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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1400)

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of *O Canada* led by the hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in honour of Earth Day, I attended an engaging installation of art by artisans in my riding. It challenged me to think of one word that would guide me to face the magnitude of the climate crisis. My word was “tenacity”. We all need to find the courage and determination to keep pushing forward, and I find that inspiration from our youth.

Young people are growing up acutely aware of the immense challenge our planet faces. They are aware that the lives of every living thing are at stake if we fail to act. We are all complicit in the continued ecocide as long as governments across the globe fail to step up and make the profound changes required to address the disaster that is already taking place.

I know my colleagues in the House are working hard toward solutions. Every day I am inspired by young Canadians from coast to coast to coast, and I join my voice to theirs to advocate for bolder and immediate action to defend our present and protect our future.

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• (1405)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is blessed with an abundance of natural resources that should be responsibly and sustainably utilized. Now is the time to invest in strengthening our energy resource, agricultural, technology and manufacturing sectors, which would assist in returning

Canada to prosperity and help in lowering the cost of living across the country.

We can also be a stable supplier of safe, clean, ethical and reliable energy, food and resources to countries that are desperately searching for safe alternatives at this time, displacing dictatorial and authoritarian suppliers with democratic ones. After all, energy security and food security are national security and international security.

The world wants more Canadian goods, food and energy. Canada wants more Canadian goods, food and energy. What we lack is a government with a vision to get Canadian goods, food and energy to market.

On this side of the House, we are committed to advocating for increased Canadian self-reliance. Canada must take necessary actions now to bolster our energy, food and resource development.

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PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, April is Parkinson's Awareness Month. Here in Canada, more than 100,000 people live with this condition, and this number is on the rise globally, with Canada experiencing among the highest prevalence rates.

While most people living with this condition are older than 60, individuals 50 or younger can develop early-onset Parkinson's. As well, it also takes some individuals many years to be diagnosed, since there is no diagnostic test and it can mimic other conditions.

In Canada, more than 30 people are diagnosed with Parkinson's every day, and we expect to reach 50 new diagnoses per day within the decade. Parkinson Canada is a fantastic advocate for all Canadians living with Parkinson's. They also provide many useful resources to help improve the quality of life for those who live with this diagnosis.

Statements by Members

I want to acknowledge Parkinson Canada's amazing work this month, and all year long, and every person in Canada who so bravely lives with this condition. I want to let them know that our government will continue to be partners with them.

• (1410)

[*English*]

* * *

[*Translation*]

FRANÇOIS BUTTLE

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Saturday in Saint-Constant, François Buttle heard a commotion in his neighbourhood. Rushing to the street, he saw that a car had rolled over and caught fire. He quickly realized that the driver was still inside. Police on the scene were forced back by an initial blast, but as one officer held the door open, François Buttle climbed into the vehicle, unbuckled the driver's seat belt and pulled him to safety.

In a spur-of-the-moment decision, François Buttle did not hesitate to help someone else. He likely saved a life by putting his own at risk. He later said that he was just a citizen doing his job.

No, François, you were not just a citizen doing your job. I have heard about your big heart, your perpetual smile and your hard work, but this incident has made me realize that you also possess the extraordinary courage that defines a hero. That is what you are, François: a hero.

The young driver's life was saved thanks to François Buttle and two brave police officers.

To them I say bravo and thank you.

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HOCHELAGA VOLUNTEERS

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Hochelaga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this being National Volunteer Week, I want to highlight the extraordinary dedication of three volunteers in my riding of Hochelaga.

Georgette Constantineau celebrated her 95th birthday last week. For the past 40 years, she has volunteered at the Saint-Jean-Baptiste-de-la-Salle church bazaar. Thanks to her involvement, hundreds of households can acquire thousands of useful items at very affordable prices.

Pierre Marcouiller has been involved with Hochelaga's community centre for over 50 years, including over 10 years running a tax clinic that completes between 1,000 and 1,500 tax returns every year. He is a pillar of our community.

Michel Vallée is the star volunteer at the La Fontaine Adventist community centre. Every month, he helps with food bank distribution days, picking up food donations and helping distribute them.

These are just a few of the many volunteers who give generously of their time just because they want to help make life better for individuals and families in my riding.

I thank them.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week is National Volunteer Week, a chance to thank and pay tribute to the countless volunteers who are truly the lifeblood of our communities.

There are volunteers such as Colleen Johnson of Mitchell, who was recently named citizen of the year for her selfless work in support of others, including her efforts to support three-year-old Claire and her family as Claire battles cancer. There is also Ron Ellis of Drayton, who helped to establish the Drayton Festival Theatre in 1991. He has been a tireless volunteer ever since.

There are volunteers such as Elizabeth Johnston and Amanda Brodhagen, who are leading the way as women leaders in agriculture. We also have volunteers such as Gary West and Murray Schlotzhauer of Perth East, who have been involved with so many agricultural organizations that it is impossible to list them all.

Finally, our rural communities owe a debt of gratitude to each and every volunteer firefighter and their families. They are on call each and every day. I thank all who give of their time for others.

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SIKH HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, April is Sikh Heritage Month, when we recognize the significant contributions of Canadians of Sikh faith to the growth and prosperity of Canada. My riding of Scarborough North is home to a thriving Sikh community and east Toronto's only gurdwara, Gursikh Sabha Canada.

In the depth of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gursikh Sabha Canada organized volunteers and resources to help support those in need. In addition to raising \$75,000 for North York General Hospital to purchase much-needed medical equipment, they spearheaded local initiatives, including vaccine clinics, food distribution and a holiday toy drive. I would like to commend the president, Gobinder Randhawa, and members of the congregation for their tireless work to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

[*Translation*]

Sikh Heritage Month is drawing to a close, but let us all continue to uphold the values of Sikhism, which are equality, compassion and service.

Statements by Members

[English]

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is National Volunteer Week, and I celebrate the compassion, empathy and generosity of volunteers in Etobicoke North. They are the lifeblood of our community. They give their time, energy and experience to improve the lives of others.

Through the pandemic, community leaders, families and friends were there for one another and lifted each other up. Rexdale Community Health Centre volunteers gave 19,000 hours of service last year. Church volunteers delivered food supplies, provided support and organized calls to combat loneliness. Volunteers with the International Muslim Organization delivered food and COVID aid. The Sikh Spiritual Centre Toronto provided *seva* and packed meals. BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir provided food, pandemic support and prayers.

I thank all our tremendous volunteers for helping to change lives and better our community through service to help build a better future for everyone.

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ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the grandson of a Holocaust survivor, I appreciate the opportunity to mark in the House of Commons the 107th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

The Armenian genocide was the first genocide of the 20th century. Well over a million Armenian Christians and members of other communities of the Ottoman Empire were systematically and brutally killed. This genocide was barely recognized for decades and it continues to be denied today, most notably by the Turkish state.

Genocide denial matters. Denial of past genocide enables future criminals to hope their crimes will be ignored as well. When he was planning the Holocaust, Hitler said, in 1939, “Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?” Those who deny historical genocides are not just debating history; they are paving the way for current and future crimes. Crimes against the Armenian people continue today from those who deny the right of self-determination and the importance of resolving disputes peacefully.

What happened to Armenians 107 years ago impacted the life of my grandmother, a German, Jewish girl who had not been born yet. The continuing denial of genocide affects the safety and security of all of us and of generations to come. To honour the survivors and for our own safety's sake, we remember.

* * *

● (1415)

RAMADAN

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Muslims in Canada and around the world are five days away from the culmination of the sacred month of Ramadan. From sunrise to sunset, Muslims across Canada have been fasting, praying and practising self-restraint. Like many of my colleagues, I have enjoyed breaking bread at sunset with my Muslim brothers

and sisters from across my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge and here in Ottawa.

Last night, for the first time in two years, parliamentarians gathered with Ahmadiyya Muslims and friends to break fast on the Hill. This uplifting Iftar dinner celebrated the values we all share, while reiterating our commitment to rejecting Islamophobia and fighting discrimination in all its forms. Muslims call this service their generosity and compassion, which is cherished by Vaughan residents.

As Ramadan comes to an end, I am looking forward to hosting my annual Eid dinner with Muslim leaders and community members from across the city of Vaughan on May 5. *Ramadan mubarak* to everyone celebrating. May this Ramadan and Eid festival be filled with many blessings and much joy.

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[Translation]

TOGETHER WE STAND MOVEMENT

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in May 2020, the pandemic was just beginning and we became aware of the storm that was raging around us.

We all understood that many people's lives were in the hands of our guardian angels, the health care workers. At that moment, as an MP, I wanted to show them my support and highlight the importance of their work, so I decided to join the Together We Stand movement, which started in New England.

In order to show my support for frontline workers, including paramedics, personal support workers and nurses, I gave many of them a flag with the Together We Stand slogan on it, in French of course. Two years later, as I travel around my riding, I see that those flags are still being proudly flown today.

Today, in the House of Commons, I want to reiterate my support for all health care workers and tip my hat to them for fighting so hard to win this battle. I want to remind the House that National Nursing Week will take place from May 9 to 15. This year's theme is #WeAnswerTheCall, in recognition of the important role that nurses play in our society.

*Statements by Members**[English]***ST. JEAN BAPTISTE CHURCH**

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for over 100 years the bells of St. Jean Baptiste church in Morinville, Alberta could be heard for miles around. The church was a place of worship, a place to mourn and a place to celebrate for generations of Catholic, indigenous, Métis and Franco-Albertans.

On June 30 of last year, in a disturbing act of hatred, this iconic structure was burned to the ground, and for the first time in over 100 years the bells were silenced. Despite this devastating blow to our community, the parishioners of St. Jean Baptiste have shown our country what the love of Jesus Christ really means: to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us.

On May 14, the church is hosting a fundraiser at the Morinville Community Cultural Centre to rebuild our beloved St. Jean Baptiste.

Today, in Canada's Parliament, I declare that we will not be defined by this act of hatred. The bells of St. Jean Baptiste shall ring again.

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RUSSIAN OPPOSITION ACTIVIST

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Vladimir Kara-Murza has emerged as one of Russia's most respected democratic opposition leaders, a noted public intellectual and a voice of conscience. He is also a senior fellow with the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights in my riding.

He is no stranger to many of us in this Canadian Parliament. He has testified before us and was instrumental in our unanimous adoption of Magnitsky legislation.

Vladimir represents the very best of what Russians stand for and the country that Russia can aspire to be. Targeted for his principled leadership, Vladimir has survived two assassination attempts and nonetheless had the courage to return to Russia to oppose Putin's autocratic regime and his war of aggression and atrocities in Ukraine. For this, he has now been unjustly imprisoned and faces trumped-up criminal charges that can result in decades of imprisonment.

I know I speak for all members of this House when I express my condemnation of this injustice and call for Vladimir Kara-Murza's immediate release.

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize early childhood educators week and honour the thousands of ECEs from coast to coast.

Every day, ECEs perform some of the most crucial work in our communities. We all know that the first few years of a child's development are the most important, and ECEs help ensure that our little ones get the best possible start in life.

However, ECEs, 98% of whom are women, are not compensated fairly for their labour. In fact, a quarter of them work second jobs to supplement their low income. Years ago, I worked as an ECE. I loved the job, but the low pay and lack of benefits resulted in me leaving this noble profession.

As \$10-a-day child care is implemented across Canada, we must make raising ECE wages and providing ECEs with good benefits, including pensions, a priority. This week, let us do more than just thank ECEs; let us ensure they are paid fairly for the work they do.

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● (1420)

*[Translation]***ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, April 24 marked the 107th anniversary of the genocide of the Armenian people. Let us come together to honour the memory of the 1.5 million Armenians whose lives were cut short beginning in April 1915, and everyone else who experienced exile, starvation and grief.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, the party that initiated efforts to have the House of Commons recognize the genocide, I want to reiterate our solidarity with the Armenian people. I want to reiterate the friendship that exists between the Quebec and Armenian nations. I would also like us to take this opportunity to reflect on the seriousness of the atrocities committed. Genocide is still going on in the world as we speak. We, and especially us as parliamentarians, have no right to trivialize this phenomenon. We have no right to be indifferent.

We cannot change the atrocities committed against the Armenians 107 years ago. Let us hope that commemorating this genocide will give us the courage to act today while we still can.

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*[English]***FARMERS IN WESTERN CANADA**

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, farmers have begun to plant their crops for the year in western Canada once again.

Western Canada was built on a hope and a prayer, and today it is no different with farming in Cypress Hills—Grasslands. There has been below-average moisture for multiple years. I know farmers are already praying for timely rains this year. They also need the Prime Minister to quit punishing them with ridiculous policies based on false claims about their industry. First it was the carbon tax, and then the clean fuel standard and harsh emission reductions for fertilizer production. Uncertainty and sky-high input costs come from an out-of-touch Prime Minister. Now he wants to go after wheat growers as a supposedly high-emitting sector. Arable farmland sequesters over 9.5 megatonnes of CO₂ every single year in Saskatchewan alone. Enough is enough.

Producers across this great country just want to be left doing what they do best: produce food for a hungry world while taking care of the land and the communities that we all love. Thanks to the Prime Minister and his continued attacks on the west, it is becoming impossible to do either one.

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[Translation]

FRANÇOIS L'HEUREUX

Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to pay tribute to a dear friend and a pillar of the Montreal community who passed away recently.

François L'Heureux was a highly respected lawyer and a well-known, passionate activist in our great Quebec nation.

François was a very caring husband to his beloved wife, Marie, as well as a devoted father to his sons, Philippe and Marc, who are both living with autism spectrum disorder.

[English]

With his son serving as his inspiration, my friend François served as a tireless advocate for a more inclusive society, believing passionately in the principle of neurodiversity. His dedication led him to the implementation of a wonderful autism organization in Montreal, the Giant Steps school and resource centre, where he served on the board of directors for over 20 years, much of that as vice-president. His tireless efforts would benefit generations of autistic Canadians and their families.

[Translation]

I would like to offer my deepest condolences to his family. We have lost a great man.

[English]

I say goodbye to my dear friend François. May he rest in peace. May his memory be eternal.

Oral Questions

ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1425)

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister invoked the emergency measures act on Canadians without justification, and now he is trying to hide it. His ministers admitted they will not be co-operating with the inquiry and they will be hiding behind cabinet confidence, of course. How many times have they used that one? WE, SNC, Winnipeg lab documents, the list goes on. Their dirty work is always too secret for anyone to watch. This inquiry will be nothing but an exercise in nasty Liberal political spin and nothing about transparency or accountability. Is that not the truth?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the illegal blockades hurt workers and endangered public safety, police were clear that they needed tools not held by any federal, provincial or territorial law. It was only after we got advice from law enforcement that we invoked the Emergencies Act. The Canadian Police Association and the Canadian and Ontario associations of chiefs of police all agree that this is how the legislation should be used, for emergencies. We have now announced the independent inquiry to examine the circumstances that led to the declaration and the measures taken in response. I know we all look forward to Justice Rouleau's excellent work.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, wedge, divide and stigmatize, that is what the Prime Minister is about and that is what this inquiry is going to be about. It is another chance for him to call innocent people racists and misogynists and accuse them of all kinds of things that are factually not true.

