving Canadians a break on the GST for many of the goods Canadians purchase over the holidays, such as toys, kids' clothes, prepared foods and even Christmas trees, so they can focus on the things that matter most to them.

On this side of the House, we are focused on making the holiday season more merry and bright. On that side, Conservatives cannot get out from under their Grinch-like leader, who cannot find it in his petty little heart to give his caucus the freedom to do its job and stand up for Canadians.

\* \* \*

**FINANCE**

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are struggling right now. Costs are up, rents are up, and food prices are soaring. The Liberals have disappointed Canadians, and the Conservatives are threatening cuts.

Now the Liberals are set to reveal a multi-billion dollar surplus in the public service pension plan. New Democrats want to see this surplus used to help workers now. Will the Liberals keep disappointing, or will they use the surplus to help Canadians?

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to helping Canadians, we are entering a period of a tax-free holiday for Canadians.

On the subject of my colleague's question, our public service comprises hard-working Canadians, the very best in the world. Very soon, I will table three actuarial reports on the public service pension plan. I will have more to say about any potential surplus and next steps at that time. I look forward to engaging with my hon. colleague on that very topic.

• (1210)

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, the turmoil at IRCC continues. I have an Australian-trained doctor stuck in the department's quagmire. We have badly needed skilled tradespeople who want to come to Canada lost in the logjam, yet there are no delays in getting citizenship for ISIS terrorists who produce videos of victims being dismembered. It is the same with human traffickers when they need a court-banned passport replaced.

What are the twisted priorities of the immigration minister? Can he focus on letting people into our country who want to heal Canadians, not kill or traffic them, and build the homes instead of blowing them up?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know why we give this guy the time of day. We drummed him out of our party because he covered up allegations of sexual assault against him and was fined by the military. He is so bad that the Conservatives do not even want him in their party. He was so afraid of the Green Party leader that he is now sitting over there. He knows the precise answers to those questions. His office has never brought a single case to me. It is lazy. It does not get anything done. He just does this for his social media.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. It is very important that all members are extended the courtesy and respect that is owed to all members who sit in this place. I will, if necessary, come back to the House after I review this matter.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[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 eight petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

\* \* \*

**INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY**

**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, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), and consistent with the policy on the tabling of treaties in Parliament, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the treaty entitled "Final Acts of the World Radiocommunication Conference of the International Telecommunication Union", done at Dubai on December 15, 2023.



## PETITIONS

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of presenting a petition signed by nearly 13,000 people demanding action on Samidoun. While the organization has been finally listed as the terrorist group that it is, the job is not finished. The petition specifically notes that under paragraph 83.05(1) (b) of the Criminal Code, it is illegal to knowingly act on behalf of, at the direction of or in association with a listed terrorist group. On October 15, the United States also designated Khaled Barakat a leadership member of the PFLP, a listed terrorist group, but the federal government continues to allow Khaled Barakat to remain in Canada. It is time for the federal government to finish the job and kick out of Canada the terrorist leader and all who support terrorism.

\* \* \*

• (1215)

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following question will be answered today: No. 3053.

[Text]

Question No. 3053—**Mr. Dave Epp:**

With regard to the former chair of the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority (WDBA) Board of Directors, Tim Murphy, leaving his post to become Executive Vice President and Chief Strategic Affairs Officer at Aecon: (a) was there a conflict-of-interest process put in place by the WDBA, and did it include a ban preventing Tim Murphy from engaging in further dealings with the WDBA; and (b) if so, what were the details of the conflict-of-interest process regarding Tim Murphy's lobbying of the WDBA on behalf of Aecon?

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the former chair of the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority, WDBA, board of directors, Tim Murphy, leaving his post to become executive vice-president and chief strategic affairs officer at Aecon, the answer to parts (a) and (b) is as follows. Mr. Murphy, appointed by the Governor in Council, is subject to post-directorship obligations as part of the Conflict of Interest Act, as well as WDBA policy. The Conflict of Interest Act prohibits Mr. Murphy from acting for or on behalf of any person or organization in connection with any specific proceeding, transaction, negotiation or case to which the WDBA is a party and with respect to which the director had acted for, or provided advice to, the WDBA; and providing advice to clients, business associates or employers using information that was acquired in the course of his official duties and that is not available to the public. The process set forth in the Conflict of Interest Act would apply should Mr. Murphy contravene the act, which may include an examination by the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner.

\* \* \*

[English]

## QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, furthermore, if the answers to Questions Nos. 3047 to

## Routine Proceedings

3052 and 3054 to 3056 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled in an electronic format immediately.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 3047—**Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to the proposal to increase the capital gains inclusion rate to two-thirds for certain taxpayers: (a) how many taxpayers realized capital gains of \$250,000 or more in each tax year from 2003 to 2023 inclusively; (b) how many of the taxpayers in (a) realized capital gains of \$250,000 (i) once, (ii) twice, (iii) more than twice, (iv) every year; and (c) how many of the taxpayers in (b) were in the (i) first (lowest) income tax bracket, (ii) second tax bracket, (iii) third tax bracket, (iv) fourth tax bracket, (v) fifth tax bracket?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3048—**Mr. Pat Kelly:**

With regard to the difference between the membership of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) (all branches) as of October 1, 2024, and the CAF's total authorized strength: (a) how many new members does the CAF need to recruit to reach authorized strength; (b) how many recruitment applications can the CAF process each month; (c) how many Canadians applied to join the CAF each month between October 1, 2023, and October 1, 2024; (d) how many full-time equivalent personnel in the CAF were tasked with processing recruitment applications as of October 1, 2024; (e) how many full-time equivalent personnel in the CAF are needed to process all incoming recruitment applications; (f) how many full-time equivalent personnel in the CAF were tasked with training new recruits up to a deployable state as of October 1, 2024; (g) how many CAF personnel were not sufficiently trained to be deployable as of October 1, 2024; (h) how many full-time equivalent personnel in the CAF are required to train all current members up to a deployable state; and (i) how many full-time equivalent personnel in the CAF will be needed should the CAF reach total authorized strength by October 1, 2025?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3049—**Mr. Andrew Scheer:**

With regard to payments, including any reimbursements, made by the government to Mark Carney since April 1, 2020: (a) what are the details of all such payments, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) purpose of the payment; and (b) for each payment that was a reimbursement, what are the details, including the (i) items reimbursed, (ii) amount, (iii) vendor, (iv) location?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3050—**Mr. Mike Lake:**

With regard to the CRA and the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) for the most recent fiscal year for which data is available: (a) how many initial assessments were completed and reviewed; (b) how many reassessments were completed and reviewed; (c) what is the number of initial DTC applications filed for both (a) and (b) that were approved; (d) what is the number of unsuccessful initial DTC applications filed for both (a) and (b) that were appealed; (e) what is the number of DTC applications filed for (d) that were approved; and (f) how many instances in (a) to (e) were specifically for autism diagnoses?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3051—**Mr. Scot Davidson:**

With regard to the Canada Carbon Rebate rural supplement (top-up), broken down by year since the rural supplement began: what was the total (i) amount of top-up money paid, (ii) number of top-up recipients, broken down by each federal riding which qualified for the rural supplement?

(Return tabled)

*Privilege***Question No. 3052—Mr. Dave Epp:**

With regard to the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority: (a) what was the final contract value paid to CIMA+ for their work on the Gordie Howe International Bridge project; and (b) what was the date of each payment made to CIMA+?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 3054—Mr. James Bezan:**

With regard to the Department of National Defence and the NATO definition of defence expenditures as “payments made by a national government specifically to meet the needs of its armed forces or those of its allies”: what are the expenditures from eligible Other Government Departments (OGDs) included in Canada’s defence spending calculations, broken down by (i) department, (ii) fiscal year beginning in 2015, (iii) type or category of expenditure, (iv) dollar value?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 3055—Mr. James Bezan:**

With regard to the Department of National Defence and NORAD modernization: (a) what are the spending projections year over year for the June 2022 NORAD modernization announcement until completion of all listed projects, broken down by (i) fiscal year, (ii) project; and (b) what are the spending projections year over year for the additional projects related to NORAD modernization with separate funding sources, including, but not limited to, NORAD Cloud-Based Command and Control (CBC2), Crossbow and Air Navigation Aid Systems Replacement (AirNAS), Advanced Short-Range Missile (ASRM) and Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (MRAAM), broken down by (i) fiscal year, (ii) project, (iii) funding envelope, and including any funding committed by the United States?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 3056—Mr. Colin Carrie:**

With regard to the government’s response to Order Paper Question Q-2741 relating to Statistics Canada (StatCan) and released data of provisional deaths and excess mortality during the time frames of June 13-27, 2022, July 4-18, 2022, and July 25-August 29, 2022: (a) what are the timeframe-matched denominators (i.e., the total number of individuals by vaccination status by dose and by age group) for each of the following vaccination status categories (i) COVID-19 cases following vaccination, (ii) COVID-19 cases in the unvaccinated, (iii) deaths following vaccination according to doses 1, 2 and 3, (iv) deaths in the unvaccinated; (b) what steps were taken to investigate the underlying reasons for this unusual finding of excess deaths in young persons; (c) why is there a discrepancy between the data that was released on the StatCan website for “other ill-defined and unspecified causes of mortality” in 2022 and the value provided in the government response to Order Paper Question Q-1115 for the same year and same category; and (d) what are the details of the memo drafted by the PCO in May 2021 which instructed recipients to skew statistics to minimize the impact of vaccine-related deaths or injuries, including (i) which agencies or entities and which specific officials received this memo, (ii) how did the agencies or entities carry out the PCO’s instructions vis-a-vis statistical skewing, (iii) who at each agency or entity signed off on the report of the data?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## ORDERS OF THE DAY

[English]

### PRIVILEGE

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

The House resumed consideration of the motion, of the amendment as amended and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, “call in the cops”. That is the stage we are at in this most recent Liberal scandal. Why are we here? There is evidence that the Liberals have on the SDTC green slush fund. They are refusing an order from Parliament. There is no higher power than the 338 men and women who get sent here to represent the 40 million Canadians. With how our Constitution is written, there is no higher power than the majority will of this space. This space has voted that the Liberals have to turn over the evidence to the RCMP. They are refusing. That is why we are here today.

If anyone is tuning in for the first time and wondering what this SDTC is all about, it is about Liberal insiders getting rich. We are now at the point where they are getting caught, because the evidence is out there. We know that there is a stink around this fund. We know that the chairperson of the fund was caught funnelling money to her own company. We know that the environment minister has funnelled money to the company that he owns as well, which stinks, but it does not shock anybody.