The purpose of this inquiry on the use of the Emergencies Act is for Canadians to see the reason why the government used it, not a chance for Liberals to insult and divide. Why is the Prime Minister so afraid to show Canadians what reasons he had or did not have to use the Emergencies Act? What is he trying to hide?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when our government invoked the Emergencies Act, we committed to Canadians that we would be upfront and transparent about it. We have kept that commitment, and the commission, an independent public inquiry, is further evidence of that. As we have made clear, we will work directly with the commission to ensure that it is able to complete its work, because Canadians demand answers and that is exactly what we are delivering.

*Oral Questions***ETHICS**

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in a shocking revelation yesterday, the Prime Minister admitted he did not use a loophole to get away with his illegal holiday. He did not give himself permission. We know from the complaints commissioner that there were some hurdles to the RCMP doing its work, but they were not insurmountable. Yesterday, the Prime Minister removed one of those hurdles.

Conservatives have asked the RCMP to reopen its criminal investigation into his activities. Will the Prime Minister co-operate with the RCMP? Will he meet with the RCMP?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Conservative Party has run out of ideas and material when it chooses to raise issues that were brought up by the Conservative leader three Conservative leaders ago. I know the Conservatives want to distract from their current leadership race, but there are real issues facing Canadians, from the rising cost of living to Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. Those are the issues that I am focused on. While they focus on me, we continue to remain focused on Canadians.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will inform the Prime Minister that there is no statute of limitations on fraud charges. This is very serious. This is a big deal. The Prime Minister of Canada has potentially committed criminal offences. We are talking about possible charges against the Prime Minister of this country. The Prime Minister has to know how serious this is. The Prime Minister has to know he is not above the law.

Has the Prime Minister met with private criminal counsel regarding these potential charges?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservative politicians want to continue manufacturing distractions on matters that were dealt with years ago, instead of talking about the economy, talking about the environment, talking about things that Canadians care about. What is clear is that they do not want to talk about making sure our economic recovery leaves no one behind. They do not want to talk about or even acknowledge the climate crisis. They definitely do not want to talk about making our communities safer by banning assault weapons. They want to talk about me, so while they stay focused on me, I will stay focused on Canadians.

● (1430)

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2016, the Prime Minister of Canada broke four separate sections of the ethics act. In doing so, as we found out just in the last week, he may have broken criminal law. The Prime Minister likes to break the rules; we know that. It all started with that illegal holiday, but it has continued with his illegal activity and interference with the SNC-Lavalin trial and his illegal benefits from the WE foundation, just to mention a few.

This is a Prime Minister who is always pushing the boundaries of ethical conduct and coming as close as he can to breaking the law. He seems to get away with it, but maybe not this time. Is the Prime Minister above the law?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the Conservative Party members are making very clear is

that they do not want to talk about investments in child care. They do not want to talk about how to close the infrastructure gap between indigenous and non-indigenous communities. They do not want to talk about investments in green infrastructure. They do not want to talk about making sure that the wealthiest pay their fair share. They definitely do not want to talk about protecting a woman's right to choose. While they focus on personal attacks on me, we will stay focused on the things that matter to Canadians.

* * *

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister used the word “flabbergasted”. He was upset and I am glad to hear it.

Canadian National has its headquarters in Montreal and so does Air Canada, and he is upset that no one at CN speaks French. He should be upset that none of the board members can speak French because they are in Quebec.

On June 16, 2021, 281 elected members here in the House voted to recognize that French is the only common and official language of the Quebec nation.

Will the Prime Minister require members of boards of directors whose headquarters are in Montreal or Quebec to have a basic knowledge of French?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, both official languages are at the heart of our identity. Every Canadian deserves to be served in the official language of their choice by federally regulated businesses, including CN.

The lack of francophone administrators on CN's board of directors is unacceptable, and we expect CN's management to lead by example.

As part of our modernization of the Official Languages Act, we are giving the Commissioner of Official Languages the tools he needs to ensure that CN meets its official languages obligations.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's indignation is a little selective.

Air Canada's CEO does not care about French, and a vice-president from CN spoke to the Standing Committee on Official Languages in English only, even though both of these companies have French roots. That is a little worrisome.

How can the Prime Minister say he is flabbergasted? Does he not realize that by appointing a governor general and a lieutenant-governor who do not speak French, he is signalling to everyone that his government thinks French is just a quaint curiosity?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Governor General is the first indigenous person to serve in that role. She was born in northern Quebec in the 1950s, a time when French was not taught there, unfortunately.

It is important for our leaders to set the example, and our Governor General has been taking intensive French courses since she was appointed.

Ms. Simon is determined to learn French and recognizes the fundamental importance of knowing both our official languages in order to represent all Canadians to the best of her abilities. By making it a priority to learn French, she has demonstrated the importance of protecting French across the country.

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[*English*]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the environment commissioner made it very clear that the government's plan for pricing pollution lets the biggest polluters off the hook while hurting indigenous communities and small businesses. The Liberals also have no plan for workers impacted by the climate crisis, which should come as no surprise when they have a plan where they take advice from big oil and gas instead of from climate scientists.

When will this Prime Minister understand that delay on climate action has the same outcomes as denial of the climate crisis?

• (1435)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the commissioner's report recognizes that putting a price on carbon pollution is critical to reducing Canada's emissions. The reports acknowledge that our price on pollution cuts emissions and fights climate change. We have strengthened our benchmark and standards, addressing many of the issues the commissioner identified, and we will continue to hold provinces' and territories' feet to the fire to meet these new targets. We will use these reports to keep delivering what Canadians expect: a healthy environment and a healthy economy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, not only does this government have the worst climate record in the G7, but the commissioner of the environment says its emissions reduction plan is nothing but a fairy tale. It is based on overly optimistic estimates and non-existent policies.

When will this government stop pretending and actually do something about the climate crisis?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the commissioner for his latest reports. His work shows how far we have come and what more we can do.

After a decade of inaction under the former Conservative government, we have made tremendous progress, whether it is building the green economy of the future, putting a price on pollution across Canada, or protecting an unprecedented amount of our lands and waters.

We are ready to do even more to keep our air clean, create jobs for the middle class and grow a strong economy.

* * *

[*English*]

ETHICS

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister admitted he never gave himself permission to accept an extravagant vacation gift valued at \$215,000 from a lobbyist. What was unknown to the RCMP during its original investigation is now known. This morning, I wrote to the RCMP commissioner asking her to reopen the investigation into the Prime Minister committing fraud on the government.

Will the Prime Minister co-operate in this RCMP investigation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are watching the Conservative Party of Canada engage in an act of political theatre on a matter that was dealt with years ago. Conservatives will stop at nothing to distract from their support of the illegal blockades that cost our economy, put people out of work and made people feel unsafe in their own communities. Let us talk about the real things that matter to Canadians, from the cost of living to Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. While the Conservatives continue to focus on me, we will stay focused on the things that matter to Canadians.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know the Prime Minister thinks he is off the hook, but there is no statute of limitations here in Canada. He shockingly revealed yesterday that he did not give himself the authorization to accept the extravagant gift. There is now a cloud of suspicion hanging over the Prime Minister, and he is under a shadow of doubt when it comes to his own integrity and honesty.

When will the Prime Minister begin speaking to the RCMP about violating Criminal Code section 121(1)(c)?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservative politicians want to continue to keep manufacturing distractions on matters that were dealt with years ago, instead of talking about the economy, the environment or issues that Canadians care about. What is clear is that they do not want to talk about making sure our economy leaves no one behind. They do not want to talk about, or even acknowledge, the climate crisis. They definitely do not want to talk about making our communities safer with a ban on assault weapons. They want to talk about me, so while they stay focused on me, I will stay focused on delivering for Canadians.

Oral Questions

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, section 19 of the Criminal Code says that, “Ignorance of the law by a person who commits an offence”, which includes our Prime Minister, “is not an excuse for committing that offence.” Section 121 of the Code indicates, “Everyone is guilty of fraud on the government if they, being an official, accept from anyone who has dealings with the government a reward”, such as a luxury illegal vacation, unless they have consent in writing from the head of the department.

If the Prime Minister did not give himself consent, will he admit that he is guilty of fraud?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we are seeing that the Conservatives do not want to focus on the things that matter to Canadians. They do not want to talk about workers. They do not want to talk about supporting seniors. They do not want to talk about supporting students. They do not want to talk about supporting veterans. They do not want to talk about the opioid crisis. They do not want to talk about reconciliation, and they do not want to talk about investments in clean and renewable energy. They just continue to want to try to make personal attacks and focus on me, while we, as a government, continue to remain resolutely focused on serving Canadians and delivering for them.

• (1440)

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we want to focus on his illegal, unethical acts. The current Prime Minister is the first and only Prime Minister found guilty by the Ethics Commissioner. The lavish, luxurious and illegal trip to the Bahamas was strike number one. Strike number two was our Prime Minister again being found guilty of ethical violations for his political interference in the SNC-Lavalin prosecution. This was followed by the WE scandal, the Winnipeg lab scandal and now the Emergencies Act invocation. Yesterday, his admission that he did not give himself consent to accept the trip was strike number three. He is out at bat and the game is over.

Why does the PM continue to conduct himself—

The Deputy Speaker: The Right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago in the House, we presented a budget that moved forward on supporting Canadians, whether by historic investments in housing, investing in green growth and good jobs, or moving forward on reconciliation. One would think that the House of Commons would talk about these things that matter to Canadians or challenge the government on the things that we did in this budget.

We all know that the Conservatives look forward to challenging and disagreeing with the government on a range of things. Are there any questions about the budget? No. Are there any questions about housing? No. The Conservatives just want to fling mud.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know that the Prime Minister is very uncomfortable with this line of questioning, and he will try to spin, spin, spin, but Canadians deserve to know that the Prime Minister is not above the law and in fact should be held to a higher standard. Yesterday, he admitted that he did not have consent to accept the vacation, and took it anyway. The unknown is now known.

Will the Prime Minister come clean and remove the cloud of suspicion and proactively speak to the RCMP about his unethical and criminal behaviour?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out, these are issues that were brought up by the Conservative leader three Conservative leaders ago. The issue was aired. The issue was dealt with.

What we see today is a Conservative Party desperate to distract Canadians from its farcical leadership race, distract Canadians from the important work we are doing on the budget, and distract Canadians from the fact that it was busy supporting a convoy that shut down jobs and hurt Canadians across the country. These are things the Conservatives do not want to talk about. What they want to do is focus on me with personal attacks. We will stay focused on Canadians.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will tell the Prime Minister that the one thing Canadians are sick and tired of is a Prime Minister who acts with impunity and thinks he is above the law.

In the House yesterday, the Prime Minister gave the RCMP the missing clue it needed to begin a formal investigation into defrauding the government of over \$200,000: He did not grant himself the permission to take this trip.

Will the Prime Minister face the consequences and make himself and his staff available to be interviewed by the RCMP, or is he just going to refuse to face the music?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, we see Conservatives trying to drum up acts of political theatre on a matter that was dealt with years ago, because all they have in their tool box is personal attacks and flinging mud.

One would think that a Conservative Party, a loyal opposition of Her Majesty, would be bringing up issues that matter to Canadians, whether it is growing the economy, whether it is issues around the cost of living, or whether it is the housing crisis faced by so many Canadians. We have answers to all of those things in our budget, and we will continue working on that. That is why they fling mud.

* * *

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we will get there yet.

On the Prime Minister's little cheat sheet, it says that it is not a question of speaking French, but rather of possibly learning to speak French in the future, or “at some point”.

At some point, though, could the Prime Minister not simply say that he will allow Quebec to apply the Charter of the French Language to businesses under federal jurisdiction, end of story?

Oral Questions

• (1445)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Bloc Québécois is obviously concerned about Quebec and about protecting official languages and French within Quebec. That is entirely understandable, since that is the responsibility he has taken upon himself.

As Prime Minister, my responsibility, and that of the Canadian government, is to protect our official languages across the country, not just in Quebec. Only a federal government can do that, and that is exactly what we are doing across the country.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is not clear.

He is not doing that. That is the problem. He is not doing it. I want to make it clear that I am not criticizing Ms. Simon or Ms. Murphy. I am criticizing him. He is the one who appointed these women. Honourable though they may be, they do not speak French.

How can he be flabbergasted and indignant about people not speaking French when he himself appoints people who are nowhere near capable of speaking French?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague knows very well, Ms. Simon was raised in northern Quebec at a time when indigenous people were not taught French. That is a shameful failure in our history, and we are working very hard across the country to change that reality now and in the future.

As a country, we are at a point in our journey where I think everyone agrees that it is very important to have a Governor General who can talk seriously about reconciliation. That is what she is doing, while learning French.

* * *

[English]

ETHICS

Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know the Prime Minister may not have the answer to this question right now and it may take him a few minutes to find out the answer, so I am going to ask the question now and then we are going to ask it again later, giving him time to consult with his staff to find out.

My question is this. Did the Prime Minister claim the \$215,000 illegal vacation as a taxable benefit on his income tax return?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we see are Conservative politicians who want to keep manufacturing distractions on matters that were dealt with years ago, instead of talking about the economy, the environment or things that Canadians care about. They do not want to talk about our plan to support young families buying into the housing market. They do not want to talk about our plan to create more jobs and grow a green economy. They do not want to talk about more gun control. They do not want to talk about standing up for women's rights. They want to fling mud and distract from their own failings, whether it is their leadership, their convoy or any other issue they are avoiding.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is not a distraction; these are facts.

The RCMP documents show that the Prime Minister committed fraud. He received a \$215,000 gift from someone who lobbies the Canadian government.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister admitted he never got that permission, but the RCMP never questioned him about it.

I have one simple question for the Prime Minister, who, sadly, has adopted this singular attitude for the past six years: Why does he always think he is above the law?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are watching the Conservative Party engage in an act of political theatre on a matter that was dealt with years ago.

Conservatives will stop at nothing to distract from their support of the illegal blockades that cost our economy dearly, put people out of work and made people feel unsafe in their own communities.

Let us talk about the real things that matter to Canadians, from the cost of living to Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. While the Conservatives continue to focus on me, the government will stay focused on the real issues that matter to Canadians.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Prime Minister of something. Does he remember Jody Wilson-Raybould? Perhaps he remembers this honourable woman who did uphold the law. The Prime Minister kicked her out of her role as Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. Why? It was because she upheld the law and, more importantly, refused to play partisan politics with it. That is what the Prime Minister did with Ms. Wilson-Raybould, and that is what he is still doing with this free trip worth \$215,000.

Why does the Prime Minister once again think he is above the law?

• (1450)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, we see that the Conservatives are desperate to talk about anything but the issues that are important to Canadians' everyday lives.

They are not talking about investments in child care, how to close the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous communities, investments in green infrastructure or how to ensure that the wealthy pay their fair share. They simply want to make personal attacks rather than focus on the issues that actually matter to Canadians.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know the Prime Minister cannot keep his litany of scandals straight and that he is always confused between his multiple charges under the Conflict of Interest Act. What we are talking about here is the Criminal Code and a Prime Minister who thinks he is above the law.

The RCMP needs to reopen the investigation into the Prime Minister accepting a gift from a lobbyist worth over \$215,000. The Prime Minister cannot act with impunity. He should be held to a higher standard.