Anyone who has been watching this place knows that, in the end, the Liberals got caught funnelling money to Liberal insiders. When the Liberals got elected, they got rid of the board and appointed members they support, or, more importantly, members who support the Liberals. Then the money flowed. We are talking hundreds of millions of dollars. On the scale of all the scandals that the Liberals have been involved in, the \$40-million sponsorship scandal, all the other scandals that the government has been known for, this one takes the cake because of the whistle-blowers. This is where, I think, the Liberals are the most concerned about evidence going to the RCMP. We know some of the evidence that has been released, which has been pretty bad.

For the people who are tuning in, we know how corrupt the Liberals are. Some of the people they put in place, obviously, are put there to influence and to enrich fellow Liberals. We then have the bureaucrats out here who are trying their best to minister to the will of the government. It does not matter who is in government. Their job is to minister to the will of whoever is in government or whatever majority decisions come out of here from members. These people have been around. They have been around scandals before. They have been around the town. They have been around Liberals before. It should not shock us but we would not believe what some of these whistle-blowers have been saying about these Liberals.

We have one whistle-blower who said, “Just as I was always confident that the Auditor General would confirm the financial mismanagement at SDTC, I remain equally confident that the RCMP will substantiate the criminal activities that occurred within the organization.” When we have whistle-blowers making a statement that the RCMP will find acts of criminal misbehaviour, it is telling. This whistle-blower also said that “if you bring in the RCMP and they do their investigation...they [will] find something”.

*Privilege*

That is it. That is what the Liberals have shut this place down over. They cannot hand over any more evidence to the RCMP. That set off alarm bells throughout the Liberal government and party. They were concerned about which of their relatives got rich in this scandal or which minister, while sitting at the cabinet table making decisions on where to spend Canadian taxpayers' dollars, decided to spend it on his own company. How criminally, morally and ethically bankrupt are these Liberals?

● (1220)

Let us hear another quote from people who work closely with the Liberals:

I think the Auditor General's investigation was more of a cursory review. I don't think the goal and mandate of the Auditor General's office is to actually look into criminality, so I'm not surprised by the fact that they haven't found anything criminal. They're not looking at intent. If their investigation was focused on intent, of course they would find the criminality.

We have long-serving servants of government of all stripes in Canada ringing alarm bells on what happened here. This is a pattern where Liberals get themselves into a pickle; they find a solution for their troubles, not for what troubles Canadians; and they utilize their power of position to sweep it under the rug. We have seen this before on foreign influence. We have seen this on other scandals. We are bringing this up because the scandal is \$400 million, but it is just the latest of the new scandals. I think of some of the times we have caught these Liberals in questionable activities.

I think of the Liberal WE scandal, where they gave half a billion dollars to a children's charity that turned around and gave half a million dollars to the Prime Minister's mom. This is at the top. This is where Liberals get their lessons on morals and ethics. It is from the Prime Minister. We have a Prime Minister who has been caught breaking the law on conflicts of interest. We all know of his famous trip down to the islands to party it up on the taxpayers' dime.

The Prime Minister is a man who spends his whole day preaching to Canadians on how we have to change our lives for our carbon emissions and we have to change our footprint. Meanwhile, he jet-sets all over the world, exposing his hypocrisy on the emissions of his plane out the rear end of it. It is so hypocritical of him to lecture regular-day Canadians: "How dare you turn the heat up in the middle of winter? How dare you even think you need to feed your family before you pay your carbon tax?"

This is the ridiculousness of what has transpired in Canada over the last nine years. We are a farce of the country that we used to be. There are real problems in our country and our society. I go back to the motion at hand: all this criminality and theft from SDTC. I go back to the purpose of this fund. It was to help with projects around Canada that would bring more sustainable, environmental and technological solutions. I have met with dozens of organizations and projects that would qualify for this, fabulous projects.

I am just going to update the House on a couple of them. Their response from the green slush fund was, "No, you cannot have support for your initiative." I think of the Calgary Co-op and Leaf. The company Leaf brought to market a consumer bag that has no plastic. It is decomposable just in one's garden. The company brought it to Ottawa. The bureaucrats said, "We cannot have this. It looks

wrong. It does not look right for what we are trying to do." It is not the science, but looks. It is always about looks with these guys.

What did that corporation do? It thought, "Why do we not bring a consumer bag to the market that is biodegradable, that people can use however many times they want, but when it gets wet and thrown in the compost bag, it decomposes?" That is a way that we think we should be tackling some of our challenges in the environment. It is through technology, not taxes. Now, we had a technology fund, SDTC, that should have been funding just that. It should have been funding technology so we got those answers, and instead, it was funding Liberal insiders, who were getting rich. This is what happened in Canada over the last nine years.

● (1225)

I know my time is almost up. I believe I have five more minutes. That is fabulous because we have some more scandals to go over.

Another one was the arrive scam. Why this is important is that these are real taxpayers dollars. Think of the people waiting at a food bank, maybe right now. Maybe right now they do not have the means to provide for their families. We know there are lots out there. Over two million Canadians are relying on a food bank because the Liberals have made the cost of living so expensive in Canada. It did not have to be this way. There are tens of millions, if not billions, of dollars of waste in Ottawa that could be refocused into helping Canadians get through this terrible time we are suffering as a country.

One classic scandal had to do with the \$54 million wasted on the arrive scam. That was an app that could have been built in a weekend with under \$50,000. That is what the private sector would have done. Do colleagues know what these Liberals did? They had to make sure their Liberal insiders got paid. In that scandal, numerous tech companies did zero work but billed for tens of millions of dollars.

That was just the tip of the iceberg of things we have kind of wasted money on. This goes right to the ministers of the Crown. It has been highlighted how the environment minister secretly funnelled money into his company. We have the international trade minister, who gave over a \$16,000 contract, sole-sourced, to a friend, just a friend. "You know what, we will just make that \$16,000 payment go to whomever we would like."

Nickels and dimes make dollars. It all adds up. We talked about \$10 million here, \$54 million for ArriveCAN and \$400 million for the green slush fund. The waste goes on and on.

*Privilege*

At committee, we have been studying some of the waste in post-secondary education. We have some silly studies we have funded as Canadian taxpayers. If someone is struggling right now in Canada, they should know their tax dollars went to UBC to study gender politics and Peruvian rock music. That was \$20,000. If someone is one of the working poor, barely getting by and wondering why they have to pay all this federal income tax, it is because someone has to study gender politics and Peruvian rock music. Another study is “Reframing Gender and Race in Music Theory and Its Pedagogy”. It is unbelievable that we are spending this kind of money out there.

There is a new study entitled “Suitably Dressed: Finding Social Justice through Distinctions in Modest Fashion for Men, Women and Transgender People”; that is \$35,000. If someone is struggling today and wanting to know what is their government is doing, this is some of the stuff it is spending money on. Another one is about large-scale archaeological video analysis, out of the U of C, for \$280,000. Here is another one, kind of timely: “Narco-Animalia: Human-Animal Relations in Mexico's Narco-Culture”. That was \$9,266.

I see my time has wrapped up. I thank everyone for paying attention and look forward to questions and comments.

• (1230)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are so off topic. If the member wants to talk about corruption, all he needs to do is reflect on Stephen Harper; the current leader of the Conservative Party played a pivotal role, whether as parliamentary secretary to the former prime minister or as a member of his cabinet.

If he wants to talk about corruption, what about the \$3.1 billion for anti-terrorism corruption? What about the \$2.2-billion Phoenix scandal; the G8 spending scandal; the ETS scandal; the F-35 scandal; the Senate scandal; and election scandals, as in plural scandals? In fact, I have a booklet here called “Stephen Harper, Serial Abuser of Power” that lists the scandals and corruption. There are 70 plus in here, so there is not enough time to quote them all.

Why is it that the leader of the Conservative Party has not changed his behaviour and still feels that he can thumb his nose at Canadians? Why will the leader of the Conservative Party not get the security clearance to deal with the serious issue of foreign interference?

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, it is very telling that the Liberals get triggered by this. The member brought up the \$16 glass of orange juice, and he is right; it is an outrage. The expensing of dollars that are not owed to oneself is wrong, and we had wall-to-wall coverage on this. He brought up the F-35 and the monies the former government looked at spending for that plane. Guess what happened. Liberals bought it years later for more. That is how the Liberals' scandals go. They find more ways of pissing away taxpayers' money at every chance they get, and the latest one is this green slush fund for \$400 million.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** The hon. parliamentary secretary on a point of order.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I am not too sure how that was translated. I do not know, and I bring it up because I think it should be reviewed, if that is an appropriate thing to be saying as parliamentary words. I suggest we take a look at that.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** We will look in to what was said and discuss it if necessary.

The hon. member for Saskatoon—University has 15 seconds to finish his answer.

[English]

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, this, in a nutshell, is about Liberals getting rich. They like to protect their own. Any time they are questioned or there is the demand that evidence be turned over to the RCMP, Liberals clam up. They attack and do anything but provide the evidence to the RCMP.

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my Conservative colleague a question about the Liberal government's latest announcement. It has announced a temporary, two-month tax holiday on certain products, and it is proposing to send out \$250 cheques to people earning \$150,000 or less. I view this as sheer opportunism or cynicism. The government is handing out gifts to buy votes. There are well-worn tactics that have often been roundly condemned.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the fact that the government, which was already struggling to deal with its deficit and rein in its spending, is once again indulging in frivolous spending to curry public favour.

[English]

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, a two-month temporary tax trick is all it is. For two months, the Liberals are going to do a little trick and save a bit of money. The problem they have is the comments they made, and that the finance minister made last year, that driving up the deficit is only going to make inflation worse.

What a surprise; we are in a cost of living crisis because the Liberals kept spending more and more money, driving inflation up higher and higher. We were very happy last year when they had seen the light, understood that having deficits would drive inflation higher and said they would not run a deficit more than \$40 billion. Guess what; they are. They are massively overblowing their targets. The temporary two-month tax trick is going to cost billions of dollars, which is going to drive up inflationary pressures on Canadians when they can least afford it. Bah, humbug.

• (1235)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I really appreciated how much the member focused on the importance of whistle-blowers in coming forward and calling out the government of the day when it is breaking laws. I absolutely agree. I find it very difficult when those whistle-blowers are attacked and discredited.

However, in 2012, a special adviser to the justice department, Edgar Schmidt, raised concerns that the department and the Conservative government were not upholding their obligation to notify Parliament regarding concerns they had about their bill at the time, the Fair Elections Act, saying it was unconstitutional. The member's leader, the member for Carleton, was trying to ram it through Parliament at the time.

Schmidt blew the whistle on the instructions he received from the government to cook the legal analysis and cover up for the blatant attacks on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Schmidt was suspended without pay and barred from office for speaking out. I am eager to ask the hon. member whether he would stand up today to apologize to a public servant like Edgar Schmidt for being a whistle-blower and standing up for what is right, or will he just continue to stand in the hypocrisy that seems to be such a large part of the Conservative Party?

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank every man and woman who works in our public sector. Public service is an honourable calling, and I thank all the men and women who work in our public service.

I especially thank the ones that call out corruption and improper management of funds. That is what we had at SDTC. We know that these workers are feeling abandoned by the NDP. The Conservatives have a plan to bring back common sense and powerful paycheques so that they can finally provide for their families.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that, with the declining per capita GDP, Canadians are getting poorer, and with \$400 million going out the door to Liberal insiders, Liberal insiders are getting richer.

This happened because of the deliberate choices the government made. It was Navdeep Bains who made the choice to clear out the existing board and appoint his own hand-picked chair, and then, under the noses of the senior bureaucrats who were in the room, these Liberal insiders voted to give public money to themselves at a time when Canadians' per capita income was declining.

I wonder if the member has more comments on exactly what happened here and why it is important to Canadians that we get to the bottom of it.

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, what is going on here is the pain that Canadians are feeling because of the NDP-Liberal coalition and a cost of living crisis that is out of control because the Liberal-NDP government is finding new and creative ways to blow taxpayers' money.

This one is \$400 million, and that is gone. It is actually not gone because we never had the money to start with. It is on the credit card, and someday this credit card bill is going to come due. Just like it is for everybody else in Canada who might feel like they are

### *Privilege*

richer than they think when they fire it on their credit card, in a month's time, that bill comes and the other bills come. This is the crisis that we are facing in Canada. There is no money left to pay the bills.

Out here, what governments do when they run out of money, and the government has done it a lot, is print money, quantitative easing, to the tune of \$700 billion. As we know, every dollar that Ottawa prints makes a dollar in Canadians' pants worth less.

Unfortunately, the Liberals continue to make things worse for everyday Canadians. The motion we are debating right now is not just talking about a \$16 glass of orange juice. It is \$400 million of Canadians' money, which these guys funnelled into their buddies' pockets.

• (1240)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, that is just not true.

The Conservatives talk about Liberal insiders, but the chair they are referencing was an adviser to Brian Mulroney, Stephen Harper and Jim Flaherty, all of whom were Conservatives. She is also a major donor to the Conservative Party, yet they call her a Liberal insider. Like many of the things that they say in the House, it is just not true.

The question I have for the member is this: When will the Conservatives recognize that the motion we are talking about is to have the issue go to the procedures and House affairs committee, and it is a motion that the Conservative Party introduced. When are they going to allow it to go to a vote?

**Mr. Corey Tochor:** Mr. Speaker, here is the difference: The NDP-Liberals want this to go to the committee, and Conservatives want it to go to the RCMP.

Canadians can be the judge. If there is a crime that happens in their house, do they call a town meeting or do they call the cops? We want the cops brought in. This is what the Liberals and the NDP are hiding.

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, we are debating an issue that goes to the core of our country and our democracy, which are built on the foundational pillars of transparency and accountability. I have been listening to this debate, and the Liberal responses have often been to deflect or to attack the messenger. We only go personal when we cannot defend something based on its merits, when we cannot defend the indefensible. Unfortunately, this seems to apply to multiple issues raised with the government.

Recently, I asked the Prime Minister a question related to Chinese foreign interference. Again, we heard a personal attack. Instead of focusing on the very important matter of foreign interference, he attacked me, and it was so blatantly and sadly transparent. In the latest example, we heard yet another pathetic personal attack from the immigration minister during question period earlier today.

*Privilege*

I do not care about what he called me because I have been called worse by better, but I do take offence to the personal attacks that he has levied against my staff. My Toronto constituency office is proud to serve not only my constituents but also other Torontonians who have been failed by the immigration minister's Toronto Liberal colleagues. I could not be more proud of my team for stepping up where the government has failed. All four of my team members in Toronto are former immigrants, and one is a former refugee. Unlike the immigration minister, we actually care about immigrants, who are the people who choose to make Canada their home, who want to work or study here, or who want to visit, often because their families call Canada home and they want to reunite with them.

Far too many people have been failed by IRCC, the department under the immigration minister's watch. People have been caught in some sort of weird purgatory, which has been inhumane while they are separated from their family or missing funerals to say their final goodbye to loved ones. I do not know if it is because of incompetence, ignorance or something else that is driving the immigration minister.

Unlike the immigration minister, those in my office actually care about the integrity of Canada's legal and immigration systems and would never abuse our power to make a mockery of Canada's courts and the professional immigration staff by overruling a deportation order issued by our own department and upheld by the federal court to save a five-time criminally convicted foreign national who boasted of foreign financing to blockade Canadian roads and infrastructure, such as building pipelines. No wonder the government does not take the issue of foreign interference seriously when it is actively abetting it and saving those who are proudly boasting of it.

How can we have a country where there is transparency, responsibility and accountability when we are protecting foreign nationals who are boasting of foreign interference? Under the immigration minister's watch, and that of his predecessors, it is letting in ISIS terrorists, who are in videos dismembering the bodies of the victims they have murdered, and granting them citizenship.

I take the issue of immigration seriously because my parents were refugees who were welcomed to Canada at a time when other countries were closing their borders to people in need. I knew of no better way to honour that incredible act of compassion by Canada then, 40 years ago, than to serve. I volunteered to join the Navy nine and a half years ago because there is no better way than to give back and serve the very country that gave my family everything.

Last year, during my honeymoon, my wife very kindly allowed us to take a detour to South Africa so I could meet with Canada's High Commissioner in Pretoria, because there also is racism there. Racism is perpetuated by locally employed staff hired by the department of immigration. People are perpetuating the injustices of apartheid in Canada's name, and it continues under the watch of the immigration minister. Nothing is being done.

There are Black doctors and nurses from South Africa who want to come here and help heal Canadians to relieve the backlog of patients and surgeries, which are so bad in British Columbia that they have to send Canadian patients to the U.S. What a shame and what

a sham. They are being discriminated against, and that continues under this immigration minister's watch.

● (1245)

This is why I have been so adamant in ensuring that we uphold the highest standards of Canada's legal and immigration systems. Again, this goes back to the heart of the issue that we have been debating in regards to SDTC because it is clear that, when we turn a blind eye to corruption, when we turn a blind eye to perhaps, at best, incompetence, we see what happens. We see how it permeates different departments in this country, and it is failing Canadians.

I will use my last few moments to simply address a matter that was also raised with the immigration minister, which was when he attacked the competence of my staff. He said that my office never sent his department anything.

Well, minister should go back to his office to ask his team about the case that was escalated on September 14, 2024. He should ask his office about another case that was escalated to him on October 23, 2024. He should also ask his office about a more recent one, sent just last week, on November 13, 2024, about the Australian doctor I referenced during question period. This Australian doctor of Iranian heritage left the evil regime because she did not want to live under the gender apartheid regime. She went to Australia, got trained and wanted to come to Canada to help heal, but now she is stuck in IRCC purgatory.

When the minister attacks the integrity and competence of my team, and he is pointing at us, he seems to forget that there are also fingers pointing back at him. He should ask his team: Did they intentionally keep it from him, or did they miss it?

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I was astonished by what I saw in question period today. I have seen a lot of personal attacks and a lot of vitriolic debate, but that was quite exceptional.

To get to the point, I think that this member needs to be given a further opportunity to really address that and to call it for what it is. Those were the actions of a deeply insecure bully that we saw this afternoon in question period.

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my Conservative colleague for standing in solidarity with me and for the opportunity to elaborate a little bit more.

*Privilege*

Like I said, I have been called worse by much better. People make personal attacks in this place because they cannot defend the indefensible. It is indefensible to try to protect a foreign national who boasts of foreign interference when the country is in the grips of trying to understand the full scope of foreign interference in this country. It is indefensible that citizenship was granted to an ISIS terrorist, and it is indefensible at a time when Canadians need to be healed and are hurting that doctors are being prevented from practising in our country and building a life here when we need them more than ever.

Those actions are indefensible, and what that minister did disgraced not only himself but also his office as a minister of the Crown. I think it was a disgrace to everyone in this place.

• (1250)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the member can indicate whether or not it is offensive and disrespectful for the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada to not get security clearance. If the member looks around, every other opposition party and the government have made it very clear, and all other leaders have the security clearance. However, the leader of the Conservative Party has something that is hidden in his background that he does not want to share with Canadians and, as a result, is refusing to get the security clearance.

Does the member feel like the rest of the Conservative caucus? This is maybe where he could get a gold star from the Conservative caucus. Does he feel that the leader of the Conservative Party should get a security clearance? Yes or no, should he or should he not?

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Mr. Speaker, I hope this member gets a gold star from the Liberal Party for trying to deflect so obviously. I said this in my remarks, knowing that this was going to come up: One deflects from the core issue because one cannot defend the indefensible. That is why the Liberals deflect as much as they can. They try to make this big thing about the security clearance when it is the Prime Minister who is sitting on intelligence of 11 parliamentarians who have been noted as having betrayed this country. These 11 parliamentarians are in the protective custody of the Prime Minister. Why is that? What is he so afraid of?

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Spadina—Fort York for his excellent talk today.

I would like to ask him to comment on the member for Winnipeg North's obsession with security in light of the fact that the Liberal government gave taxpayer money to an illegal Chinese police station in Montreal not once but twice. Not only did the Liberal government fund these illegal police stations, but it extended them charitable tax status.

Can my colleague comment on that?

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Mr. Speaker, it is insane that the federal government has extended not only taxpayer dollars but charitable status to organizations that are fronts for the Chinese Communist Party. What is the incentive? What is the motivation? Is it because the government benefits in some way? As we heard at the Hogue in-

quiry, members of the Liberal caucus and their party benefited from help to secure nominations and fundraising.

What is the motivation? Why have the Liberals dragged their feet for as long as they have? What are they afraid of? Why are they scared to come out and name the 11 parliamentarians? They continue to focus on this issue of a security clearance, but we do not need a security clearance to know that 11 parliamentarians have been named. Not only was this found at the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, but it was validated by the Hogue inquiry. It has been validated by multiple news report.

What we need to know is why the Prime Minister refuses to name those 11 members. What is he so afraid of?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, through foreign interference, a Canadian was assassinated, many Canadians are being extorted and the leadership of the Conservative Party is being manipulated. Also, China and Russia are spending gobs of money to try to discredit the Prime Minister to the advantage of the Conservative Party.