Will the Prime Minister commit today to co-operating with the RCMP regarding his fraud against the government?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, these issues were dealt with years ago. The Conservative Party is desperate to try to find personal attacks to muddy the waters so that people do not talk about the real issues facing Canadians, whether it is the housing crisis, the opioid epidemic, the erosion of individuals' rights or support for the green transition. These are things that matter deeply to Canadians, and unfortunately the Conservatives would rather focus on me than focus on what deeply matters to Canadians in their daily lives.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: If people want to ask questions, they can get on the list to ask questions so that we can all speak in the House of Commons.

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, due to the slow rollout of sanctions against Russian oligarchs closely affiliated with Putin, yesterday we learned that Igor Makarov, one of those oligarchs, was able to move \$120 million of assets out of Canada. Again, this was due to the slow rollout of sanctions. The New Democrats have long been calling for an expansion of sanctions and to apply them directly to oligarchs closely affiliated with Putin who are fuelling the war in Ukraine.

Why is the government dragging its feet?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since even before the beginning of this illegal war in Ukraine, Canada has been leading the charge in support for Ukraine and, indeed, pushing back against Russia. However, it was also extremely important that we worked in a coordinated fashion with our allies and partners across NATO and around the world. That is exactly what we did, with the strongest package of sanctions ever applied against a modern major economy. We have continued to do that, including with 203 new sanctions brought in today, which means in total, over 1,000 people supporting Putin have been sanctioned since just February. We will continue to do every bit more we need to.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this evening is Yom HaShoah, a time to remember the Holocaust. It is when it commences. This weekend at the National War Memorial, a memorial that is committed to remembering Canadian soldiers who gave their lives to fight the Holocaust, there is going to be a protest where the chief guest speaker is a notorious anti-Semite and a Holocaust denier and someone who is promoting the horrific war in Ukraine that Putin is engaged in.

Canadians deserve to be protected from hate groups, so what is the government going to do to prevent this obscenity from happening?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, tonight is indeed the beginning of Yom HaShoah. Anti-Semitism and hatred in any form have no place in Canada. We have held a national summit on anti-Semitism to hear directly from community leaders on their concerns, and budget 2022 provides funding to support the special envoy, the construction of a new Holocaust museum and the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, and proposes to prohibit the promotion of anti-Semitism through the denial and downplaying of the Holocaust.

We will always be steadfast in our support for Canada's Jewish community, and I look forward to seeing many parliamentarians tomorrow at the memorial for the Holocaust.

* * *

● (1455)

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Inuit communities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and across the north all agree that self-determination is an essential step toward reconciliation. This is the best way to promote prosperity and support communities' and individuals' well-being throughout Inuit Nunangat, with the goal of socio-economic and cultural equity between Inuit and other Canadians.

Can the Prime Minister inform the House about the latest developments in ensuring the government properly supports Inuit self-determination?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the member for the Northwest Territories for his outstanding work.

Along with our Inuit partners in what is the culmination of years of collaboration, we have recently announced the endorsement of the Inuit Nunangat policy. This will help ensure that Inuit priorities and self-determination are part of the government's programs, policies and initiatives going forward across the breadth of everything a government does.

We will continue to work with Inuit leadership through the Inuit-Crown partnership committee to build a renewed Inuit-Crown relationship and advance reconciliation based on affirmation of rights, respect and partnership.

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the saga of the Prime Minister's illegal vacations, involving a trip that even Canadians cannot afford, there are some grey areas with respect to the Prime Minister's authority to hold himself above the law.

Did the Prime Minister hamstring the RCMP in order to shield himself from the facts and a fresh scandal?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the party opposite is short on material, because it is raising the same issues that were brought up by the Conservative leader three Conservative leaders ago.

Conservative politicians want to keep manufacturing distractions instead of talking about things that are important to Canadians, such as the economy and the environment.

What is clear is that they do not want to talk about the need to ensure that our economic recovery leaves no one behind, they do not want to talk about the climate crisis or even acknowledge that it exists, and above all, they do not want to talk about the fact that we have made communities safer by banning assault weapons.

We will continue to work for Canadians.

[English]

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, page 56 of the RCMP's criminal brief into the Prime Minister said that the Prime Minister's actions were "more damaging to the Government of Canada's appearance of integrity than would similar actions carried out by a lower-ranking government official".

Canadians expect the highest standard of integrity from the Prime Minister. Why does the Prime Minister believe that he is above that standard?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we see how short of ideas or relevance the Conservative Party of Canada is right now when it does not have anything to say about the housing crisis that we just put forward strong measures to address in our budget of two weeks ago. We moved forward on initiatives to invest in the green transition and the green economy in ways that will make a huge difference in the lives of Canadians from coast to coast to coast, and the Conservatives have nothing to say about that. They have nothing to say on the issues facing Canadians. Instead, they just want to fling mud. They just want to make personal attacks on me. I am going to stay focused on Canadians.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister incriminated himself by admitting to the only element that the RCMP could not establish to charge the Prime Minister with fraud.

Oral Questions

Will the Prime Minister share that information with the RCMP? If not, is it because he is afraid he will be charged?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians of all backgrounds and walks of life are watching question period, and what they see right now is a Conservative Party desperate to distract—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Please, let us respect the process here of asking a question and having an answer. We will try our best to do that.

The Right Hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, what Canadians watching question period see today is a Conservative Party flailing about, desperate to bring up issues that were dealt with years ago and desperate to try to distract from the fact that they have nothing to offer Canadians. They have no solutions on the housing crisis that Canadians are facing. They cannot even criticize us for the solutions we put forward two weeks ago in the budget.

We continue to stay focused on Canadians, while they stay focused on me.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1500)

The Deputy Speaker: I am going to wait a second. I am hearing a lot back there. If the member wants to be on the list to ask a question, I am sure he can talk to his folks and get on the list.

[Translation]

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

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister sees all of our questions as personal attacks.

In fact, we are asking questions of the person who is meant to represent moral authority. The title "right honourable" comes with certain responsibilities.

In the House yesterday, the Prime Minister admitted to the one thing that the RCMP was unable to establish in order to charge him with fraud.

Will the Prime Minister proactively share that information with the RCMP? If not, is it because he is afraid of being charged with fraud?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, we tabled an historic budget that will help Canadians buy a new home, that will help fight climate change by creating a greener economy, and that will invest in indigenous communities and their economic empowerment.

The Conservative Party has nothing to say. It has no questions, no criticism, no counter-proposals. Instead, the Conservatives want to bring up an issue that was thoroughly dealt with years ago. We will continue to stay focused on our work for Canadians.

*Oral Questions***THE ENVIRONMENT**

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the federal government is not prepared for the green transition. The environment commissioner released a report yesterday that said there was no federal implementation plan, formal governance structure, or monitoring and reporting system in place to support a just transition.

The commissioner also said that the government is not prepared to provide appropriate support to more than 50 communities and 170,000 workers in the fossil fuels sector.

We must transition away from oil. Why has the Prime Minister done nothing for these workers?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, our government has a clear plan for a just transition.

We have a comprehensive action plan that includes legislation. We are in talks with workers, unions, indigenous groups, stakeholders, and the provinces and territories to find the best way forward.

We are making strategic investments in skills and training. Regional strategies and projects across Canada will help create sustainable jobs. By planning together, we can ensure that Canadians have sustainable jobs that will help them tomorrow and in the future. That is exactly what we are doing.

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the environment commissioner disagrees.

He says that the Prime Minister has not done anything to help workers in the oil and gas sector make the green transition. That is not to say that the Prime Minister has done nothing at all. On the contrary, he has done quite a bit when it comes to oil. He bought Trans Mountain, and he just approved Bay du Nord, a project that will produce one billion additional barrels of oil.

The question is this: If the environment commissioner thinks that the federal government is not ready for the green transition, is it simply because the Prime Minister never had any intention of starting this transition in the first place?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we thank the environment commissioner for his latest reports. His work shows how far we have come and how much more we can do.

After a decade of inaction under the former Conservative government, we have made tremendous progress, whether it is building the green economy of the future, putting a price on pollution across Canada, or protecting an unprecedented amount of our lands and waters.

We are ready to do even more to keep our air clean, create jobs for the middle class and grow a strong economy.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is important to remember that the Ambassador Bridge and the

Coutts, Alberta crossings were cleared before the Emergencies Act was invoked. The act was not needed to clear the border blockades, and police were well equipped to take care of this with all the existing laws and powers.

What, then, was the national security threat that met the extraordinarily high threshold needed to invoke this act? Is there something they are not telling us, or was the Prime Minister trying to cover up for his incompetent management of the protest?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when illegal blockades hurt workers and endangered public safety, police were clear that they needed tools not held by any federal, provincial or territorial law. It was only after we got advice from law enforcement that we invoked the Emergencies Act. The Canadian Police Association and the Canadian and Ontario associations of chiefs of police all agreed that this was how the legislation should be used: for emergencies.

We have now announced the independent inquiry to examine the circumstances that led to the declaration and the measures taken in response, and we all look forward to Justice Rouleau's work.

• (1505)

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the protest organizers are being held accountable in courts as we speak, but this inquiry is to ensure the government is being held accountable. Invoking an act with the power to override charter rights is dangerous, so the purpose of the inquiry is to tell the public whether the threshold needed to invoke the act was in fact met.

The Liberal government has not made a convincing argument. Whether it met the threshold remains in serious doubt, so either it is hiding something or it is covering up for incompetence.

Will the Prime Minister waive cabinet confidence and let Canadians know the true story?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when we invoked the Emergencies Act in a restrained and limited way, we also committed to the full transparency that goes with the invocation of these powers, whether it is a parliamentary committee that has been examining the issue or whether it is a full public inquiry that will be transparent and have the power to understand the circumstances and the use of the Emergencies Act.

That is the kind of thing everyone should look forward to. Unfortunately, Conservatives are made uneasy by the fact that they were standing against hard-working Canadians by standing with people who were illegally blockading our economy.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I think the Prime Minister's definition of transparency is different from Canadians' definition.

The Emergencies Act stipulates that the special joint committee and the inquiry are responsible for holding the actions of the government to account, and not that of Canadian citizens.

At last night's committee meeting, the Minister of Public Safety and the Minister of Justice continued to hide behind cabinet confidences and lawyer-client privilege.

Will the Prime Minister be transparent and accountable to Canadians and release the documents the government relied upon to justify the invocation of the Emergencies Act?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, an integral part of invoking acts like the Emergencies Act, unutilized to this point, is a level of transparency and accountability that comes through a parliamentary committee created to look into exactly that, and a transparent public inquiry headed by Justice Rouleau, who will be able to examine all these questions around the circumstances that led up to the invocation and the use of the act itself.

That is what Canadians expect, but that is exactly what makes Conservatives uncomfortable, because of their support of those convoys.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we continue to be dismayed at the images coming out of Bucha, Mariupol and other towns and villages throughout Ukraine where the atrocities committed by Russian forces are coming to light.

Canada has supported Ukraine every step of the way, both before and after the Russian invasion, but Ukrainians still need our help. Could the Prime Minister tell the House and Canadians about the measures this government has taken to hold President Putin and his accomplices accountable?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Etobicoke Centre for his solidarity with the Ukrainian people and his personal leadership.

This morning, we announced sanctions against 11 senior officials and 192 other members of the people's councils of the so-called Luhansk and Donetsk people's republics.

Today's measures apply further pressure on President Putin and those complicit in the horrific events occurring in Ukraine. We will continue to stand with Ukraine and its people.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Emergencies Act is crystal clear. The independent public inquiry must look into the circumstances leading up to and the measures used by the government under the Emergencies Act. It is completely inappropriate for the Prime Minister to try to direct the scope of this inquiry by predetermining what the commissioner must investigate. This is political interference. It is up to the com-

Oral Questions

missioner, based upon the Emergencies Act, to determine what is relevant, not the Prime Minister.

Will the Prime Minister immediately amend the order in council to remove any political interference from this inquiry, yes or no?

• (1510)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when our government invoked the Emergencies Act, we committed to Canadians that we would be up front and transparent about it. We have kept that commitment. The commission, an independent public inquiry, is further evidence of that as it looks into the circumstances that led up to the invocation of the Emergencies Act and the use by the government of the Emergencies Act. As we have made clear, we will work directly with the commission to make sure that it is able to fully complete that work.

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve to know the full truth and nothing but the truth on how the Liberal government came to its decision that the threshold had been met to invoke the Emergencies Act. Key evidence considered by cabinet would include a complete legal and constitutional analysis on the legality of this decision. Without this information, the inquiry will not be able to perform its legislated mandate to determine if the government acted appropriately.

Will the Prime Minister commit today to being open by default and make this internal analysis available to the commissioner immediately, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the member's second question, he confirmed that the mandate of the commission is to look into the circumstances that led to the invocation of the act and the use of that act and if it is responsible. That is exactly the issue.

Unfortunately, Conservative politicians seem a little uncomfortable that the inquiry might find that their supporting blockaders and folks who tried to shut down the Canadian economy and overthrow the government were maybe on the wrong side of the issue. That is what Conservative politicians seem to be so worried about.

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister cannot help himself. He just has to be the centre of attention.

He was the subject of an RCMP investigation. We know that he accepted a gift even though he did not authorize himself to do so. He is the first sitting prime minister to have been found guilty of multiple ethical violations.

Oral Questions

Let us see if he also gave himself the right to break other laws. His aides have had time to look into this. Did he or did he not declare his trip as a taxable benefit on his tax return? That is an easy question.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the Conservatives are flailing about in a desperate attempt to avoid talking about the day-to-day issues that matter to Canadians, from the housing crisis, which we are addressing with an extremely strong plan to help Canadians in our latest budget, to the green transition, in which we have invested billions of dollars to ensure jobs for generations to come as we fight climate change.

These are issues the Conservatives do not want to talk about. They want to focus on me, but we will stay focused on Canadians.

* * *

[English]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many indigenous, rural and remote communities are still heavily dependent upon diesel and other fossil fuels for heat and for power.

Will the Prime Minister please tell the House what the government is doing to ensure that these communities and communities in rural and remote Canada are able to transition toward net zero?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country for his hard work on protecting the environment. Advancing the transition to indigenous climate leadership is central to addressing climate change. It includes continuing to support indigenous, rural and remote communities by investing in indigenous-led and indigenous-delivered solutions to climate change and the transition to clean energy.

It is why our strengthened climate plan invests \$300 million to advance our commitment to ensure communities relying on diesel have access to clean, renewable and reliable energy by 2030.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people are not safe as a result of successive Liberal and Conservative governments putting the privileges of big oil corporations over our safety and human rights.

We saw this in the budget, which gives \$2.6 billion to big oil, but zero new funding to implement all the calls for justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This is disgraceful.

Will the government commit to increased investment to end this crisis of violence?

• (1515)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our hearts are with survivors and families of missing and murdered indigenous women, girls, two-spirit and 2SLGBTQQIA+

people. Addressing this ongoing violence requires living up to the goals of our country and all the calls for justice.

In June 2021, partners from across the country came together and released the national action plan, including the federal pathway to finally end this ongoing tragedy. It will be supported by budget 2021's \$2.2-billion investment in concrete measures that will keep people safe.

* * *

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, on April 4, the IPCC issued its latest and most stern climate warning. Globally, within three years, emissions must peak, and then they must drop dramatically in half by 2030. The only hope of holding to less than 2°C is if global emissions peak by 2025 and then drop in half by 2030.