However, the leader of the Conservative Party is saying he does not care and does not want a security clearance. He does not want to know. Does he really not want to know, or is he scared to tell Canadians what in his background is preventing him from getting a security clearance? Why is the member defending the Conservative leader? He is saying it is okay; we do not have to be concerned about foreign interference.

Is the member concerned about foreign interference? If he is, he should not be supporting the Conservative leader.

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

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** Order. I would ask members who do not have the floor to please show some decorum and respect, especially when the Chair is speaking.

The hon. member for Spadina—Fort York.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Mr. Speaker, I hosted a press conference just a couple weeks ago where we brought in an investigative journalist who has been at the forefront of identifying foreign interference. We also brought in the former Asia Pacific desk chief at CSIS and brought in a sinologist. They are all experts in identifying Chinese foreign interference. At that press conference, names were named, and one of the names raised was that of the international trade minister. The minister sits on the side opposite with the member.

The Liberals raise the issue of foreign interference, but who is the one truly not taking it seriously? They bring up the Conservative leader, but he himself has said to name the names. I am paraphrasing, but essentially he said that he does not care which party they are in. That is because our democracy and the integrity of this place and our country go beyond partisanship.

*Privilege*

That should matter more than whoever they are, because we need to root out these traitors. They are a cancer on our democracy. We need to remove them and shine a light into the shadows where foreign operatives hide.

• (1255)

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I felt compelled to rise today because of the member's speech. I really appreciate the speech he gave.

I want to apologize to him on behalf of the House for the comments he endured during question period today. They were beyond the pale of anything I have seen in the House so far, and he did not deserve that. Frankly, I think the Speaker should have the member who made those comments, a minister of the government, removed from the House for a period of time for saying heinous things about another member that are, frankly, untrue.

I will ask a question, because it is incumbent upon me to ask a question at this point in time.

The member knows both what is required to be a member of Parliament as far as a security clearance goes and what is required by the military regarding security clearances. Does he think anything could be accomplished, outside of muzzling the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition in the questions he gets to ask the government, without the security clearance the Leader of the Opposition already has? He is just playing his constitutional role.

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Mr. Speaker, I have a security clearance as a result of my role as a naval reserve officer. It is a very rigorous process to go through. There are requirements, for anyone who has clearance, when accessing certain information, and they include, to put it simply, muzzling the ability to use it.

The role of the official opposition, as the Liberals know full well, is to hold the government to account, but getting into the trap they are trying to set up for the leader of the official opposition to get a security clearance would prohibit him from doing his duty of holding the government to account. Let us instead focus on the fact that the Prime Minister does not need a security clearance to name the names. He, as the Prime Minister, has the ability to declassify all of that.

He was able to go to the Hogue inquiry and throw out there that he has, allegedly, seen some Conservative names. That is convenient. I thought we could not reveal anything because we need to protect intelligence and its methods, all of that. That does not seem to matter to the Liberals when it can be of potential partisan advantage to them to magically declassify things. It is just like what they alleged about India, only for the national security and intelligence adviser, last night, to completely walk that back, all at the expense of our country and our relationship with the largest democracy in the world.

Shame on the government.

**Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate rising in this chamber any opportunity I get. However, I wish I could say it was a pleasure to rise. Unfortunately, it is not this time. This is now my second opportunity to speak about the green slush fund scandal through SDTC, and frankly, I am hopeful the government will finally come to its senses, listen to the will of the House and

release the documents unredacted, as it has been called on to do, so that Parliament can move on.

As mentioned many times throughout the debate, this has led to a gridlock in Parliament. There are many things I would rather be discussing, such as our plan to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime, but unfortunately these issues are now being halted because the government refuses to show transparency. I believe this process shows how little the Liberal government cares about this institution and the democracy it represents.

Just to highlight the situation from a broader lens, this democratically elected House ordered on behalf of Canadians that the government hand over all relevant documents related to the green slush fund scandal within 30 days of the order passing. That was on June 10 of this year. By my count, it is 166 days later, and the government still has not done so.

In my last speech on this matter, I raised a couple of issues. I will not repeat all of them, of course, but I do want to highlight some key points.

All of our constituents elected us to represent them and fight for their best interests. I believe that one of the paramount aspects of that is ensuring that we are spending tax dollars wisely. Unfortunately, we have not seen that from the NDP-Liberal government. We have not seen that in the way that it has run up deficits. The Prime Minister has added more debt than all previous prime ministers before him, which threatens the sustainability of social programs and government services for future generations. We have seen it in the way the government has continually hiked taxes on Canadians and driven up inflation, to the point where people are struggling to fill their gas tanks, heat their homes or put food on the table. Of course, we also see it with the green slush fund scandal. The government has shown no regard for the massive amount of taxpayer money that was given out inappropriately.

Instead, the government has worked very hard to try to cover up its scandal and has refused to hand over the documents we mentioned, violating the collective privilege that we as parliamentarians have to order documents to be revealed. This privilege is a crucial function for ensuring that the legislative branch of government can meet one of its main objectives, which is holding the government accountable. I spoke about that just a couple weeks ago. With this privilege comes extraordinary powers to ensure the government cannot interfere with us meeting that objective, and it means the House can order all documents it deems necessary to carry out its duties.

As I noted previously, and will again for the benefit of government members, there is not a similar privilege afforded to the government to refuse an order for the production of documents. We are here debating this motion because the government seems to believe that it has such a privilege.



*Privilege*

I will re-emphasize to the government that in the Speaker's ruling, he noted:

The procedural precedents and authorities are abundantly clear. The House has the undoubted right to order the production of any and all documents from any entity or individual it deems necessary to carry out its duties. Moreover, these powers are a settled matter, at least as far as the House is concerned. They have been confirmed and reconfirmed by my immediate predecessors, as well as those more distantly removed.

That was from the Speaker's ruling directly, just for clarity.

The Speaker also went on to quote page 985 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, which I will quote for the benefit of Liberal members of the House: "No statute or practice diminishes the fullness of that power rooted in House privileges unless there is an explicit legal provision to that effect, or unless the House adopts a specific resolution limiting the power."

• (1300)

The House has never set a limit on its power to order the production of papers. I believe that is an important aspect. It is clear that the government is violating one of the collective privileges we have as members of the chamber. We are all sent here by residents in our own ridings from all corners of the country to make sure their voices are heard. The government is continuing to completely disregard that authority we have as members of the House.

We are also here because the government failed to protect the Canadian taxpayer. According to the Auditor General's report released on June 4, the government turned SDTC, Sustainable Development Technology Canada, into a slush fund for Liberal insiders. She found that SDTC had awarded funding to projects that were ineligible and where conflicts of interest existed. In total, 123 million dollars' worth of contracts were found to have been given inappropriately, with \$59 million being given to projects that should never have been awarded any money at all.

I mentioned that the government seems so careless with money. Two million people in a single month are lined up at food banks. People are struggling just to afford basic necessities because of the inflationary policies caused by the government, yet \$59 million has been given out to projects that should never have been awarded any money at all. I think that is staggering, and it shows that the government has no regard for the taxpayer.

I go back home to my riding and travel around northwestern Ontario, and nobody likes taxes; I think that is pretty clear. Maybe the Liberals and the NDP like taxes, but most people do not really appreciate paying taxes. When I talk to my constituents, they say that they have no problem chipping in their fair share if they know where it is going, and if it is going to go somewhere to help benefit their community and their country.

That is the big issue with the government; Liberals are raising taxes, and what are they doing with the money? They are funnelling it to Liberal insiders. They are taxing Canadians more, and Canadians are getting less as a result. It is completely unacceptable.

I want to get back to the Auditor General, because she discovered that conflicts of interest were connected to approval decisions. As a consequence, at the green slush fund, nearly \$76 million of funding was awarded to projects where there was a connection to

the Liberals' friends appointed to roles within Sustainable Development Technology Canada, while \$12 million of funding was given to projects that were both ineligible and had conflicts of interest.

In fact the Auditor General discovered that long-established conflict of interest policies were not followed in 90 cases. In one instance, the Prime Minister's hand-picked chair siphoned off \$217,000 to her own company.

I believe that the Auditor General has made it very clear that the blame for the scandal lies directly at the feet of the Prime Minister's industry minister, who "did not sufficiently monitor" the contracts that were being awarded to Liberal insiders. The industry minister utterly failed in his duty to protect the Canadian taxpayer, but what else is new with the Liberal government?

There is much more, and I do not want to repeat too much of what members have already covered, but I do want to note for the record that if the government had managed taxpayer dollars responsibly, we would not be discussing a privilege motion here today. Of course if the government had handed over the documents, we would not be here debating the privilege motion. We could be discussing one of the many other issues that are impacting Canadians in their everyday lives.

It is very important to note that only the government has the power to end the gridlock. If it complies with the House order to hand over all the documents related to the green slush fund, we can then get back to normal programming. Instead, the government is trying to protect itself and withhold what I would imagine is very damaging information. It must be very damaging information if the Liberals are willing to put their entire legislative agenda on hold.

• (1305)

As I mentioned, we could be talking about everyday Canadians and the fact that we have a plan to axe the carbon tax to bring down the cost of living and make life more affordable for people who are struggling. We could be talking about our plan to remove the GST on new home builds or our plan to make housing more affordable and get young Canadians out of their parents' basements and realize the dream of home ownership.

We could be talking about our plan to stop the crime by bringing in jail, not bail for repeat violent offenders, fixing the broken bail system the government has created and ensuring that we can restore safe streets across the country. We could be talking about many issues impacting first nation communities and about reconciliation across the country.

*Privilege*

All of these issues are tremendously important and require our attention, but the government would rather drag out the debate to prevent the documents from being released. I think that speaks for itself. It speaks to the fact that the government clearly has something to hide.

It is also unfortunate that the incident is not an isolated one. Many members have mentioned this. It is a culture, a pattern, with the government. There has been scandal after scandal. Whenever one scandal is in the rear-view mirror, another one comes to light. We have talked about SNC-Lavalin of course, the WE Charity and the Bahamas vacation the Prime Minister took. The list goes on.

One scandal in particular that has come to light recently is the one involving the former minister of employment, workforce development and official languages, who is still sitting as the member for Edmonton Centre but is no longer in cabinet. This is a very interesting one.

It has been reported that the member is tied to a lobbyist who received a staggering \$110 million in federal contracts. He was the director of the company that received a further \$8 million of government contracts. He is engulfed in allegations of fraud and wire fraud. He also tried to hide that he was getting payments from the lobbying firm while he was lobbying his own government and even sometimes his own ministry. However, he was caught by Global News, which reported this, thankfully, to highlight the issue for Canadians.

It does not stop there. As if that were not bad enough, earlier this month we found out that there were more text messages in addition to the ones obtained earlier, that showed a Randy, perhaps another Randy as the member for Edmonton Centre maintained. This Randy was in regular contact with his co-owner while he was the minister. It turns out that there is only one Randy, and we all know who it is.

On top of all this, because again it does not stop there, the member made false claims about his own ancestry, pretending to be indigenous in order to advance his own business interests, hoping to use that as an opportunity to access government funding for his business. It is absolutely despicable for anyone, let alone a member of the government and a minister of the Crown, to do such a thing.

Any one of those issues would have been serious enough for the member for Edmonton Centre to be fired from cabinet, but for some reason the Prime Minister continued to show support right up until the point the former minister resigned in disgrace. It really makes one wonder what it takes for an unethical Liberal minister to be removed from cabinet.

I guess the problem is there are too many ethical scandals on the other side. The Liberals would have to get rid of almost the entire cabinet at this rate, including the Prime Minister. Again, I highlight the issue because although it is not directly related to the SDTC green slush fund scandal, it is important to note that there is a repeated pattern with the government.

• (1310)

Coming back to the last issue, as the member for Kenora, I represent 42 first nations. I also represent part of the Métis homeland in

northwestern Ontario. The scandal that I just highlighted with the member for Edmonton Centre particularly hits home for residents in my riding. Roughly half of my riding is indigenous. We know that first nations and indigenous people across the country experience a number of challenges and that a number of well-intentioned programs have been created to help rectify some of the past wrongs. To have a minister of the Crown use that to his advantage, to fake indigenous ancestry, is something that is especially concerning and disgraceful. That is what I have heard in my riding from residents, both indigenous and non-indigenous.

I have lots of questions about the priorities of the government. We have seen in the case of the member for Edmonton Centre that the Prime Minister has continued to stand up for him, to have his back. However, if we look at past Liberal ministers, taking Jody Wilson-Raybould as an example, she is an indigenous woman who spoke the truth and was punished. She was removed from cabinet and kicked right out of caucus. The question I know a lot of people have is why the government is so quick to remove an indigenous woman from its benches when she speaks the truth and also so quick to support a non-indigenous man pretending to be indigenous and trying to advance his own interests.

It is perplexing to me that no members on that side seem to be asking that question. I would think they would also want to know. Maybe they do not care. I would like to think that they do, that they would take issue with this, but it does not seem that they do. These are very serious allegations. It is incredible to me that it has become normalized on that side of the House that one would use a ministerial position to advance one's own interests and even go as far as doing what Jody Wilson-Raybould described as "play[ing] ancestry wheel of fortune."

There is much more I could go on about, but it is very important to note that this green slush fund scandal really is just one domino in a series of events of ethically challenged Liberal governance. It is very important to know that we could get back to debating the issues everyday Canadians are facing if the government were to comply with the House order, if it was able to show some transparency. It is supposed to be transparent by default, but that really has not worked out. The government must hand over the documents instead of trying to cover this up. It is unacceptable that it has paralyzed the House for two months instead of doing what was ordered and that it is preventing us from addressing the many issues this country is facing.

I want Canadians across the country who may be watching at home to know that this really is not how a government should be run. A government should not be caught up in scandal after scandal, improperly spending taxpayer dollars, trying to cover it up or rewarding insiders. That is why Conservatives will keep fighting to get to the bottom of this scandal. Canadians deserve to know what is in those documents, and those who broke the law should be prosecuted.

Above all, it is clear that the government is not worth the cost or the corruption, and only Conservatives will take action to clean up this mess. It is time for a carbon tax election so that Canadians can elect a common-sense Conservative government that will end the corruption, axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget, stop the crime and get things back on track for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

• (1315)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know how Conservatives are actually treated in the back room. They are all watched very closely by the Conservative leader and report directly.

It is interesting that the member ended his speech with slogans. There is a CBC report that should be mandatory reading, quite frankly, for every member of the House: “If the leader invents a new slogan,” Conservative sources say that “we know we’ll have to use it”.

It goes on to say this:

“If you repeat the slogans, you get rewarded,” said a Conservative source. “You are celebrated in front of the entire caucus for being a good cheerleader...”

These things are what Conservative MPs and Conservatives are actually saying, and we just witnessed yet another; we witness it with virtually every one of them who stands up. The reality is that this is nothing more than a multi-million dollar game that the Conservative Party is playing, which is in the self-interest of the leader of the Conservative Party and not in the interest of Canadians.

If the Conservatives want to talk about corruption, I have a much longer list of examples of Conservative corruption, and even corruption in which the member's own leader was involved.

The Conservatives' actual motion says that we should take the issue and hand it over to the procedure and House affairs committee. When will the Conservatives stop playing this game at the expense of Canadians and allow us to vote on their motion?

• (1320)

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, it is always amusing to be able to respond to a question from the member for Winnipeg North.

The crux of the question was this: When can we get back to work? I would reiterate that we can get back to work when the government hands over the documents and finally shows some transparency.

Once again, I will use the word “amusing”. It is incredibly amusing that the member spoke to that CBC article, which was absolute garbage. The fact of the matter is that we have a Liberal Party that is actively trying to remove their leader. There is a list circulating among their caucus. I would be very curious to know if the member for Winnipeg North has seen the letter. Maybe he has signed that letter, but I doubt we will ever know, because we know that Liberal members have to get permission to actually speak their mind in their own caucus.

The member likes to pretend to be all high and mighty, but Canadians know that Conservatives—

### *Privilege*

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is rising on a point of order.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, at least within the Liberal caucus, each individual has a mind. We do not have to follow the lead of the leaders.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** That is clearly a point of debate.

We will move on to questions and comments. The hon. member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert.

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since the Conservatives have not been shy about preventing us from doing our job of asking serious questions for the past month, I will take the liberty of asking a question that has nothing to do with the current debate, but is important nonetheless.

If current trends hold, we know that, in the coming years, we could see a separatist government elected in Quebec. The party that would form that government has promised to hold a referendum during its term. There is also a possibility that a Conservative government will be elected during the next federal election. We know that an act on referendum clarity was passed here. Under that act, the government gave itself the right not to respect democracy in the event of a “yes” victory.

I want to know whether my colleague believes, deep down, that a “yes” victory in Quebec would be recognized by a potential Conservative government.

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

[*English*]

I would reiterate that the topic at hand today is the SDTC green slush fund scandal. Although the question is well intentioned and well placed, we have to stay focused on the fact that the Liberal government is continuing to paralyze Parliament by refusing to comply with an order of the House. This is all to cover up a scandal that must be very damaging to the Liberals if they are willing to go to such great lengths. I hope that the Bloc Québécois, the NDP and the other parties will join us in fighting for the answers, fighting for the truth, to ensure that Canadians can see what happened. That way, they can have transparency, and those bad actors who are involved will get what is coming to them.

*Privilege*

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am just disgusted with the Liberals' barrel of scandals that followed a Conservative government under Harper, who also had a barrel of scandals. However, I have to say, I have been pretty nauseated having to listen to particularly the Conservative leader, the member for Carleton, pretending to be on the side of indigenous peoples when he is on the record being a residential school denialist. In fact, he has fundraised with residential school denialists, the Frontier Centre, that ran campaigns in Saskatchewan denying residential schools. I have also had to call points of order on other Conservative members who likened indigenous backgrounds to criminality, something they changed in the Hansard over. I found myself grunting out loud in the House in excruciating disgust at tokenizing the racism and the stripping and stealing of indigenous identity by a party that supports residential school denialists.

I want to ask my colleague here, does he stand alongside me to condemn the Conservative leader's fundraising any further with residential school-denying think tanks?

• (1325)

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, the member speaks to an accusation that I am unaware of. I am not going to make any direct comments about that. I can say this: I have enjoyed working with the member in the past at committee and with members of the House to advance reconciliation, whether it be at indigenous affairs or anywhere else. I know the Conservatives have a very bold plan for reconciliation. We have a plan to ensure we are meeting the needs of first nations, Inuit, Métis across the country. I look forward to continuing that work, hopefully with all members of the House, in good faith and not playing political games.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about this SDTC scandal and nearly \$400 million of taxpayer funds corruptly directed to companies and the board members, all appointed by the Liberal minister at the time, profited directly. These were companies they controlled or were actively participating in. We are talking about \$290 million. It is an incredible amount of money. We could have axed the carbon tax for a lot of residents in Alberta for that price, or in Ontario, in his riding of Kenora, for years. They would have netted out more money. We could have built some homes by reducing the GST on new builds under a million bucks. We could have fixed more of the budget by reducing the deficit. We could have stopped some crime, including the crime of obtaining a brand-new passport after being ordered by a court not to have one. These Liberals allowed a known convicted human trafficker to get a brand-new passport from passport Canada despite the fact that a court had ordered he not have one.

Which one of those four options does the member think his constituents would have preferred instead of giving it to Liberal crooks?

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, we can take our pick. Of course, as I mentioned in my remarks, the debate itself is about the government handing over the documents, but it could have prevented all of that in the first place by just managing taxpayer funds effectively. When I go door to door, when I speak to residents across north-western Ontario and beyond, we hear time and time again that people are looking for change. They are looking for a plan to bring down the cost of living by axing the tax, a plan to build more

homes, as the member for Calgary Shepard mentioned, by reducing the GST on new home builds and helping speed up building permits. We have a number of common-sense proposals Canadians are excited about, and they want us to be here debating those issues. Unfortunately, the Liberals will not let us, because they are too busy trying to cover up their own corruption.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I do not want this to be a trick question, so I will remind the member to be careful in the way he answers it, because the Conservative spies are listening to him. The issue is we have very important votes coming up. One in regard to providing workers in Canada, 18 million plus, \$250 come springtime, and we have a tax holiday for the GST on a number of products and services starting on December 15.

Will this member be supporting those two measures?

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, we know the Liberals are moving forward with their temporary tax trick. Conservatives also know they are going to be increasing taxes on Canadians as soon as that is over. The Liberals have a plan, along with their NDP coalition partner, to continue raising the costs of living for Canadians, and Conservatives do not support that plan.

**Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour and a pleasure to bring the voices of Chatham-Kent—Leamington to this chamber.

My colleague before me lamented the fact that he had to speak twice on this. I will add to the lament, as this is my third time rising, because the government is not listening to ordinary Canadians as they are represented in this chamber.