Two days later, the government approved Bay du Nord. Three days later, the budget said we are going to complete the Trans Mountain pipeline. In the face of this, my question is this: Why, with a choice of now or never, has Canada chosen never?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know what is at stake in the fight against climate change. It is why we are stepping up our climate ambition by committing more than \$100 billion to climate action, ensuring we reduce methane emissions by 75% by 2030 and transition to a net zero-emissions electricity grid by 2035.

We are also doubling our commitment to \$5.3 billion, to help developing countries fight climate change and protect biodiversity. We will continue delivering ambitious and achievable climate action that protects our communities and builds a healthy future for everyone.

* * *

UKRAINE

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

If you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, given that:

Routine Proceedings

(a) there is clear and ample evidence of systematic and massive war crimes and crimes against humanity being committed against the people of Ukraine by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, directed by President Vladimir Putin and others within the Russian Parliament; and

(b) the crimes committed by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation include:

- (i) mass atrocities in the invaded and occupied Ukrainian territories,
- (ii) systematic instances of willful killing of Ukrainian civilians and the desecration of corpses,
- (iii) forcible transfer of Ukrainian children to the Russian territory,
- (iv) torture and the imposition of life conditions causing grave suffering,
- (v) widespread instances of physical harm, mental harm and rape,

the House recognize that the Russian Federation is committing acts of genocide against the Ukrainian people.

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

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

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the parties, and I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion: That the House call on the government to develop a policy of due diligence on corporate responsibility for human rights and the environment that would: require companies to prevent any negative impact on human rights and the environment through their global operations and supply chain; require companies to perform due diligence, including careful assessment of how they might contribute to human rights or environmental abuses abroad and ensure access to remedies for harm; ensure significant consequences for companies that fail to perform and report on adequate due diligence; establish a statutory right for aggrieved persons to seek justice in Canadian courts; and strengthen the Office of the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise by giving it the power to compel witnesses and testimony.

● (1520)

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

[*English*]

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, today during question period, the Prime Minister danced around answering any questions about criminal charges that he could be being investigated for. I believe it is only fair that I share with all members of the House the criminal briefing documents from the RCMP on the Prime Minister's fraud against the government.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Mission—Mat-squi—Fraser Canyon has a point of order.

Mr. Brad Vis: Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I saw the member for Sydney—Victoria wearing a wonderful tie with his name and a picture of his riding on it in the colours of the Liberal Party.

Just to confirm, is it okay for me to wear a blue and white tie with my name on it and the name of my riding as well? Can you please clarify that for the House, Mr. Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: On that, we will come back to the member later on. I will check to see what the ruling is. I thank the member.

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 one petition. This return will be tabled in an electronic format.

While I am on my feet, I move:

That the House do now proceed to orders of the day.

The Deputy Speaker: If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

The hon. deputy House leader.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I request that the motion be carried on division.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. whip for the official opposition.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Mr. Speaker, we respectfully request a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1605)

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

(*Division No. 58*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Battiste	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Cannings	Carr
Casey	Chagger

Routine Proceedings

Champagne	Chatel	Zarrillo	Zuberi— 180
Chen	Chiang		
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)		NAYS
Cormier	Coteau		Members
Dabrusin	Damoff		Aitchison
Davies	Desjarlais	Aboultaif	Allison
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Albas	Baldinelli
Diab	Dong	Arnold	Barrett
Drouin	Dubourg	Barlow	Beaulieu
Duclos	Duguid	Barsalou-Duval	Bergen
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz	Benzen	Berthold
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Bergeron	Bezan
Erskine-Smith	Fergus	Bérubé	Blanchette-Joncas
Fillmore	Fisher	Blanchet	Bragdon
Fonseca	Fortier	Block	Brock
Fragiskatos	Fraser	Brassard	Calkins
Fry	Gaheer	Brunelle-Duceppe	Carrie
Garneau	Garrison	Caputo	Chambers
Gazan	Gerretsen	Chabot	Chong
Gould	Green	Champoux	Dalton
Guilbeault	Hajdu	Cooper	Davidson
Hanley	Hardie	Dancho	Deltell
Hepfner	Holland	DeBellefeuille	Desilets
Housefather	Hughes	Desbiens	Dowdall
Hussen	Hutchings	Doherty	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Iacono	Idlout	Dreeshen	Epp
Ien	Jaczek	Ellis	Falk (Provencher)
Johns	Joly	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Ferrier
Jones	Jowhari	Fast	Gallant
Julian	Kayabaga	Fortin	Gaudreau
Kelloway	Khalid	Garon	Genuis
Khera	Koutrakis	Généreux	Gladu
Kusmierczyk	Kwan	Gill	Goodridge
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Godin	Gray
Lametti	Lamoureux	Gourde	Hoback
Lapointe	Lattanzio	Hallan	Kelly
Lauzon	LeBlanc	Jeneroux	Kmiec
Lebouthillier	Lightbound	Kitchen	Kramp-Neuman
Long	Longfield	Kram	Kusie
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)	Kurek	Lantsman
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor	Lake	Lawrence
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Larouche	Lemire
Martinez Ferrada	Masse	Lehoux	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)	Lewis (Essex)	Lloyd
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty	Liepert	MacKenzie
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	Lobb	Martel
McLeod	McPherson	Maguire	Mazier
Mendès	Medicino	May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)	McLean
Miao	Miller	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Michaud
Morrice	Morrissey	Melillo	Morantz
Murray	Naqvi	Moore	Motz
Ng	Noormohamed	Morrison	Nater
O'Connell	Oliphant	Muys	O'Toole
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor	Normandin	Paul-Hus
Powlowski	Qualtrough	Patzer	Perkins
Robillard	Rodriguez	Pauzé	Plamondon
Rogers	Romanado	Perron	Rayes
Sahota	Sajjan	Poilievre	Reid
Saks	Samson	Redekopp	Richards
Sarai	Scarpaleggia	Rempel Garner	Rood
Schiefke	Serré	Roberts	Savard-Tremblay
Sgro	Shanahan	Ruff	Schmale
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Scheer	Shields
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh	Seeback	Simard
Sorbara	Spengemann	Shipley	Small
St-Onge	Sudds	Sinclair-Desgagné	Steinley
Tassi	Taylor Roy	Soroka	Stewart
Thompson	Trudeau	Ste-Marie	Stubbs
Turnbull	Valdez	Strahl	Therrien
Van Bynen	van Koeverden	Thériault	Tochor
Vandal	Virani	Thomas	Uppal
Weiler	Wilkinson	Tolmie	Vidal
Yip	Zahid	Vecchio	

Vien
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Vis
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Webber
Williamson

Viersen
Villemure
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from April 26 consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to share some words on this budget.

I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague, the member for Nunavut.

In the context of what Canadians are going through, it has been a tough time. These past couple of years, Canadians have had to deal with the pandemic and the growing cost of living, which is at a crisis level now. The cost of everything has gone up, from filling up our cars, to buying groceries, to finding homes people can afford and paying rent. On top of that, there is a war that makes everyone around the world feel less safe.

In this context, Canadians sent us to Parliament in a minority government to get them help and to find ways to solve the problems that they are dealing with, and we did exactly that. In this minority government, we used our power to win significant victories for people. While other parties have spent their time worried about themselves, and spent their time not responding to Canadians' needs, we focused on what people needed most and we delivered.

We were able to expand our national health care system for the first time in a generation, and do it in a significant way. We delivered dental care for Canadians. Starting this year with children under 12, children who need care the most will be able to get their teeth fixed. That is a significant step forward for so many people. We are proud of that.

We know that this is going to make a big difference in the lives of Canadians and we are going to keep pushing phase two, which will cover children under 18, seniors and people living with disabilities. We will eventually see full implementation of our program, which will mean that everyone in our country who qualifies, and who does not have coverage already, will be able to get their teeth fixed. That is something that we are proud of. That is something that this budget delivers that we used our power to obtain.

I want to share with members what that means for real people. I have spoken with one person in particular named Adam. As I am a

The Budget

new dad, Adam's story really hit me hard. He is a young dad of two kids. Both are under the age of 12, and both need dental work. He figures the estimate for the work they need is about \$1,000 for each child. He makes under \$70,000 per year and he is barely getting by. It is tough. The rising cost of living has hurt him.

When I spoke with him, I could hear his voice quiver when he shared with me that he feels a bit ashamed. He feels ashamed that he does not know if he can afford to get his kids' teeth fixed, and he feels ashamed that he is wondering if he should just wait until their adult teeth come in. A dad was feeling ashamed that he was not taking care of his kids.

I got to speak with Adam after we made our announcement. He said he had a feeling of relief right now, knowing that his kids would be looked after, and that he did not have to continue to bear the shame of not being able to afford to care for his kids, who he loves so much. It was such a beautiful thing to hear him share that with me.

I have spoken to so many people who tell me that it would be life-changing for them to be able to get their teeth fixed. I was just speaking with a young woman at a bakery where I was purchasing some bread. She thanked me, and said that this would mean that she would be able to look after her teeth, which she had been neglecting for so long.

• (1610)

This is going to be a lot of help for a lot of people. Seniors who, as they age, often encounter problems with their teeth and end up in the hospital and are unable to get the care they need, will be able to get their teeth fixed. This is going to mean a lot to a lot of people.

While we are proud of this victory, I want to also be clear that, as much as this might upset the Conservatives' world view, this is not a New Democrat budget. This is a Liberal budget where we used our power, as New Democrats, to get some victories for people. However, there are a lot of problems with the budget. There are a lot of problems with the approach of the government toward some of the most urgent struggles that people are dealing with.

[Translation]

We are therefore proud that we were able to use our power with this minority government to win some victories for people in this budget. We met the needs of people who said that they were facing major challenges in their lives and who asked us to help them. We were able to support them through a federal program that will help people across the country who cannot afford dental care. This truly marks a turning point, and it will help millions of Canadians. We estimate that about 6.5 million Canadians will have access to dental care thanks to our efforts.

It is also important to mention that the Liberals and the Conservatives voted against this motion and this plan in the past, and that we have now won this victory.

*The Budget**[English]*

There are a lot of problems. One of the massive problems we have with this budget and the government's approach is about the environment. It is one of the most crucial issues of our time. We know that people are worried about the impact of the climate crisis, not simply for the future but right now in their lives. We are seeing forest fires devastate communities and floods steal away people's homes and their ways of life. Extreme heat waves that we have never seen before are taking the lives of some of the most vulnerable. We are feeling the impacts of the climate crisis now, and we know from scientists that this will only get worse if we do not act.

Despite the seriousness of this crisis, the Liberals' approach has been to give more subsidies to the oil and gas sector instead of cutting them, as we have said, or eliminating them entirely. No public money should be spent on profitable oil and gas companies. Our public money should go to workers impacted by the climate crisis, to investments in renewable energy, and to investments to ensure that we are doing our part to reduce emissions and create good jobs for Canadians. That is where our public money should go. Instead, the Liberals have increased subsidies for the fossil fuel sector. We know that the plan or the price on pollution exempts the biggest polluters: It lets the biggest polluters off the hook, but it disproportionately hurts indigenous people and small businesses. We see this theme. The government makes decisions that benefit those at the top and hurt everyone else.

The other major concern, and one of the most unifying serious crises of our time in Canada right now, is the housing crisis. An issue that used to be more of a concern in large urban centres, such as Vancouver and Toronto, is now a crisis that has gripped every city and municipality in our country. People cannot find homes to call their own. They cannot afford homes. What does that mean for a young person who wants to start a family? I have heard from young people and young families who say they cannot afford a home to raise their kids, so they are not going to have kids. To be forced into a position where they are unable to grow their families just because they cannot find places to call home is pretty bad in a country as wealthy as ours. It is, frankly, shameful. We have people who have good salaries who cannot find homes, people who have limited salaries and people with no income. This is a concern that is impacting all walks of life. All Canadians are struggling.

I have spoken with parents who have beautiful homes, and they tell me their number one concern is the cost of housing. When I tell them they have beautiful houses, they say that their kids are never going to be able to afford a place. Even more so, young people who grow up in a community with their friends, families and connections feel that they will never have a chance to find homes in the communities where they grew up and will have to move somewhere else. When they try to find homes somewhere else, those are too expensive, too.

It is a serious crisis, and we do not see the action necessary to respond to this crisis from the government. We fought for some serious supports and we are proud of those supports to tackle the housing crisis, but we need much more. We need to do a lot more. We need to make up for decades of inaction on the part of Conservative and Liberal governments. When the government fails to continue investing in the housing that people need and fails to ensure

that there are affordable options for people over decades and decades, it causes a crisis. When the government sets up a tax system that not only encourages but incentivizes speculation and property flipping, it is no surprise that properties and the cost of homes have gone up. A system has been designed to encourage and incentivize that activity.

- (1615)

[Translation]

We know that the other major crisis, one of the most serious in the country, is the housing crisis. We need more measures to address it. Clearly, people cannot find affordable housing.

We will continue to put more pressure on the government to provide assistance.

[English]

Again, these are all choices. If we were in government, New Democrats would make choices to invest in our health care system, increase transfers and make sure that we invest everything possible to build homes that are affordable. We would tackle the housing crisis. We would commit to investing in solutions to create good jobs and fight the climate crisis. That would be a New Democrat budget.

We are proud of the work that we have done, but we have got to make it very clear: decisions by Liberals and Conservatives have gotten us to this point where people cannot afford homes to call their own. They have gotten us to this point where the climate crisis is raging. There is no solution for workers and for people, but we would do it differently. We will continue to fight and be their voice.

[Translation]

It is truly an honour to share these words with my colleagues today.

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on a number of occasions, I have heard NDP members say that oil and gas subsidies have gone up. I will be honest. The first time I heard that I started to look into it because I was personally concerned about it.

The only evidence I could find of oil and gas subsidies going up is with respect to money that has been designated specifically for dealing with orphan oil wells. In my opinion, that is not really a subsidy. That is more about making sure that we take care of the environmental consequences oil wells have contributed to over the years.

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I have a very simple question for the member, because I could be wrong. I am willing to accept that, and if that is the case, I want to hear that. Is it true that, when the member says the oil and gas subsidies have gone up, he is really referring to the fact that more money has been put towards dealing with those orphan wells?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, on the question of orphan wells, we are deeply concerned that profitable oil and gas companies are getting subsidies to do the work they should have done anyway. They should not have left orphan wells that way. To answer the question directly, there are also more than \$2 billion of carbon capture credits, which amount to at least \$2 billion of additional subsidies. Many scientists point out that we do not know how effective carbon capture technology is.

Again, giving billions of dollars to subsidize profitable oil and gas companies with a carbon capture tax credit is absolutely wrong, and it is absolutely an increase in fuel subsidies. That should not happen. Why would we give public money to profitable oil and gas companies, which are gouging people at the pumps? It makes no sense at all.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, NDP members have repeatedly said that carbon capture and storage is unproven or does not work.

I want to take this opportunity to invite the NDP leader to come to my riding. I will pay for his hotel. He could see carbon capture and storage happening right now. There is the Shell Quest project in my riding. Last week I went to an open house for the Polaris project, an entirely private sector-funded carbon capture and storage project.

Saying that carbon capture is unproven is like saying that we do not know if cars work or if airplanes work. They are working, right now. They are capturing carbon, and they are contributing to environmental reductions. They are being fully funded, in the case of the Polaris project, by the private sector.