Before I get into the substance of my speech, I want to take a moment to recognize the efforts of 40 extraordinary Canadians, for that is truly what ordinary Canadians are, for bringing the peace train to Ottawa two nights ago. MPs from a cross-section of this chamber, representing a cross-section of philosophical paths to peace, from our military veterans and peacekeepers to our peaceniks, all agreed on the message represented by the peace train participants: that Canada should do more for peace in our world.

It has been said many times that war is a failure of statecraft. We thank these folks for reminding us to invest more, in many ways, for peace.

Speaking of state and government failures, here we are again because the current government is ruling like an autocratic regime rather than a parliamentary democracy. Of course I am referring to the green slush fund and the Liberal refusal to hand over documents as ordered. The government is not being accountable on any front.

Today we are talking about the subamendment that is to be added to the amendment, and it reads as follows:

...except that the order for the committee to report back to the House within 30 sitting days shall be discharged if the Speaker has sooner laid upon the table a notice from the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel confirming that all government institutions have fully complied with the Order adopted on June 10, 2024,—

That is my birthday.

—by depositing all of their responsive records in an unredacted form.

In other words, the government does not have to report back to the House if it actually complies with the ruling of the Speaker's office. At issue, of course, is the Auditor General's finding that the Liberal appointees gave 400 million tax dollars to their own companies, involving 186 conflicts of interest. This is about 400 million wasted taxpayer dollars while Canadians cannot afford to eat, heat or house themselves.

The NDP-Liberals must end the cover-up and make the unredacted documents available, as ordered by the Speaker, so Parliament can get back to working for Canadians.

Let us review a few of the facts. The Speaker ruled that the NDP-Liberals violated a House order to turn over evidence to the police for a criminal investigation of the latest Liberal \$400-million scandal, but why the cover-up? Why would they allow Parliament to be incapacitated rather than address the issues that Canadians really and truly care about, like the doubling of housing costs, food inflation, crime and chaos?

On the crime front, the government has made a mockery of our justice system. Terri-Lynne McClintic, who abducted, and then assisted her boyfriend in the sexually motivated killing of, eight-year-old Tori Stafford in 2009 was allowed to be in the presence of children through a mother-child program at a women's federal penitentiary. It is hard to even fathom. Where is the accountability? I spoke so much about accountability in my previous two interventions.

Time after time, the government has revictimized victims, just as it did when it allowed Paul Bernardo to be moved out of a maximum-security facility. The government created the problem by passing Bill C-83, which ensures that even the worst of the worst, like Paul Bernardo, Luka Magnotta and Terri-Lynne McClintic, must be incarcerated in the least restrictive environment.

The Prime Minister has unleashed a wave of crime across the country with disastrous policies like Bill C-5, which took away mandatory jail for violent crime and allowed sex offenders to serve their sentences in the same home as their victims, under house arrest. Bill C-75 also made it easier for repeat violent offenders to be given bail. While the Liberals are concerned about heinous criminals being given a less restrictive environment, Canadians suffer the consequences of unrestricted crime and chaos. Again, the victims of crime are revictimized.

● (1330)

The government must be held to account for its failures. It has allowed Parliament to be paralyzed by its refusal to be transparent about the SDTC documents. Its own self-interest supersedes all other issues in their minds. Refusing to hand over the documents is an

### *Privilege*

affront to Parliament. What is so bad that the government would go to such lengths to hide it?

Why would the government not instead focus on the food inflation it has caused? Food bank use has doubled. Wholesale food prices in Canada have risen 36% faster than wholesale food prices in the U.S., a gap that has opened up since the introduction of the carbon tax. Sadly, now there are two million people lined up to feed themselves and their families at food banks. Our economy is teetering on the brink, but the worst is yet to come.

The coalition government voted for and legislated the quadrupling of the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre. In Ontario alone, Feed Ontario revealed last September, a record one million people visited a food bank in 2024. This is a dramatic increase of the 25% from the previous year, with Feed Ontario's CEO telling the media, "I never thought I would see this day". She went on to say that she had been with the organization for almost 15 years and never thought it would see this level of demand. She cannot believe it has reached a point where the numbers are so dramatically high. However, the Liberals seem oblivious to the suffering.

In a parliamentary democracy, Parliament is supreme. If a citizen finds a certain law repugnant, their only option is to mobilize a change in Parliament, for example by campaigning in favour of a certain issue, by joining a political party or by standing for office, such that Parliament changes that law. Citizens who disagree with the law of this land and believe that their rights have been violated can push for political change.

The rule of law is crucial in a democracy because it ensures that everyone, including government officials, is subject to the law. Key points about the rule of law in a democracy include equality before the law regardless of social status, checks on power, and holding the government accountable, which is a fundamental point in the rule of law. Other key points are the protection of rights; social sustainability, where citizens trust the law will be applied fairly; and economic development. A strong rule of law fosters a predictable business environment, encouraging investment and economic growth.

It is evident that the government believes that it is above the law and above the sovereignty of the chamber. Holding leaders accountable for serious wrongdoings is a hallmark of democracy. That is why we are here today. Again I ask, where are the documents? What is in them that is making the Liberals so afraid of the Canadian public's finding out?

*Privilege*

To the matter at hand, let us talk for a moment about what the Sustainable Development Technology Canada fund could have done with respect to research and innovation, and in particular, for a moment, with the energy sector. If colleagues would please indulge me, I will come back to the direct issue of the corruption at hand in a moment. I have often talked about this next sequence in round tables at town halls that I host.

If we think back to the creation, development and increase of wealth in our western world, it has largely mirrored the increase and the densification of our energy. When we came out of the caves, we kept ourselves warm and heated our food with wood. Over time we moved to charcoal and coal and on to fossil fuels. Today we have nuclear energy. Potentially tomorrow we will have hydrogen. Each one of these sources of energy has come with its own set of environmental consequences. As we have moved to a new path to that densification of energy, we have found ways of reducing and eventually removing, hopefully, environmental consequences.

● (1335)

There is a question I often ask when I am hosting round tables. We often hear the opposition speak of fossil fuels, their use and a hope for the day of peak oil. Here is my question: When did the world achieve peak coal? I do not mean the metallurgical coal we need for steelmaking. When did the world hit peak use of thermal coal?

I often ask this question at home, and I get responses from my constituents. Some say it was probably during the 1870s, during the Industrial Revolution. Maybe it was in the roaring twenties in the lead-up to the great crash, or more recently, after the green revolution of the 1970s. However, our world hit peak coal, the record use of fossil fuels in the form of coal, in 2023, and we are going to break that record this year.

Why is that important? Coal has twice the greenhouse gas emissions of liquefied natural gas. If Canada truly wanted to address greenhouse gas emissions that had a material effect on the world, we would be championing the sale and use of our clean and ethically produced liquid natural gas. We had 15 projects on the books 10 years ago. That is not what the government has done.

We have had the world come asking for that energy. Instead, the government has introduced a carbon tax, and while it might make someone feel good by patting themselves on the back that they are doing something, Canada produces 1.5% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

Weather and climate are a worldwide phenomenon. If we wanted to impact greenhouse gas emissions on a worldwide scale, we could. A carbon tax is not going to do it. We could, not as an end goal a century out but as an interim step, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from a material perspective and fund our own wealth as we transition our economy over to even more environmentally benign technologies. That is what we could be doing.

There was a fund set up to direct energy, investment and innovation in that direction. The Auditor General took a look at it back in 2017 and that fund was working well then. However, here we are today. I will end in a few minutes after already speaking for an hour

to the corruption that has come from the government, but I will note that if we wanted to do something, that is where the fund could truly be making a difference. Instead, we are here talking about corruption.

I have spoken at great length in the House about the lack of accountability and about the endemic corruption of the government. There was a lack of accountability by the former employment minister. After months of Conservative prosecution, he finally resigned. There have been allegations of fraud, of being involved in a private business while sitting at the cabinet table and of fake indigenous claims, and they were not enough to remove him from cabinet for months. Why is this behaviour seemingly endemic in the government?

Earlier this week, the Prime Minister defended the former minister and claimed, "I'm happy that he is continuing to lead on issues around jobs and employment and represent Alberta in our government." It is now clear that the Prime Minister knew about the crime and corruption the other Randy was engaged in the entire time. That was not enough to remove him. He knew about the double identity but chose to look the other way. The Prime Minister knew that the member for Edmonton Centre was operating his own business while sitting at the cabinet table.

Members may remember that the former minister had the nerve to testify that the Randy referenced in texts was not him but another Randy who just happened to work at the company he has a 50% ownership stake in. His business partner has refuted these claims, stating now that he was the only Randy who worked at that company. I guess he thought if the Prime Minister was backing him, he could get away with it. After all, the Liberals have gotten away with a litany of scandals over their rocky nine-year tenure in government.

● (1340)

The Prime Minister knew he was falsely claiming to be indigenous to steal money from indigenous people. After firing a legitimate indigenous justice minister for upholding the rule of law in Canada against his wishes, the Prime Minister decided to protect a corrupt, fake indigenous minister. There is a double standard when it comes to the Liberals: They expect the rest of us to be responsible for our actions, but they are not accountable for theirs. Everything from Frank Baylis and the \$273-million scandal to the former minister Navdeep Bains getting an executive position at Rogers after the government green-lit the Rogers-Shaw merger.

It is unconscionable. Every member of the House of Commons swears an oath to uphold the democratic institution of Parliament. Parliament is the foundation our nation was founded upon; it is a firm and solid base. As we come here to work every day, we are witnessing the rebuilding of Centre Block. The government is spending between \$4.5 billion and \$5 billion in part to provide a firm and solid foundation under that national treasure.

There is an old hymn whose refrain goes like this:

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;  
All other ground is sinking sand,

When we build a home, the foundation is arguably the most important part. Without a firm foundation, Centre Block would not be secure. Our security in a democracy is the firm foundation that our country was built upon. It provides the stability upon which we stand. When a democratic government rules as if it were a dictatorship, the supremacy and the stability of Parliament is lost. Freedom is not free.

Over 118,000 Canadians have died in military service for our country to keep this “land glorious and free”, a predominant line in our national anthem. It is time the government adhere to the principle of the rule of law in Canada. The fundamental principle of the rule of law means that everyone is subject to the same laws and no one is above the law. The rule of law is based on the idea that laws should be applied fairly and equally to all people, regardless of their power, wealth or societal position. It is time to restore accountability and democratic freedom in Canada.

Conservatives will continue to hold this government accountable and demand that the documents be released in an unredacted form. When will the government call a carbon tax election so that Canadians can vote out this out-of-control, corrupt government and vote in a common-sense Conservative government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget, stop the crime and bring home lower prices for all Canadians? For our home; for your home, Mr. Speaker; and for my home, let us bring it home.