Will the NDP leader stop ignoring the reality of carbon capture, stop denying the technology that is currently happening and working, and commit to coming to my riding and seeing it in action?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, the member's passion has certainly secured him a future job in the oil and gas sector.

However, the problem is, why would we give billions of dollars of additional subsidies to profitable companies? Why would we spend our public money? Would the member go to the public and say that we are going to spend the public money on a company that is profitable to make them do something? Why would we agree to that? That is ludicrous.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, the member had his time to ask a question. Maybe the member wants to ask another question, but I will respond by saying that it is ludicrous to give public money to profitable companies when we should focus our public money on investing in workers, in the help workers impacted by the climate crisis will need and in renewable energy. That is where our public money should go. We would not want to give our public money to profitable enterprises. That is wrong.

• (1620)

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie): We have time for a 30-second question, but first I wish to remind members that this place requires some decorum. The debates are passionate, but I would ask members to show more decorum.

The hon. member for Trois-Rivières.

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Burnaby South for his truly touching words.

Dental care is extremely crucial. Teeth are important for smiling, and smiling helps us connect with others. Dental care is definitely something that affects us all.

I would like to know if the member for Burnaby South will support the Bloc Québécois' request to adequately compensate Quebec under this program.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, our policy has always been to recognize that Quebec has the right to opt out with full compensation. That is what we have always said.

However, I want to make it clear that what we are proposing is a federal program similar to employment insurance. It is not about hiring dentists. It will pay the bills for people who cannot pay them. That is what we are proposing.

[*English*]

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I rise today to speak about housing in my constituency. This budget has an entire first chapter on housing, and it offers the classic promises of modest levels of funding to the three territorial governments. Housing is not a new issue. Although the housing crisis in Nunavut has been raised in Parliament, there may be still little understanding or knowledge of what this crisis means on the ground.

I will continue the work started by my predecessor Mumilaaq Qaqqaq. I am more convinced than ever that safe, affordable housing is the key for Nunavut and all indigenous communities to thrive. Reconciliation takes a full government effort. We cannot shuffle it into a specialized corner.

A basic everyday reality in Nunavut is that Nunavummiut do not have access to many housing units in their own communities, while imported federal employees do.

The Budget

Across Nunavut and in many indigenous communities, federal employees are given the benefit of an allocated housing unit with their job. To hire and retain employees, Canada has completely opted out of the general housing supply and has built or leased its own units, exclusive to its employees, which results in federal employees avoiding the experience of the housing crisis themselves.

Nunavut communities have rows of boarded-up federal employee housing units. The federal employees have been moved years ago to newer units in newer parts of the community. This means that every day on their way to school, children in Iqaluit and other communities see and walk past empty federal housing units. I do not understand how we can talk about equity and fairness when I think about people like Iqittuq, who told me that in that her household there are 15 people in a four-bedroom unit: three adults, each with their own family.

Why is it acceptable to have this level of overcrowded housing and still permit so many housing units, which are directly controlled by Canada, to sit empty in so many indigenous communities? Does anyone in authority know how many of these unoccupied houses Canada controls? What is the financial and the social cost of allowing 40-year-old units to be empty when Nunavummiut are cramped into 60-year-old housing that is in worse condition? Why is this not a budget issue?

An Inuk woman in Pond Inlet told me, “There are so many family members in one overcrowded house, so many families that have been on waiting lists for years, to move into any available house. Housing authorities need more resources.”

In this budget, we see the government only beginning to demonstrate an awareness of the life-altering need Canadians have for access to suitable and affordable housing. The issue is largely presented as generational. The up-and-coming generation of Canadians are struggling to access what much of Canada has assumed was available: appropriate, affordable and diverse housing options.

Welcome to our reality. The reality for most of indigenous Canada is that housing is a multi-generational, multi-family and all-encompassing crisis. It impacts health, schooling and employment.

From filling those empty federal units to supporting indigenous governance, there are many ways the federal government can directly support the easing of the housing crisis in Nunavut. It is the Nunavut communities that know what the potential solutions are. They know the seasons, the infrastructure limitations, the families in most need and the resources required to go beyond what was announced in budget 2022 weeks ago.

Over and over, we hear dollars announced, as we saw on page 41 of this budget, but communities do not see changes on the ground. Families like Peter Kilabuk’s, who is retired and raising grandchildren with complex medical needs in Pangnirtung, do not see the changes. He told me that past housing promises have not reached his community. When I met with him, he asked me where the \$300 million for housing that was announced before was. He does not see it.

• (1625)

Announcing numbers is relatively easy. Impacting on the ground requires a whole rethink. Clearly, what we are doing is not working. Do we do more of the same, or do we look to the roots of the issues, such as financing, taxation, travel costs, seasonal out-of-community workers and the abrasive transient work camps?

I was recently in the communities of Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk. Both communities also identified these issues. Indeed, housing has been a crisis across all Nunavut communities. While I loved the warm welcome in both communities, I saw around town the many broken windows requiring replacement, and many boarded-up, empty units. Of course they should be repaired and renovated, but it is not simple. Access to supply is incredibly limited.

No Nunavut community has road access. In any given year, marshalling materials takes months and access to capital. The open water shipping season each year is days to weeks long, up to a maximum of four months. Most communities may get sealift once or twice per season. In that season, bulk food, resupply materials for housing and new infrastructure are all delivered, and most communities do not have a dock or a harbour.

Members should take a moment to compare this to their home communities. If they need to repair the back steps or replace a window, how far is it to the nearby building centre to get materials? Have they ever considered having to fly in an electrician or plumber from 1,000 kilometres away to maintain their homes?

In Coral Harbour, I was told that Inuit are capable, skilled and knowledgeable. Inuit must not be only employed as janitors, receptionists or security personnel. Even if Inuit are not academically educated, Inuit must be paid for the skills they do have as experts in our communities. We need to recognize skills and develop them from the ground up. Fly-in solutions are, at best, stopgap and intrusive.

Inuit need to be part of the solutions and integrated into the decision-making and to be the lead when building new units and in community planning. How is this any different from other remote and indigenous communities? Does anyone need solutions dropped on them from afar, or do we need to see needed structures and programming that support community goals and efforts?

During my recent travels in Nunavut, I spent time in Naujaat with renowned elder Donat Milortok. What I gathered from Milortok is that individuals in the communities know what the solutions are. Canada must allow the solutions to be shared solutions. We must ensure that in this budget cycle the federal government stops ignoring the calls for a complete rethink of housing for indigenous communities.

• (1630)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend's thoughts regarding indigenous housing and housing in general. In Winnipeg North, I represent one of the higher percentages of indigenous people, probably somewhere in the neighbourhood of 20,000 to 25,000 people. It breaks my heart when we see the type of housing they have, and it is one of the reasons why I believe that, as a national government, we have to recognize that we do have a role to play. That is why we have invested literally tens of millions of dollars in Winnipeg alone with regard to emergency housing shelter, the Main Street Project, investing in and encouraging provincial governments and municipalities to also come to the table.

This is where my question lies. Would the member not agree that, as a national government, we can show leadership by investing in and generating ideas, but we also need to get provincial and other stakeholders, such as indigenous communities, which have demonstrated incredible leadership on the issue, to continue to work together to try to resolve this problem?

Ms. Lori Idlout: *Qujannamiik, Uqaqtittiji.*

I think the member should listen to my statement more intently, because my recommendation is that the federal government needs to listen to the communities. The communities are the ones that have been offering solutions. They have been ignored long enough, and it is the communities that need to be heard when solutions are being provided. It is the federal government that needs to listen more intently so that it can show real reconciliation when it comes to providing solutions that will impact and improve indigenous people's lives.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the statement put forward by my colleague from Nunavut, and I agree with her. The federal government should do more for housing. I think it is failing communities in northern Canada.

I have a question for her about her leader's comments that were made just previous to her speech and the fact that he is basically a carbon capture denier. He does not agree with the science of carbon capture, although it is out there already. I would like to know the member's opinion. Does she agree with her NDP leader about carbon capture not being a way to help clean up the environment?

I invite all New Democrats to come to my riding in Saskatchewan and tour Boundary Dam 3, which is one of the largest working carbon capture facilities in the world. It is the equivalent of taking millions of cars off the streets, millions of cars' worth of emissions, and it has been working for five years. The NDP in Saskatchewan actually started this project.

The Budget

Are New Democrats against their provincial cousins and are they actually carbon capture deniers?

Ms. Lori Idlout: *Qujannamiik, Uqaqtittiji.*

I have been quite interested in the Conservatives' approach to addressing climate change, to addressing indigenous issues, to addressing what is going on in Europe. They have taken such a different approach to how we as Canadians try to support each other.

In my focus, when I decided to talk about housing, I needed to do so because indigenous housing is such a major issue. With most of our communities still operating on diesel, with diesel-operated energy, we need to find ways to make sure that renewable energy is the source of the transition that we move toward.

Whatever positions the Conservatives have made, I have not been able to agree with them because of the foundation that they have been trying to use to misinform and disinform a lot of Canadians.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for the member for Nunavut. I think she understands the concerns of Inuit communities better than anyone in the House. I also think she is best suited to stand up for these communities here in this House and to explain what is happening in the north.

Would she have preferred that the agreement between the NDP and the Liberals focus on a concrete plan to help Canada's Inuit communities rather than a dental plan?

[*English*]

Ms. Lori Idlout: *Qujannamiik, Uqaqtittiji.*

That is a very simple answer for me, and that is yes. I would have preferred more collaboration to make sure that we are doing better for our first nations, Métis and Inuit, and I will continue to make sure that we do.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie): Order. It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Peace River—Westlock, Justice; the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni, Canada Post; the hon. member for Bow River, Small Business.

[*English*]

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be able to rise today and address the budget, which I will call “the good, the bad and the ugly”. I am expecting Clint Eastwood to walk through the doors and the music to play.

The Budget

I will say this, just to address the speech. There is a section of this budget that I agree with. The good part is that the government is promising to give Ukraine \$500 million and to provide weapons that are so desperately needed right now in the war against Russia. We need to make sure we send whatever lethal weapons Ukraine has been asking for. I am glad to see the government has made this announcement and will be out there on the market buying up as many weapons as possible.

I know, for example, that there are lethal weapons being built in Winnipeg by PGW Defence Technologies, which builds sniper rifles. It has already done business on its own directly with the Ukrainian government in the past, and has also sent sniper rifles over very recently. I believe those high-quality sniper rifles being made in Winnipeg would be very valuable to the Ukrainian armed forces, and buying more of those weapons with this \$500 million would be welcome news.

I have been advocating this for quite some time, going back to early March, right after the invasion started. There is an inventory of Canadian military equipment that is sitting around and that is about to be retired and turned into museum monuments at war memorials and legion halls across this country, but we do have light armoured vehicles, such as the Coyotes and the Bisons. There are 32 armoured ambulances in the Bison configuration that can easily be used and shipped over to Ukraine.

The reason we can use these vehicles to provide armoured personnel carrier protection to Ukraine is that the replacement LAVs, the new super Bisons that are being built in London at GDLS, are almost complete. The parking lot is full of new LAVs. They just need to be accredited by the Canadian Armed Forces. Taking those Bisons, Coyotes and our M113 tracked LAVs and sending them to Ukraine would provide much-needed protection, especially for the civilian domestic defence force that has been stood up with recruits from across Ukraine as they battle against the Russian aggressors.

I have also been working with people here in Canada who want to buy Role II mobile field hospitals, which Ukraine has requested. Unfortunately, the government here has yet to provide those hospitals. We have extra Role II hospitals that are sitting in containers. They were purchased for the pandemic and were never used, so we could be moving them over. There are some mobile field hospitals that are available for sale in the Netherlands. Again, they are ready to go. The Government of Canada could buy those off the shelf and move them over there in under a week. I hope it will consider that and get it done, because Ukraine desperately needs them and has asked for them as part of the shopping list it has given to NATO countries around the world.

Finally, there is the issue of the Harpoon missiles. We had defence and industry experts in Canada who came forward and said that we have over 200 unused Harpoon missiles sitting in inventory. There are launchers sitting on one of the ships that are under refurbishment right now. We could send over a whole cache of truck radar systems, all built here in Canada, with our excess Harpoon missiles that are sitting in inventory, to help protect Odessa from the onslaught that is taking place from the Black Sea. The more we can eliminate the Russian navy's ability to bring its forces to the coastline, the better off Ukraine will be, and the more protected.

I welcome the \$500 million. I encourage the government to do more and make sure we are repurposing some of our existing assets. We do not have to actually go there and put cash on the table, just send those and donate them to Ukraine, as well as the \$500 million that is approved in this budget.

Unfortunately, that is the only good thing in this budget, and I am not going to be able to support this budget, because of the bad and the ugly that are still in there.

The bad is that the current government continues to print money like it is going out of style. The Liberals have increased the deficit again this year by another \$52.4 billion, which has taken our national debt to \$1.2 trillion, and all of that has not been entirely tied to, as they would like to say, pandemic spending to support the economy. We know there have been many situations where this budget is about unnecessary spending. It has put increased money into circulation, devalued the Canadian dollar and driven up interest rates and inflationary pressures on our economy.

• (1640)

Canadians are now worse off because of the reckless spending by the Liberal-NDP coalition. They know that they have to deal with higher food prices and higher fuel prices, and that continues to increase the cost of living. In Manitoba alone, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer's own numbers, Manitobans are now \$2,000 poorer just because of inflation created by the government.

I know they will try to argue that there are supply chain issues. They will try to argue that this is an international phenomenon, but, at the same time, we are talking about 6.7% inflation rate. That is higher than in so many other countries in the G7 and the G20, and it is because of excess government spending and putting too much cheap Canadian money into circulation, which has taken inflation out of control.

The other bad part of this budget is that there is no help there for farmers. We are seeing higher input costs because of inflationary pressures. We are seeing higher input costs on farmers because of the carbon tax, which affects everything from diesel fuel to fertilizer prices. We are seeing that the Liberals continue to push farmers farther and farther down into the deep red hole on their balance sheet because they do not care about protecting our farm families.

They may, as a government, expect that they will be able to import cheap food from elsewhere, but why do we want to make our farmers less competitive on the international market? Why would we not let our beef, pork, grain and oilseed producers flourish and be competitive on the world market? Instead, we are increasing their input costs to such a level that they will never be able to compete on that global scale.

The Budget

We expect government to actually care about our farmers, our farm families and our rural communities and give them relief from things like the carbon tax, give them relief from rising excise taxes on fuel, give them relief from the increasing costs of fertilizer. We need to know if the government will ever commit to helping out our farmers.

In my riding of Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, our farmers last year dealt with a very devastating drought, the fourth year of dry conditions, and again, the help from the federal government was next to nil. We know that there is no help in the budget for farmers who dealt with that drought, whether it was trying to buy feed for their livestock or having major shortfalls in crop production.

The ugly part of this budget is the way the government continues to treat our Canadian Armed Forces. Our members in uniform deserve to be given the best equipment and the best support, and have a warrior culture that is out there actively recruiting and rebuilding our Canadian Armed Forces. We are 10,000 members short as it stands today, and the government seems not to care about making sure that we have a critical mass of soldiers, sailors and aircrew across the country to serve here at home and to be able to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves around the world, including what we are seeing happening in Europe. Although the Liberals talk about increasing spending and getting it up to about 1.5% of GDP, it is still far short of what NATO members expect of us. Our NATO partners are asking us to spend 2% of GDP, and it is not happening in this budget.

On top of that, the government continues to fall short in spending and buying new equipment. Procurement has been well short of satisfactory. We know that in this budget there is a \$15-billion gap between what the government is promising to do and what is actually in the Department of National Defence departmental plans for the next year. We know they already have \$12 billion lapsed over time that should have been used to buy new ships, new planes and other equipment for our Canadian Armed Forces members.

It just comes back to the fact that the Liberal-NDP coalition has not made the proper investments in national defence, at a time when the world is getting more and more scary. We are witnessing what is happening in Europe with the Russian aggression in Ukraine, and we are always concerned with other nefarious actors on the world stage who are watching and seeing what Canada does, as well as our allies. We need to do more, not less.

• (1645)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the irony here is that the member who just spoke was the parliamentary secretary for defence. We have to remember that, under Stephen Harper, the military expenditure was, at one point, less than 1% of the GDP.

I am glad the member recognizes the value of the contributions toward the war effort in Ukraine, \$500 million, but what he does not say is that there is an \$8-billion increase for defence.

Would the member not agree that for the first time since Stephen Harper, we have seen a real, tangible investment in the Canadian Forces today, because it was lacking during the Stephen Harper era,

the time in which the member was a parliamentary secretary for defence?

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the member for Winnipeg North that under Stephen Harper, when we were at war in Afghanistan, there was defence spending. This is before the Liberals cooked the books on how we calculate the amount of money that is allocated to national defence by adding things like the Coast Guard, veterans' pensions and other things that are spent under foreign affairs, not under defence. If we had added those numbers in, we would have been well over 1.5% when we were at war in Afghanistan.

When we pulled out of Afghanistan, defence spending went down because we balanced the books. The government here continues to spend recklessly. This means that the debts and deficits of today are going to be the taxes of tomorrow on our kids and grandkids, and we know the Liberals still have not made the investments, because the money they promise does not get spent.

[Translation]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my Conservative colleague for his speech. I found it very interesting and well structured.

In his critique of the budget, there is one thing he did not talk about that I would have liked to hear. It may be something that does not concern him, but maybe it does. He can let me know.

In the budget that was tabled, we see the government, or the NDP-Liberal coalition, intruding significantly on areas under Quebec's jurisdiction, including health. For example, the budget talks about creating federal pharmacare or dental care programs, when that is strictly the responsibility of Quebec and the other provinces.

Regarding health transfers, which every province is calling for, here is the answer we get: "Any conversation between the federal government and the provinces and territories will focus on delivering better health care outcomes for Canadians".

How does my colleague interpret the message that the government is sending, and does he agree with these intrusions?

The Budget

• (1650)

[*English*]

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from the Bloc for his intervention, because he is dead right. The one thing the provinces asked the NDP-Liberal coalition government to do was increase health care transfers. About \$28 billion was asked for and they got nothing. Instead, they got \$5.3 billion for an imaginary dental plan, and that is nothing the provinces have asked for. Again, the federal government, now with the support of the NDP, continues to ignore the interests of our provinces in delivering health care to all Canadians from coast to coast to coast, and continues to venture into that type of jurisdiction.

The housing program is another example of this. The federal government is stepping into provincial jurisdiction to create housing stock. We all know the money it is offering is not going to create half the housing stock that is required. It also penalizes people who are trying to increase housing stock through property developments, condo developments and flipping houses, which are all now being taxed even more by the Liberal-NDP coalition. That is disgusting.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the speech that my hon. Conservative colleague made.

Only a couple of days before the budget was introduced, the House passed a motion suggesting that the Liberals support meeting the 2% NATO target. However, when I read this budget, it fell woefully short of that, promising only a bit of money incrementally spent over time. The Liberals seem to have claimed victory on this issue, but that simply does not line up with the facts.

I wonder if my colleague could expand on how far short this budget falls compared with even what the Liberals had promised a few days before the budget was introduced.

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, again, it is a perfect illustration of how the Liberals will say one thing but do something completely different, and it continues to undermine the economic prosperity of individual Canadians across this country. Instead of offering things as simple as tax relief, all we get is more ridiculous spending that is unnecessary, and it is ultimately undermining the government's ability to support Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, almost three weeks ago now, I watched Canada's Minister of Finance deliver her budget speech in this place, and I listened to someone who represents the tone of the government and the doublespeak it continues to deliver to Canadians.

However, let me begin with a compliment. One of my Liberal colleagues in the House asked me just prior to the budget what should be in the budget for it to be palatable. My response was that if the budget came in below a \$50-billion deficit, I would be surprised. I confess that I did expect a much larger deficit, given the government's and the Minister of Finance's predisposition to spend other people's money with no regard for the negative consequences and no foresight for what this country will need in the future. The minister's budget did not quite get over the bar. It was close, but let us accept that my expectations were very low, given what I have seen from the profligate government.

The future is always uncertain. If there is one thing the past few years have shown us, it is that the world's challenges and Canada's challenges will continue to increase. The events that challenge governments are not slowing down, as the eight billion people who inhabit this world are becoming more divided economically, politically and socially. Those events are, in fact, increasing. Natural disasters, pandemics, wars, safety and an emerging world food crisis are challenges that have not tested a Canadian government for some time.

Much like the financial meltdown of 2008, from which Canada emerged relatively unscathed thanks to good government both before the event and during the event and a doggedness to get back to balance in this country, we need to focus on the state of the country that we are leaving to those who come after us. We do not prepare for events when we are in the middle of events. We prepare ahead of time to abate the risk that events beyond our control will happen. That is the practice of risk management, and it seems lost at all levels of the government. The rot, as I see it, has taken hold through many levels, but it comes from the top.

To say that this is a government large on words and short on outcomes would be an understatement. I could say much of what is broken, but I will keep my remarks today focused on the budget and Canada's failing finances under the government.

I appreciate that all politicians bring their own background to this job when they are elected. I appreciate, as well, that the Minister of Finance is learning much on this job. However, I listened to her budget address, and I do need to point out the absolute doublespeak that filled her short speech to the House. Doublespeak is the iteration of two scenarios, both of which cannot exist together, like the so-called "having cake and eating it too".

• (1655)

[*Translation*]

In Quebec, the saying is "le beurre et l'argent du beurre".

[*English*]

She stated that Canada is doing very well economically and, without missing a beat, justified why Canadians need to go a further \$52 billion into debt as a nation. There was a time when public officials showed responsibility and restraint when they bragged about the strength of a country's economy. Those strong economic times were opportunities to pay back debts incurred in difficult times and to prepare the country, financially and socially, for future events, which always arrive without warning.

The Budget

Canada's government seems to have decided that we need to fund our military after seeing the threat of a hostile Russian autocrat invade a peaceful democratic country, yet these threats have been on our horizon for years. Funding Canada's proud military seems to be a revelation to the government. However, the funds are a drop in the bucket of what is required and their delivery is somewhat speculative and down the road.

Two years ago, the world was hit with a generational pandemic and Canada was ill prepared in so many basic ways. The foresight to have policies that allowed pharmaceutical firms to flourish here was long gone. Monumental deficit spending has become like a sugar high for the government, and the hangover is going to be massive. The results are already becoming evident: escalating inflation, asset bubbles and an inability to properly fund the basic social services that Canadians thought they had invested in, like health care and recently like day care. Now there is a scheme to buy support by funding dental care. Programs are great until we have to pay for them. The government members seem to think that problems like that belong to tomorrow's taxpayers, not today's voters.

Canada has another stimulus budget when the government says the economy needs no stimulus. It is a strange contradiction in thinking, yet someone told me that it is not really untrue if we really believe it. I hear the government members say repeatedly in the House that they will take no lessons. That is obvious, but it has to change. Here is a basic lesson, and I do not mean to sound trite: Economic stimulus causes inflation. Too much printed money pursuing the same pool of goods means the price of those goods will increase.

Exhibit one in Canada is housing. My colleagues know I will not dumb this down by pretending that Canada's housing problems are the result of one factor: inflation. How could it be? Inflation has taken root throughout the economy. The latest CPI numbers show us at an annual increase of 6.7%, a 40-year high, and house prices are increasing at three times that rate.

Let me address some further doublespeak in the speech from the Minister of Finance: "Inflation, a global phenomenon, is making things more expensive in Canada too." This is an excuse. The minister's policies caused this outcome in Canada. She can try to blame it on the Governor of the Bank of Canada, but he is already trying to save his reputation in this regard. He is saying governments need to spend less as a first course in taming inflation, and the minister still wants to spend more.

This is supposed to be responsible government, and if it really is the minister's opinion that the fault lies with the Bank of Canada, then I will remind her that the governor reports directly to the minister. This is about accountability. The governor knows it and so should the minister. I will give another quote: "We will review and reduce government spending because that is the responsible thing to do." Okay. Prove it. Words are not matching actions.

Let me address the so-called fiscal anchor the minister likes to tout. Debt-to-GDP is a comparative metric but not one that speaks to fiscal accountability for governments. The minister seems to pretend that there is only one government debt in Canada, ignoring 10 provinces and three territories, or perhaps she believes that GDP can be counted twice. When I hear the minister refer to our debt-to-

GDP ratio as if the provincial debts should not be included, I know she is either uninformed or misinforming Canadians.

It is a ruse. Canadians are much poorer as a country after seven years of the government. Our country's combined capital stock showed a decrease last year. Depreciation of our country's assets exceeded the amount invested in new capital here. These are metrics that matter, and the government has driven investment out of this country.

I will give another quote: "Canada has a proud tradition of fiscal responsibility. It is my duty to maintain it and I will". Does the minister actually believe her own words? Let us acknowledge that the Prime Minister's governments this country has endured have been anything but fiscally responsible, and the saga continues with this year's projected \$52.4-billion deficit in an economy supposedly close to full employment.

Let me address some of the nonsensical and counterproductive spending in this budget. There is a new Canada growth fund, in addition to the boondoggle that is the Canada Infrastructure Bank. It will attract the billions of dollars in private capital that we need to transform our economy at speed and scale. It will invest using a broad suite of financial instruments, including all forms of debt, equity, guarantees and specialized contracts. There is lots of debt available for investing in projects in Canada; there is lots of equity. If the government is guaranteeing returns or specializing contracts, this speaks to its basic misunderstanding of financial markets' search for clarity and transparency. It also speaks to the Liberals' predisposition to increase the risk being borne by taxpayers on projects that do not make sense.

I am going to close on a positive note that I heard in the speech of the Minister of Finance. She wants to "tackle the Achilles heel of the Canadian economy: productivity and innovation", and said, "we are falling behind when it comes to economic productivity." It is good the minister has an eye on the mess the government has made of Canada's economy. We are falling behind, and we need to address it.

This budget falls far short on this important issue, so far short that it does not even address the reason we have fallen. That is evident in the approach of the government over the past seven years. The first step the Minister of Finance could take would be to acknowledge that she has helped create this problem and start to undo some of the significant economic damage her government has visited upon Canadians over the past seven years. To solve a problem, we must first admit we have one and, indeed, admit we have caused it by our own actions.

The Budget

• (1700)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I heard the member say earlier that there has been no success from the government: The government has been unable to demonstrate any degree of success as it relates to our economic activity and outputs.

Meanwhile, we have the fastest-growing economy in the G7. We have the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio. We are continually touted to be among the top countries, in terms of our credit rating. We have the lowest unemployment rate. We have recovered more than 100% of the jobs lost during the pandemic.

I am wondering this. Is the member using a different set of data to determine that, other than his speculation on what he anticipates is going to be happening in the future?

Mr. Greg McLean: Mr. Speaker, we must be dealing with two different sets of data. I appreciate that the member is writing his own press release here.

In fact, the debt-to-GDP ratio in this country is much different from how the government explains it, because we do not include the provincial debt. I explained that in my speech. I hope the member was listening just a little, but he does not actually listen.

Another thing is regarding \$52.4 billion in deficits. We used to say that if \$100,000 was put in the deficit, it would buy one job. How many jobs does \$52.4 billion of stimulus in the economy buy? It is 500,000 jobs. Congratulations: there is the magic number. I think that might address my colleague's question very adequately.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a very simple question for my hon. colleague. Also, I would like to thank him for his speech.

We all know that the Liberals are great at talking the talk, but not so great at walking the walk. Just think the war in Ukraine. It has been 63 days, and they have yet to charter a single plane, even though they had no trouble getting one for the Aga Khan trip.

Look at what they are doing with international aid. There is not much about it in the budget, yet the Liberals see themselves as world leaders championing human rights and international aid. In the budget, however, the current amount earmarked for international aid represents 0.27% of the GDP, whereas even under Stephen Harper, it was 0.33%. The average for OECD countries is 0.42%, and the UN target is 0.7%.

I would like my colleague to talk a bit about the difference between the current government's actions and its image.

• (1705)

Mr. Greg McLean: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

I agree with him. He is right in saying that we are not spending much money on international financial aid. Now there is a war on in Ukraine, and I think the government has said that it will give \$500 million. That is a small share of the financial aid for the rest of the world.

[*English*]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in his speech, the member actually raised the issue of housing.

As we know, Canada is faced with a housing crisis from coast to coast. In the budget, there are some measures related to it. One of the pieces that I am happy to see is the change with the RC-FI initiative: Instead of ensuring that the rent is going to be above market, which is what it was with the Liberal government's approach, in our agreement we were able to negotiate to get the government to ensure that the rent is below-market.

With that being said, one key issue to address the housing crisis is the financialization of housing. Would the member support the NDP's call for the government to put a moratorium on REITs? That would make a difference in the cost of housing.

Mr. Greg McLean: Mr. Speaker, the financialization of housing is an issue, of course, across the country, but we do have investors who invest in housing. I have read that 30% of the housing stock in Canada is actually owned by investors. These are not necessarily large investors, which is what people think of when they think about the financialization of the housing market.

A lot of small investors have committed to putting money into housing. That is because there are no other areas to put money into in Canada. The Liberal government has more or less annihilated the investment market: the ability to invest in anything that has a return in Canada. If there is an opportunity to get 15% a year on an investment in housing, most smart investors will take that. I think a lot of that is coming from small investors.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie): Resuming debate. Before I recognize the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, I want to inform her that her speech will be interrupted at 5:15 p.m. for a vote on the motion.

[*English*]

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House today with the privilege of serving the constituents of Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill to speak on the budget: A plan to grow our economy and make life more affordable.

Before I discuss this very solid and progressive budget, I would like to begin by commending all the members in the House who unanimously supported the COVID measures our government brought forward in 2020. It is easy to forget, as we respond to the new challenges we face worldwide, the progress we have made coming out of one of the worst economic crises in our history.

The Budget

The unanimous support in the House for programs such as CERB, the CBRA and more recently the caregiver benefit and the tourism and hospitality sector benefits have protected Canadians not only from disease but also from the worst of the economic fallout from this pandemic. Every member who supported these measures should be proud of the strong economic position Canada is in today. When we all pull together, we make real progress for Canadians.

Canadians are proud that despite losing over three million jobs since the start of the pandemic, we have recovered not only all of these but added another 300,000, giving us one of the most robust job recoveries in the G20.