• (1345)

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I must say that I really enjoyed listening to the member's speech. I thought parts of it were extremely thoughtful, when he spoke more extemporaneously about the history of fuels and so on. Then, of course he went into what I call the ChatGPT Conservative tropes we have been hearing for four weeks.

When it comes to the Conservative Party, there is no such thing as an environmental policy mix. It is all based on one thing. They do not like the price on carbon, ZEV mandate, an emissions cap, a clean-fuel standard, a clean electricity standard or even planting trees. It all comes down to giving money for green technology. The member seemed to say that they want to give a lot of money to the oil and gas industry, and we know they are allied with the oil and gas industry. I am wondering if the member finds that a bit ironic.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, there are so many ways I could go in response. Let us start with trees. The government has addressed climate change by planting two billion trees. I would ask every member with a phone here to go to Google and ask, “How many trees does Canada have?” The government's plan to address climate

### *Privilege*

change was to plant two billion trees. It is nowhere close to that, but it wants to add two billion to Canada's present 318 billion trees. It is not there yet.

• (1350)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I was the one who heckled the number of trees, but they do start as seeds, just to make the member aware.

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

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** That is a point of debate.

Colleagues, I would ask for a bit of decorum. The debate is getting pretty heated here.

The hon. member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert.

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is Friday afternoon, and we are all a little tired.

I agree with my colleague on this. It would be nice to know how many trees have been planted. I remember the ad campaign about planting two billion trees. It was quite a big campaign. I do not know how many have been planted so far, but it is a fraction of that. It is ridiculous.

My Conservative friends talk a lot about common sense. They want to fix the budget and all that. I know of two areas where the government could make cuts. According to a study by the IMF, the International Monetary Fund—not Greenpeace, not Equiterre—Canada gave oil companies \$50 billion directly and indirectly in 2022. I see that as an opportunity to cut spending. That money could be used to build social housing.

Does my colleague agree that the government should cut that \$50 billion?

[*English*]

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, yes, Canada does need to build an awful lot of housing. We have our own ideas about that as well.

*Privilege*

However, the topic of discussion today is actually the sustainability development fund. If the member was listening to my speech, he heard that this is where we could be investing and making our processes more efficient to provide fuels to the world in a way that actually addresses the climate and addresses greenhouse gas emissions. Now, this would not be forever. That is actually a practical, common-sense approach that would enrich Canada rather than bankrupting it while being able to fund the transition to even greener fuels. Instead we have a tax. That is the plan, and that is the plan the Conservatives say no to; we will axe the tax, and we will fund sustainable technologies in the future.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I just want to correct the record: No, we do not have enough trees, and no, the Liberals have not planted what they promised.

Getting back to the debate at hand, as I said before, the fact is that the Conservative Party voted unanimously against the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Its former leader said that the crisis of MMIWG was not on his radar.

I want to let everybody, and certainly first nations across Canada, know something. On the claim to have this deep concern for indigenous peoples, the Conservative Party leader, who is on the record fundraising with residential school denialists, does not care about first nations people.

I know the member has spent a great deal of time on food security issues, and I want to honour his work on this. With his many years of work around food security, does he support his party's plan to cut the school food program and his party's move to vote against my bill for a guaranteed livable basic income?

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, there are several things I do support. I have spent time in food security, and I support food security for Canadians and indeed for all peoples of the world. I am trying to remember what the other question was.

I support my colleagues who have done great work with the indigenous files as well, and the next government will actually have bold and innovative plans to deal with reconciliation with our first nations.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre on a point of order.

[*English*]

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind the member that nobody owns indigenous people. We have risen in the House on several occasions to remind members not to call us “our” indigenous people. We are not pets.

• (1355)

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, we stand with our colleagues.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will bring this back to what we are debating here today and SDTC having 186 instances of, basically, fraud.

The Auditor General conducted this audit. It is absolutely incredible where there are these conflict of interest, which came out of this audit. I am wondering if the member could speak to just how excessive this is. Any amount of conflict of interest, one, two or

three instances, is enough, but we have 186. We also know, as part of that, that the Auditor General did not audit all of the contracts. The Auditor General only audited approximately half of them, so it could potentially be even higher.

I am wondering if the member could speak to the incredible amount there is and how important this is. The lengths that the government has gone to protect this and not bring out all of the documents unredacted is just absolutely unprecedented.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, yes, there were 186. I think the fear is that this is just the tip of the iceberg, once all of the documents are have been provided. I have been fortunate in my life to be part of several different organizations. What really, truly, is a fact, is that the culture of an organization often comes from the leadership shown at the top. There are 186 conflicts of interest here. I did not have time today, and I even cut about four pages out of my speech, but I did do two previous interventions when I began to list the litany of conflicts and corruptions from the government in the past.

Why is this? It is almost like Canadians have become immune to Liberal corruption. I think that we will find out that they are not immune when we do finally get to an election. What I wanted to say is that the example gets set at the top.

The Prime Minister is the first prime minister who has been convicted twice for ethics violations. Is that what is causing the almost permissive ability for his ministers to go, one after another, to commit the same kinds of acts?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the member might want to check the ethical challenges that the leader of the Conservative Party had while he was in government, when there was a lot more corruption, power hunger and so forth. It continues today when we see the leader of the Conservative Party, I would suggest, being in borderline contempt, in this multi-million dollar game that they continue to play at taxpayers' expense, which is all for his personal self interest as opposed to Canadians' interests.

When is the Conservative Party going to recognize that the motion before the House is for this issue to be brought over to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs? The Conservatives have refused to allow that to happen. Rather, they want to filibuster, for weeks and weeks now, at a substantial cost to all Canadians.

When does the game stop?

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North used the word “contempt”.

**An hon. member:** Borderline contempt.



*Privilege*

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, he said, “borderline contempt”. Even Richard Nixon turned over the tapes, and then he resigned. Is that why we are not seeing the documents? Is that why the government is standing in contempt of Parliament and of the Speaker’s office?

The government needs to turn over the documents.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague. Earlier, I heard him say how important it is to move away from coal and toward other types of energy. I found that very interesting. Not so long ago, when we were examining Bill C-33 in committee, I moved an amendment to the bill. This amendment sought to ban the export of thermal coal in order to help fight climate change. However, the member’s Conservative colleagues voted against my amendment.

I would like to know whether the member will take his colleagues to task and tell them to change their minds.

• (1400)

[*English*]

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Mr. Speaker, when we talk about coal, we have to be very careful about whether we are talking about metallurgical coal or thermal coal. They are two different entities. Metallurgical coal goes into the production of steel. We need steel. Ideally, we would be making more Canadian steel. As I said in my speech, the progression of technologies through the densification of energy and their resultant lesser, more benign environmental effects are things this party does and will always support.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, thank you for your service today. It gives me an opportunity to practice my French, one of the two official languages of my country of birth, Lebanon. Today is Lebanese independence day. I want to take this opportunity to say to my birth country and the people of Lebanon that I hope for an end to the war that has been going on there for two months now.

[*English*]

It is raining today in Ottawa, and it being almost the end of November, we can perhaps be thankful that what we are getting on this gray day is rain and not snow. At this time of year, with the weather just above the freezing point, snow does not last very long as snow. It is quickly turned into slush. As Wikipedia tells us, “Slush, also called slush ice, is a slurry mixture of small ice crystals...and liquid water. In the natural environment, slush forms when ice or snow melts or during mixed precipitation. This often mixes with dirt and other pollutants on the surface, resulting in a gray or muddy brown color.”

Strangely, Wikipedia makes no mention of green slush, though I suppose we could make green slush by adding a little food colouring. If we did, it would still be slush, which “often goes through multiple freeze/thaw cycles before being able to completely drain and disappear.”

The Liberals are desperately hoping someone or something will make their green slush fund drain and disappear. For that to happen, though, they have to be willing to accede to the will of this House and produce the documents that were requested in unredacted form. I understand they do not want to do that.

The Auditor General uncovered many instances of apparent corruption. Releasing the documents would allow us to determine whether there were more. One would think a government that was honest would want to do that. Failing to release the documents makes it look like the Liberals have something to hide. Maybe it is the Prime Minister. Maybe it is one or more of the ministers. Where there is the smell of corruption, it seems safe to say there is corruption somewhere. We have the smell. What is making the stink? What might the corruption look like?

One of the supposedly shining lights in the Liberal plan to fight climate change was Sustainable Development Technology Canada, or SDTC, a foundation the Liberals created to fund new clean technologies. Their desire was to tackle climate change through Canadian innovation.

It was a good goal and well intentioned. It looked like a good idea. Who could argue against this concept? We all understand the need to fight climate change, and Canadians should be world leaders in developing new technology. We have the know-how, but those with the brain power sometimes need help bringing their ideas to fruition. However, what this great turned into, apparently, was a Liberal slush fund.

Merriam-Webster provides us with three definitions for what constitutes a slush fund. It can be, “a fund raised from the sale of refuse to obtain small luxuries or pleasures for a warship’s crew”. Certainly, when the Liberals are involved, there is a lot of refuse. However, I doubt if anyone would be willing to pay for their excrement, so we should turn to the other definitions.

• (1405)

A slush fund can also be “a fund for bribing public officials or carrying on corruptive propaganda”. I think this hits closer to the mark, though the public officials appear to be unelected party insiders.

One could say it was used for corruptive propaganda, though. The Liberals talked about climate change and the great things that would be done by SDTC. It turns out the Liberals’ plan to fight climate change was anchored in the idea of giving money to their friends. No wonder they do not want to release the documents that will show the full extent of their corruption.

*Privilege*

Merriam-Webster's final definition of a slush fund also seems appropriate: "an unregulated fund often used for illicit purposes". Certainly, no member opposite could really believe it is right to reward Liberal insiders with million-dollar contracts without public scrutiny. Do they believe the public is being served by this conflict of interest? Are they so self-righteous that they believe the means justify the ends as long as they are Liberal ends? Apparently they do or they would stop this sham and release the documents. They would rather tie up the House than do the right thing.

I was raised in a country that believes in honour. I have always known the importance of doing the right thing, the honourable thing. A person is judged by their actions, by whether they do the right thing, and not just when it is convenient. To act incorrectly and be less than honourable brings shame on a person, their family, their friends and their nation. A person would rather die than act shamefully.

Apparently, this is not true in Canada anymore, as we see from the government. When I look across the aisle and see the faces of the Liberal members, I have to ask whether their sense of honour is gone. Each and every one of them, I am sure, came to this House wanting to do the right thing for the good of the country. Somehow, they have lost their sense of honour and are taking part in shameful acts. They are complicit in a cover-up. They are aiding and abetting possible criminal activity. They are disrespecting the will of the House of Commons and the order of the Speaker.