My constituents tell me they are relieved and hopeful that our economy is continuing to thrive. Our GDP grew at 4.6% in 2021 and is forecast to continue to grow at about 4% through 2022. Constituents are also encouraged that small business closures were lower and personal savings rates higher when compared with pre-pandemic times. Again, this is a testament to the programs every member in the House of Commons supported in 2020.

Despite the significant increase in the deficit and the national debt, Canada has continued to maintain a AAA credit rating with the major debt rating agencies.

In budget 2022, we are continuing to protect the safety of Canadians, as COVID still presents challenges, while at the same time focusing on the post-COVID recovery and continuing to implement the platform that we promised Canadians in the last election.

This is a prudent budget in the wake of pandemic spending, but not an austerity budget. We have learned from past experiences that continuing to invest in critical social and physical infrastructure during times of economic uncertainty is wise.

With that in mind, I want to add to the current debate on the budget by discussing two major areas of focus. The first are measures that will make life more affordable for Canadians, in particular moving forward to address housing affordability, the cost of early learning and child care and dental care. The second focus of the budget I would like to address is the measures to preserve and improve Canada's role in the world.

In the first group, we are addressing affordability and continuing to support the middle class and those who are working hard to join it by expanding critical programs, all of which will benefit Canadians across the country and the residents of my riding.

On the housing front, we are proud of the budget 2022 measures to address this crisis. The tax-free first home savings account, and a doubling of the first-time homebuyers' tax credit, will give those young people fortunate enough to be able to save for their first houses a little extra assistance to reach that goal. For those who are not in a position to save for that first down payment, there is support for rent-to-own programs. As well, there are new programs to support our municipal partners in the planning and delivery of housing.

My father, Tom Taylor, was an elected public servant for over 40 years. He served as a mayor for the last 10 years. We have, of course, discussed this budget. The thoughts and experiences he

shared with me underscored how important the measures are. We all realize municipal and city officials know their communities best, and control the important zoning and planning functions that are so critical to getting homes built for Canadians.

The accelerator fund and the rapid housing initiative will continue to help municipalities execute their important roles more effectively.

There are further initiatives to end homelessness and expand co-op and other housing programs that are being initiated. Organizations and people in my riding such as Michael Braithwaite at Blue Door, Clovis Grant at 360°kids, Sajida Habib at the Salon Foundation and Lorris Herenda at the Yellow Brick House are just a few examples of those who work tirelessly to help others who need a hand to find a place to stay. We are committed to helping them.

● (1710)

Our goal, as our respected Minister of Finance has said, is to build a Canada where nobody gets left behind. That includes ending homelessness. Of course, there is continued funding for the Canada-wide early learning and child care program. I could say a lot more about this, but I realize my time is being cut short today.

The second thing I really want to talk about is our role in the world, which is so important. In this budget, we see a number of measures that are focusing on our role in the world, both as a partner in promoting world peace and the health of our planet, but also as an economic force contributing to prosperity. Of course, these measures reinforce one another.

For me, the climate crisis is the greatest challenge facing us. Residents in my riding are very concerned with the impacts of this crisis on their communities and our world. There are many measures in budget 2022 to address the climate crisis and to support a transition to a green economy, from incentives to drive electric cars and invest in making our homes more energy-efficient, to protecting our waterways and green spaces and investing in clean tech and energy.

We also know that our commitments to other peoples and nations start with the indigenous people of Canada. We are committed to reconciliation. There is much to be done, but the historic investment of \$4 billion over six years to support first nations children through Jordan's Principle takes us another step along this journey.

The Budget

Lastly, Canada has committed over \$8 billion to build our defence sector and to ensure that we are there with our international partners to help maintain peace and world order. We have been there for Ukrainians, providing the support they have asked for, and we will be there to help rebuild Ukraine when it emerges as an independent country at the end of this horrendous and uncalled-for war waged by Putin.

We must be committed allies: strong, secure and engaged. We can and must work together to meet the challenges facing Canadians and our world and to keep Canada a country of which we can be proud.

• (1715)

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie): It being 5:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of Ways and Means Motion No. 3.

The question is on the motion.

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

The hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie): Call in the members.

• (1755)

[*English*]

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

(Division No. 59)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong

Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Miao
Miller	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Singh	Sorbara
Spengemann	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thompson
Trudeau	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
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NAYS

Members

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett

Barsalou-Duval
 Benzen
 Bergeron
 Bérubé
 Blanchet
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 Brassard
 Brunelle-Duceppe
 Caputo
 Chabot
 Champoux
 Cooper
 Dancho
 DeBellefeuille
 Desbiens
 Doherty
 Dreeschen
 Ellis
 Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
 Fast
 Fortin
 Garon
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 Gill
 Godin
 Gourde
 Hallan
 Jeneroux
 Kitchen
 Kram
 Kurek
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 Lehoux
 Lewis (Essex)
 Liepert
 Lobb
 Maguire
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 Melillo
 Moore
 Morrice
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 O'Toole
 Paul-Hus
 Perkins
 Plamondon
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 Reid
 Richards
 Road
 Savard-Tremblay
 Schmale
 Shields
 Simard
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 Therrien
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 Vis
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 Webber
 Williamson

Beaulieu
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 Berthold
 Bezan
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 Carrie
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 Dowdall
 Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
 Epp
 Falk (Provencher)
 Ferreri
 Gallant
 Gaudreau
 Genuis
 Gladu
 Goodridge
 Gray
 Hoback
 Kelly
 Kmiec
 Kramp-Neuman
 Kusie
 Lantsman
 Lawrence
 Lemire
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lloyd
 MacKenzie
 Martel
 Mazier
 McLean
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 Morrison
 Muys
 Normandin
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Private Members' Business

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

It being 6 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1800)

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC) moved that Bill C-250, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (prohibition—promotion of antisemitism), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, before we get into tonight's debate on my private member's bill, I would like to acknowledge Yom HaShoah, the Holocaust Remembrance Day, which is actually today. Today is a time, I feel, to renew our commitment to combatting anti-Semitism in all its forms.

I am honoured today to rise and speak to Bill C-250, an act to amend the Criminal Code, prohibition—promotion of anti-Semitism, which is my private member's bill. Bill C-250 is modelled on subsection 319(2), “Wilful promotion of hatred”, in the Canadian Criminal Code. However, the bill focuses specifically on Holocaust denial because of the gravity of the event in our history. If the House chooses to pass Bill C-250, it will make Holocaust denial, which is one of the key indicators of anti-Semitism and radicalization, illegal in this country, and the offence will be punishable with incarceration.

B'nai Brith just released its 2021 audit of anti-Semitism incidents this week, and for the sixth consecutive year, records were set for anti-Semitism in this country. There was an increase, unfortunately, of 7.2%. Nearly eight anti-Semitic incidents occurred every day in this country in 2021. The actual number of anti-Semitic incidents recorded last year was 2,799. This marked the fourth consecutive year in which the 2,000 plateau was exceeded.

Heather Fenyes is a past president of Congregation Agudas Israel Synagogue, in my city of Saskatoon, a CIJA local partner, a Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights board member and the chair of the Concentus Citizenship Education Foundation. This is what she had to say about Bill C-250. “When the Holocaust is denied, Jewish people die. This malignant seed of hate left unchecked threatens Jews at home, in their synagogues and within their communities. Anti-Semitism, the most pernicious of hates, is the canary in the coal mine. Where hate is left unfettered, nobody is immune from its consequences; signalling a threat to all communities. Making Holocaust denial illegal is a step towards creating safer spaces for Jews in particular and building a healthier society.”

Private Members' Business

Kevin Sharfe, president of the Congregation Agudas Israel Synagogue and Jewish Community Centre, said, "Holocaust denial is often a symptom of ignorance or intolerance. Sadly, denying the history of a people can lead to anti-Semitism, and more generally, widespread racism in our community. Healthy education is the way forward."

The CIJA, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, made this statement: "Holocaust denial is a dangerous form of anti-Semitism. We deeply appreciate the leadership of the member from Saskatoon—Grasswood who introduced a private member's bill to criminalize this insidious form of Jew hatred. Thank you to the member from Thornhill for seconding [this bill]."

Ignorance and intolerance must be confronted and condemned wherever they exist. Ideally, I would be happy if this Criminal Code amendment were never used. Punishment is the last resort. Criminalization is an imperfect tool, but it is also an important tool to stop a behaviour that we as a society consider offensive. Criminalization is also an important step toward changing attitudes in this country. Criminalization will help draw a moral limit on the erosion of history. It will be a message to those who wish to erase historical truths.

● (1805)

Suppression of anti-Semitism is not the goal. Education is the key to ending anti-Semitism and the hateful fallout that comes from ignorance. Education is the safeguard of history. Holocaust denial is not free speech; it is an abuse of free speech. It is an abuse of a freedom that we all cherish in this country. It is an attack on Canadian values and our respect for diversity. If we stand by and allow history to be erased by allowing the Holocaust to be denied, distorted or minimized, we allow democracy to be eroded.

Research has shown that people who learn about the Holocaust are more likely to care about other communities, develop anti-racist attitudes and oppose persecution. It is imperative that our future generations know and understand that, from early 1941 until 1945, six million Jewish children, women and men were murdered in a state-sponsored genocide we now remember as the Holocaust. We cannot allow this chapter in history to be denied, minimized or lost. We must continue to educate Canadians to face history with courage and to call out and confront intolerance and racism every time it emerges.

If we do not continue to educate Canadians about the horrors of the Holocaust and the dangers of anti-Semitism, we leave room for hatred, racism and radicalization to take root and grow more in this country.

I will point out two recent examples that come to mind. The first one is the case of Joseph DiMarco. He was a Timmins, Ontario, school teacher who was fired in 2019 after teaching Holocaust denial. The Ontario College of Teachers held a disciplinary hearing last year to deal with the allegations that he taught Holocaust denial theories in the years 2018-19. When DiMarco's teaching licence was pulled, Michael Levitt, president and CEO of Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center had this to say:

The disturbing actions by this former teacher demand nothing less than his inability to set foot in a classroom ever again. Instead of using the opportunity to teach about the Holocaust and [even] 9/11 and their lessons, he decided to spread

Holocaust denial and antisemitism, doing an extreme disservice to his students.... Educators have a duty to not only provide students with factual information, but to also inspire them to be upstanding citizens who stand against hate and intolerance.

I think we would all agree that the most publicized case would be the James Keegstra trial a number of decades ago. For those who do not have the background, Keegstra was charged and convicted of hate speech in 1984 for willfully promoting hatred against an identified group by teaching his students that the Holocaust was a fraud and by promoting anti-Semitism.

Keegstra was a high school teacher in Alberta until he was fired in 1982. He expected his students to accept his views, and their grades suffered if they dared to oppose them. Keegstra, by the way, served as mayor of Eckville, Alberta from 1974-83, when his offensive and anti-Semitic views caused citizens to overwhelmingly vote him out of office in 1983. He appealed the conviction to the Supreme Court, where it was upheld.

Most Supreme Court justices believe that hate speech is not a victimless crime. They understood the potential of hate speech and anti-Semitism to be harmful and dangerous, and to promote violence.

● (1810)

Violence and radicalization cannot be allowed a space to grow in this country. We cannot overcome and overlook the obvious causes, and when these offences are being perpetrated by educators, they are especially egregious and very harmful. I understand that hatred and anti-Semitism are not eliminated by legislation, but legislation alone is one rung on the ladder.

I have heard the criticisms all over on this legislation. I have read media reports that imply that criminalization will only muffle anti-Semitism, but doing nothing is not a solution. It deeply concerns me that for some people doing nothing is an acceptable path forward. Paying lip service and making virtuous gestures is somehow seen as a substitution for action. I want there to be no mistake that education is the action that is needed and that criminalization is the tool to demonstrate that anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial, minimization and distortion are not going to be tolerated in this country anymore.

A 2020 study on Holocaust awareness by the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, conducted by Nanos, supports the notion of education. I will quote that study and I am happy to table the study if there is consensus among members in the House. The 2020 study on Holocaust awareness and education reveals that 59% of people in Canada's Prairies believe that young people are not taught enough about the Holocaust in school, and 73% believe young people are less aware of the Holocaust and its lessons today than in the past, while 92% of people in the Canadian Prairies say teaching about discrimination is either somewhat important or important and 96% believe teaching about the Holocaust is either somewhat important or important.

In a July 2021 report on hate crimes in Canada by Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, Statistics Canada data indicates an increase in hate crimes. Again I am happy to table the part of that report that says that. If we go back to July 27 last year, it stated, “Statistics Canada released hate crime statistics for 2020 today, revealing that police-reported hate crimes increased by 37 per cent last year and reached the highest number ever recorded, 2,669. According to StatCan’s annual police-reported crime statistics report, the Jewish community saw an almost five per cent increase in hate crimes”.

I am going to move now to a person I have known for a number of years. He was an educator in the city of Saskatoon. Right now, he is the president of B’nai Brith, David Katzman. He is from Lodge 739 in my city. He made the following comments on a bill to criminalize willfully promoting anti-Semitism by condoning, denying or downplaying the Holocaust. He described the Holocaust as the industrialization of the mass murder of over 11 million people, including six million Jews. As he said, condoning, denying or downplaying the Holocaust has always been the most powerful magnet for those who hate Jews, and most often these same haters have a long list of “others” who must be abused or banished. Canadians, he said, treasure our national commitment for all persons to live freely and safely.

The government has now taken the precedented step once again of appropriating the private member’s bill I introduced as the member for Saskatoon—Grasswood. In the last Parliament, it took my bill and fumbled it, and then I actually held on to the ball and got it over the goal line. This time, though, it has taken the text of my private member’s bill and parked it halfway through seven pages of potential future promises in annex 3 of the budget document. There is no commitment here, just a vague suggestion of future consideration.

I urge members to understand the difference between my bill, Bill C-250, and the version of this bill that the government has chosen to place into the omnibus budget legislation. Bill C-250 will have the teeth that the “budget lite” version will not have.

• (1815)

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for Saskatoon—Grasswood for his perseverance in bringing this important piece of legislation before the House.

I hope he will indulge me for just a moment. At the age of 19, as a student on a summer program in Europe, I visited Mauthausen, one of the concentration camps. I came away from that visit thinking either the site should be plowed up and planted with flowers or that every young person should be required to visit. I could not make up my mind.

I stand here, 50 years later, still unable to make up my mind, but I believe that the member for Saskatoon—Grasswood has convinced me that Holocaust denial is an important tool in inciting violence and hatred against the Jewish community and therefore it deserves criminalization. I know that he will agree with me when I say that it would make a great difference in combatting the rise in anti-Semitism that B’nai Brith has documented again this year in its audit.

Private Members' Business

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member’s statement here tonight. It is funny, because I have in my hand the annual audit of the anti-Semitic incidents in 2021 from B’nai Brith. It has eight recommendations. I very much cherish that organization in this country. It has fought through anti-Semitism in this country for decades, and it just had its annual audit. It released eight recommendations. All members of Parliament should take a look at this report that was just released about a week ago.

[*Translation*]

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Saskatoon—Grasswood for his speech.

No one could disagree with the principle of Bill C-250. Ignorance and intolerance must be condemned. Like my colleague, I believe that education is essential.

However, I am concerned that naming a specific group in such a law could imply that one group is more important than another and that there are laws that favour some groups over others, even though I know that is not the legislator’s intent.