They sit there and do not even feel shame. If they did, they would come into the chamber with paper bags over their heads to conceal their faces from the people of Canada, whose trust they have betrayed. It saddens me to see them, those people who once had the ideal of serving the country, and see how far they have fallen. They have lost their honour and shamed not only themselves and their families but the constituents they were elected to serve. The longer they continue this cover-up, the more shameful their actions become.

There is a way out of this, of course. The Liberals can regain their lost honour. They can tell the Prime Minister and the ministers to stop the cover-up, do the right thing and release the documents. Somehow, though it saddens me to say it, I do not see the members opposite having the courage to do that, which is why we have to debate the motion before us today.

● (1410)

It is important the people of Canada know that the government is trying to conceal wrongdoing. The \$400 million may seem insignificant to the Liberal government that has, in nine years, more than doubled Canada's national debt and is handing out such sums to the Liberal insiders. Violating the rules is apparently business as usual for the Liberals. It is not business as usual for the Canadian people who are being carbon-taxed to death. It is not business as usual for the record number of people visiting Canada's food banks each month. With that money, how many people could we feed? Canadians are appalled that money that was supposed to fight climate change was instead used to line Liberal pockets. The Liberals cannot deny it.

The corruption was so bad they had to shut down their green slush fund. I do not think any member there will deny what I am

saying. Earlier this year, the Prime Minister explained the Liberals' new climate strategy. Canadians who are worried about feeding their children are being short-sighted, he says. Apparently, he thinks it is morally selfish to be concerned about feeding their children, better they should starve to death for the good of the planet. It is easy to take the moral high road when he was born into privilege and the only food bank he has ever seen was as a visiting politician. That is not the real world most Canadians experience.

It is more important that we in the House show Canadians there is still honour in this land, and that graft, greed and corruption will not be rewarded. Politicians at any level of government should not be allowed to hide corruption and wasteful spending. It seems to me that for those who are inviting mob rules, the day will come when the people will say they have had enough with politicians who do not understand that their role is to serve, not to reward their friends.

The member for Calgary Rocky Ridge has proposed what I see as a reasonable subamendment to the amendment to the amended motion. It takes into account the possibility, however remote it may seem, that the government fully complies with the order from the Speaker of June 10. If the Liberals were to do this, if they were to show respect for the Speaker and the House, there would be no need to refer the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. Adopting this subamendment could save the committee time in the unlikely event the Liberals decide to do the right thing.

When will the Liberals realize they have no right to overrule the Speaker and the will of the House? The Prime Minister has expressed his admiration for the way dictatorships can get things done, so it is understandable that he wishes to ignore those who do not see things his way. Someone needs to tell him that no matter how much he wishes it was, Canada is not a dictatorship. He and his party are supposed to respect the rule of the law, even if they do not like it. Maybe, given his famous math skills about balancing budgets and small deficits, and his unwillingness to think about fiscal policy, the Prime Minister has become confused.

● (1415)

The Prime Minister knows the Auditor General found that some SDTC contracts involved conflicts of interest involving Liberal appointees and their friends, but maybe he thinks it was only one or two incidents, nothing to get excited about; surely the people of Canada will not be concerned about one or two incidents.

However, it was not one or two; it was 186 incidents of corruption. That is not a mistake, someone forgetting to recuse himself once or twice, not realizing that there was a conflict. It is a systematic failure, one that has cost taxpayers \$400 million so far.

*Privilege*

Only if the documents are released as ordered can we find out whether the problem is bigger than that and the corruption runs deeper. If there is no wrongdoing, what are the Liberals afraid of? The only reason not to comply with the Speaker's order is that they know the real numbers are much worse and the corruption is much more widespread than they have already admitted. No wonder they do not want the police involved.

In not complying with the Speaker's order, the Liberals are paralyzing Parliament, preventing it from doing other important work, not that they are willing to admit it. "It is not our fault" is what we hear. They tell anyone who will listen that it is the fault of the evil opposition that will not allow them to get away with covering up the corruption. They do not know why it has to be so mean to them. We hear that all the time, every day.

Canadians deserve to know the details about who profited from the \$400-million scandal. The money did not come out of the pockets of members on the other side. Liberal donors did not offer it as donations. The money came from taxpayers, from people wondering whether they can afford to heat their house this winter and put groceries on the table. For Canadians, \$400 is a big deal, but \$400 million is beyond their imagination. It is no wonder the Liberals think they can get away with it. They think people will not believe how corrupt they are.

After nine years of the Liberal government, the scandals are too many to list. The Prime Minister leads by example with his multiple ethics violations. It is no wonder so many of his ministers have difficulties determining right from wrong, something we have seen again and again in the past week.

Canadians are sick and tired of the arrogance and the paternalism the Prime Minister and his Liberal government have shown. Apparently, the Liberals know best about everything, and anyone who disagrees with them is just too ignorant to understand. That would explain why the Prime Minister would suggest that Canadian parents should let their children go hungry in the name of serving the planet, even if there is no proof that any of his policies will have any appreciable effect on climate change.

Those of us who live in the real world know it is time for the government to do the right thing. The people living in Liberal fantasyland will continue their efforts to paralyze the House and perpetuate the cover-up. I for one do not believe that participating in a cover-up of the mismanagement of public funds is the honourable thing. I would be ashamed to be part of it.

I ask members opposite to remember the ideals and values they held when they were first elected. Live up to them now and do the right thing. Hand over the documents and end the cover-up.

• (1420)

**Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentioned the national debt in his speech. However, the national net debt to GDP in Canada is among the best in the G7 countries. On the deficit to GDP, again, Canada is the best among the G7 countries. In terms of economic growth, the IMF projects that, in 2025, it will be the best among the G7 countries. Today, the Canadian consumer confidence index is at a 30-month high. Inflation, from its peak in June 2022, has come down to 2%, which is at the

lower end of the Bank of Canada's preferred target range. The interest rates have been cut four times, and Canada has the best per capita foreign direct investment that we have had.

I would like to ask the hon. member this: Under what economic indicators is Canada lagging behind any of the G7 countries?

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, this is the Liberal fantasyland that I was talking about. People cannot be fed reports and papers.

The only documents that Canadians would love for the government to talk about are the documents that it has to release to the House to uncover the scandals. If the hon. member can help me with some of his good colleagues on the other side and push the Prime Minister, the ministers and the rest of the caucus to hand back the documents to show the \$400 million in corruption, that would be a more fruitful and better conversation to have. That would be a real help to Canadians.

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish my colleague a happy Lebanese Independence Day. Of course, it is Lebanese Heritage Month as well. In my city of Edmonton, we have an incredible diasporic community of Lebanese Canadians.

I want to ask the member a question that I know is very important to many of the people in his constituency. Yesterday, the International Criminal Court came forward with arrest warrants for Netanyahu, for some of his cabinet ministers and for members of Hamas.

Now, I have been very clear that I believe in the international justice systems. Canada was one of the architects of the Rome Statute and the international court systems. Could the member say whether he also supports the international justice systems and whether he agrees with the NDP that we should enforce the arrest warrants if Netanyahu and his cabinet ministers come to Canada?

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Mr. Speaker, for some reason the member chose this time to wish me a good Lebanese Independence Day. A week ago, she would not even sympathize with me about what is happening in my home country. The message to the member is to stop—

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member.

The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona is rising on a point of order.

*Privilege**[English]*

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Mr. Speaker, according to the Standing Orders, it is not appropriate for members of the House to speak falsehoods. I have been a staunch supporter of the Lebanese community in Canada and around the world. I think the member would definitely know that. I am wondering if he would like to apologize and retract that statement. I would ask that you, Mr. Speaker, insist upon it, please.

- (1425)

*[Translation]*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** The Table will look into this and the Chair will address the House if necessary.

The hon. member for Edmonton Manning, to finish his answer.

*[English]*

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Mr. Speaker, if anyone needs to apologize, it is the member. She continues to meddle in the business of my community for her own political fortune and for her party's political fortune. On the irrelevant question from her—

*[Translation]*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** The hon. member for London—Fanshawe is rising on a point of order.

*[English]*

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot understand why the member does not want to follow the rules of this place. The member for Edmonton Strathcona is clearly doing her job as a foreign affairs critic and as a member of Parliament in the House. She is standing up for communities; it is not meddling to do so.

*[Translation]*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** Questions and comments.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

*[English]*

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** First of all, I want to thank my colleague for giving the beginning of his speech in French. I deeply appreciate that.

He mentioned the word “slush” a lot. It is exactly the same expression we have in French, so he can use “slush” in both French and English.

*[Translation]*

I would like to come back to the substance of the matter, which is actually quite heavy.

We are here because nearly \$400 million has not been properly managed. It was not one incident, or two or even three. It was not a small miscalculation here and there. This happened about 186 times. The official opposition is not the one saying it. The Auditor General looked at all this under a microscope. Four out of every five projects that were studied in this green fund were mismanaged.

Has the member ever witnessed such mismanagement of public funds during his political and business career?

*[English]*

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his explanation about the French word for “slush”. I will now use it in French.

This is unprecedented. There are 186 cases we know about. There could be way more than that. It could go much deeper than \$400 million and 186 cases.

I still cannot comprehend how we can accept that this happened in Canada. I have had different experiences in countries where corruption has become a culture, and I do not want corruption to become a culture in Canada. That is why we have to be very careful.

The government has a responsibility to do the right thing, show the documents and make sure that people who misuse funds for personal use are accountable for their actions.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague speaks so well and is always so well informed.

I want to ask him, similar to what I asked another colleague of mine, about the magnitude and weight of this and how important it is. Despite the 186 instances of conflict of interest that were found by the Auditor General when she did an audit, we know she did not even audit all of the contracts. Even one instance would have been enough to question the SDTC program and here we have 186.

Can he speak to how big this is and why it is so important that all of the documents relating to it are put forward unredacted?

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Mr. Speaker, there are 186 cases that we know about. That is beyond any comprehension whatsoever. It is beyond belief that we are still debating this while government members are sitting on their hands rather than handing over the documents. The government should show some respect to Canadians for the mismanagement and misuse of their funds.

- (1430)

*[Translation]*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie):** Since the time provided for debate has expired for today, the House will resume consideration of the privilege motion on Monday, November 25, at 11 a.m.

Pursuant to Standing Order 94, I wish to inform hon. members that Private Members' Business will be suspended on that day.

It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until next Monday at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)







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