I would like to know what my colleague could do to give his bill the broadest possible scope.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, when I pass a private member’s bill, I know now how we get it through the House and the other place to become law. We have to be very specific. We cannot have a big bill going into the justice committee because the committee will tear it apart. In this case, this is just one piece because I know the important legislation that is needed in this country for Holocaust denial. It is a very small piece of legislation, but it is a start, as I mentioned in my speech.

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank my friend for Saskatoon—Grasswood for putting forward this bill. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Whether this bill comes to fruition as a private member’s bill or as government legislation, the hon. member can take solace in the fact that he put this forward and is the driving force behind it. On behalf of, I am sure, the vast majority of the Canadian Jewish community, I want to thank him for what he has done.

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, I certainly want to thank the hon. member for Mount Royal. He has been a stellar performer on the heritage committee that I serve on. I know, when I put it on the Order Paper, that the hon. member for Mount Royal phoned me right away: It was seconds after it was on the Order Paper.

Private Members' Business

I agree that this needs to change, whether I pursue this as a private member's bill, Bill C-250, or whether the government picks it up and hopefully moves it forward, if it is going to do anything with this bill. Unfortunately, in the last Parliament, the Liberals took my bill but kind of lagged with it, so I had to pick it up and move it forward, which is good. The country has benefited from it.

I agree with the hon. member that this is a good bill that is needed, particularly at this time. Anti-Semitism is on the rise in this country, and it is good that we are bringing out this bill in 2022.

• (1820)

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for putting forward this bill.

Rarely has a date ever been so apt to debate legislation, as this evening is the beginning of Yom HaShoah.

Yom HaShoah is a sacred day. It is a day when we remember with reverence the over six million Jews who were slaughtered by the Nazis in the Holocaust. It is a day when we remember all of the victims of the Holocaust, regardless of their origin, whether they were from the LGBTQ+ community, the Roma community or any other community. It is a day when we honour the survivors, including those many survivors who came to make their homes in cities like Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg. It is a day when we thank the rescuers, the righteous gentiles who risked their lives to save others. It is a day when we remember atrocities, and it is a day when it is totally appropriate to talk about how we can prevent this from ever happening again.

On Monday I had the incredible honour of standing with my friends from Thornhill and Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke at the B'nai B'rith press conference, where it brought forward its audited anti-Semitic incidents for last year. As my friend from Saskatoon mentioned, there was yet another increase in incidents after multiple successive years, with many more violent and threatening incidents.

[Translation]

In my province of Quebec, there was a significant increase in anti-Semitic incidents.

[English]

In British Columbia there was an important increase in anti-Semitic incidents. We as a country need to confront why this is happening.

Last spring, the month of May was when many of these incidents happened, which occurred as a flare-up from the war, or incidents of violence, occurring in the state of Israel when they were attacked by Hamas, which is a terrorist organization under Canadian law. For whatever reason, that turned into anti-Semitism here in Canada. It turned into rock-throwing in Montreal. It turned into a time when families in my riding were scared to let their children go to the park because they were afraid somebody would see them wearing a kippah and that they would attack them.

[Translation]

That same month, Holocaust survivors in my riding came to see me to ask if they should take down the mezuzah from their doors, for fear that people would see this Jewish symbol and find out they were Jewish.

I never would have believed that this could happen in Montreal, in Quebec, in Canada. That is unbelievable.

[English]

It has been 262 years since the Jewish community has been in Canada. We have contributed so much to this country in every facet, whether it is politics, the judiciary, the arts, sports or the military. Canadian Jews are not victims. We are strong and proud. It is unacceptable that in a great country like ours we see incidents of Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism.

One of the things that makes me very proud is that, when there are international polls about anti-Semitism, Canada always ranks among one of the lowest countries for incidents of anti-Semitism. Only about 8% or 9% of Canadians are anti-Semitic, versus much higher percentages in other countries.

Last week, when Angus Reid did a poll about how people perceive different religious communities in Canada, the Jewish community finished as the most favourable. How is it that, with so few anti-Semites in this country, 61% of religious hate crimes in this country are against Jews, when we make up only 1.25% of the population?

• (1825)

[Translation]

Something is wrong with this picture.

[English]

From the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* through to disinformation online today, for some crazy reason, Jews are always the first victims but never the last. Somebody who is capable of disliking Jews is capable of disliking people because they are part of any group.

[Translation]

We know it sometimes starts with Jews but does not end with Jews.

We are all here to see what we can do to fight not only anti-Semitism, but also racism, francophobia and all forms of discrimination in our society.

It starts with education, but education is not always enough.

[English]

I always believe that we err on free speech. We always try to make sure that we do not unreasonably take away someone's right to say something, but it is clear from all kinds of evidence that denial of the Holocaust and minimization of the Holocaust is actually one of the most effective tools for increasing anti-Semitism and directing hatred and violence against Jews.

Our Constitution is clear. Freedom of speech is an incredibly important right, protected under section 2 of the Canadian Charter.

[Translation]

That right is also protected by the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and many other charters in this country.

[English]

We, under section 1, have a right to place reasonable limits on freedom of speech. Hate speech is not necessarily free speech. The courts in Canada have determined that we are allowed to prevent people from inciting genocide and from inciting hatred against identifiable groups.

Today, when people go online and look at Holocaust denial on all of the platforms, it is but a start of where people go when they start hating Jews. I support this bill or whatever frame this bill takes, because it is so important to not allow people in Canada to minimize or to deny the Holocaust. It is a historical truth. It is not a subject for debate. Someone who claims that six million Jews did not die in the Holocaust does not know what they are talking about. It happened.

[Translation]

Everyone in Parliament has a duty here and now. Regardless of our political party, we are all united in saying that we do not want anti-Semitism, racism, homophobia or any other form of discrimination in Canada.

We may not always agree on how to go about it, but we agree that it should not exist.

Holocaust denial is one thing we can unanimously condemn. It is so bad and causes so much hate that it should be against the law.

[English]

I would like to finish by adding one other thing. Yom HaShoah comes on the eve of Yom Ha'atzmaut. Yom Ha'atzmaut is Israeli Independence Day. It happens next week. In Canada, part of the hate comes from the extreme right and part of the hate comes from the extreme left. Nobody has a monopoly on it. Everybody could be part of it.

One of the things that I have seen, and one of the things that I am the most afraid of, is that when somebody denies the existence of the state of Israel or incites hate against the State of Israel, it leads to anti-Semitism against Jews in Canada. Israel is a democratic country: it is the only Jewish majority state in the world. It has a right to exist. It has a right to exist behind secure borders.

I really hope that we can also join together, in addition to condemning anti-Semitism, to agree that BDS, all forms of Israel Apartheid Week, all forms of heinous attacks against Jewish students on campus, and all the places where hate of Israel leads should also not exist in this country.

I thank my friend for Saskatoon—Grasswood. He has brought forward an important issue that we all need to work together to confront.

Private Members' Business

• (1830)

[Translation]

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Speaker, let me begin by reading the text of a motion unanimously adopted by the National Assembly of Quebec on May 26, 2021, nearly a year ago:

That the National Assembly strongly condemn the threats, violence and aggression against Jewish Quebecers, which have increased in recent weeks;

That it reaffirm that in a free and democratic society, all people may protest or express their opinions in a context of respect, safety and dignity;

That it reiterate the need to continue to hold a healthy and democratic debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;

That, lastly, it recall that violence toward anyone is never acceptable.

Those are the words of the National Assembly of Quebec. As far as I am concerned, it is the supreme authority in Quebec. The Bloc Québécois is committed to defending these unanimous motions and will continue to defend them against all attacks. I read that out to illustrate that Bill C-250 is part of that process. Bill C-250 is not perfect, but it is part of that process.

Hatred is a venom in the veins of society. Inciting and promoting hatred is akin to injecting this poison into the veins of our society.

Quebec adopted a secularism law specifically to allow each and every religious faith to be practised voluntarily and freely, without the appearance of government criticism, favour or disapproval. We want the government to be secular, and we want people to be free to practise the religion of their choice. To us, in Quebec, this principle is sacred.

Over the past few years, we have seen an increase in the number of anti-Semitic crimes. I saw that anti-Semitic crimes increased considerably in 2021, in the Montreal area in particular, but elsewhere as well, including the Vancouver area, as my colleague across the way mentioned, as well as in various parts of Canada and in the U.S. too, and probably throughout the western hemisphere. We have to work on not only reducing this disturbing trend, but stopping it in its tracks.

Obviously, it is not just hatred against the Jewish community that we must combat, but all hatred. Nonetheless, we have to start somewhere, and I think that the current situation deserves our attention.

There are different ways to promote hatred, and promoting Holocaust denial is one of them. There are no words to describe the Holocaust. I too visited some sites in Poland. I was speechless. The idea that a human being could do such things is unfathomable. I cannot even claim to be better than those who committed these horrific crimes. I think that, no matter how much we try to avoid it, these kinds of things can happen to anyone in any society. I understand that, in certain circumstances, any society can be faced with these types of dilemmas. I would almost say that I feel as sorry for those who perpetrated these atrocities as I do for their victims. It is unbelievable.

Private Members' Business

I feel a strong sense of solidarity with the Jewish community, and I sympathize with what it has to live with. It is unacceptable for anyone to deny the impact of the Holocaust, or sometimes the fact that it even happened, or to trivialize it. We must make sure that the Holocaust is never forgotten and that its importance is never diminished.

• (1835)

As I was saying, Bill C-250 is not perfect. It proposes a definition of the Holocaust. As I mentioned, I visited sites in Poland. I saw what it was like. Even so, I find it somewhat difficult to explain what it is. It is something so inhuman and senseless that it is hard to imagine. Therefore, I want to hear from experts in committee.

Perhaps the definition being proposed by my colleague from Saskatoon—Grasswood is fine, or perhaps it can be improved. I would like to hear from experts on how to define the Holocaust accurately enough so as not to diminish other genocides, yet highlight what happened at the time and ensure that it never happens again.

The committee also needs to hear explanations of the different potential definitions of the Holocaust as well as their negative effects. It is not that hard to guess, but I still want to hear from the experts.

My colleague across the way was talking earlier about someone in his riding who was wondering whether he should take down the mezuzah from his door and stop his children from wearing a kippah to the park. That is unacceptable. We certainly do not want that. These are the harmful effects of Holocaust denial and hatred of others. I want people to come talk to us in committee, people who might help us better understand the situation so we can respond to the problem more effectively.

We need to do all this while making absolutely sure that we do not fall into the trap of adopting provisions that conflict with the freedom of expression provisions in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As my colleague said, freedom of expression is in the charter. It is also in the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms. It is a principle we all hold dear, in Quebec as well as in Canada, and even throughout the western world. It is one of our most precious freedoms.

We have to be careful though. If I can put it this way, we will have to “handle” Bill C-250 prudently and sensitively. This has to be dealt with. We have to address the situation, act on our responsibility and make sure we are responding to the concerns of the Jewish community. This community's concerns are shared by society as a whole in different ways and for different reasons. We all need to care about this. We cannot ignore what is happening in these situations.

We will have to be careful, but this is something that must be done. We also have to ensure that we do not duplicate what already exists in section 319 of the Criminal Code, which is quite clear. The provisions in Bill C-250 may not have as broad a scope and may already be covered by section 319. If so, we will have to find a way to harmonize it all. We do not want to simply duplicate what is already in the Criminal Code; we want to supplement it, or to ensure

that we have a text that the courts can interpret in such a way as to achieve the objective set out in Bill C-250.

For all these reasons, the Bloc Québécois will be voting to send Bill C-250 to committee so that we can work on it and so that, while we may never fully comprehend, we can strive for a better understanding of the tragedies that members of the Jewish community may endure, as well as the inhuman events that took place in the 1940s, particularly in the concentration camps in Poland.

• (1840)

[English]

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin my remarks today by thanking all members of the House for ensuring that we have a meaningful debate about the meaning and importance of today, about Holocaust remembrance in particular and about how important this bill truly is. The planning and carrying out of the destruction of six million Jewish lives is a terrible tragedy to reflect upon, particularly here in Canada, a place where we are not unfamiliar to this.

Today and every day, we are called on to remember the truth, the brutal truth, that six million Jews died simply for being themselves, for being who they are, for being true to that promise. Women, children and men were executed by the terrible and evil Nazi regime simply for being themselves. All Canadians deserve to be who they are. That is a basic principle that I believe our country can stand by.

Today we must not only remember, but challenge ourselves to go even further and do more. Families across our country are still grieving from the reality of this painful and lasting experience. We must acknowledge and recommit to the elimination of hatred, anti-Semitism and xenophobia in all its forms. We must combat the poisonous hatred that is anti-Semitism. It is our duty, but sadly anti-Semitism is on the rise in Canada and around the world. Jewish people continue to face discrimination, prejudice and physical violence simply for being themselves.

I know the struggle of wanting to ensure that we are honest with ourselves and that this country has the protections to ensure it. It is our job as parliamentarians to ensure that we not only stick up and stand up for the things that our country has been able to achieve, but also go back and attempt to remedy all the things that we have not, including truly ensuring that anti-Semitism does not continue. Those who deny and condone the Holocaust should rightly face criminal prosecution. Their actions motivate hatred.

I am grateful to the member for Saskatoon—Grasswood for his leadership in tabling Bill C-250, legislation that would finally ban Holocaust denial in Canada. I want to thank the member for that.

Canada has an obligation, particularly as a democracy and a vibrant one, to condemn and combat Holocaust denial in every way, shape and form. The Jewish community has truly suffered from the horrors of the Nazi regime, but it continues to suffer. That is truly a pain that all Canadians must bear. This unique and truly painful experience is one that we must learn from and overcome. The New Democrats welcome Bill C-250 and hope that it will finally tackle this long-standing denial, which puts today's generation at risk.

I want to take the opportunity to shed some light on Canada's deeply problematic and anti-Semitic history.

Frederick Blair is one of the most shameful taints in Canadian history. As a high-ranking immigration official in the Government of Canada in the 1930s, Blair deliberately worked toward formulating immigration policies based on racial purity. This also included the exclusion of Jewish people. Notorious anti-Semites were in control of our policies here in Canada toward Jewish people during the Holocaust, at the time they needed us most. In 1941, Blair wrote, "Canada, in accordance with generally accepted practice, places greater emphasis on race than upon citizenship." It is no secret that many other elite officials and such people with power were openly hateful. I am deeply remorseful for this facet of Canadian history, among many, many others.

• (1845)

Instead of accepting Jewish refugees with open arms, Canada's immigration policy openly denied them safe refuge. When people were coming from every corner of the world to this place, they were seeking refuge. We denied them. When many other allied countries were accepting tens of thousands of refugees, Canada only accepted 5,000 during the entire duration of the Holocaust.

Liberal prime minister William Mackenzie King's political decision was to limit Jewish immigration in Canada. In one of many such moments of shame, when the MS *St. Louis* arrived in 1939 from Germany carrying 937 refugees, Canada turned them away. It is shameful. Eventually, 254 of those passengers would perish, simply because they were being themselves and the complicity of Canada. We had the opportunity to act, and we failed.

It is also a documented fact that, when a Canadian immigration agent in 1939 was asked about the refugees and if Canada would commit to admit, he replied, "None is too many".

"None is too many". Can members imagine fleeing a terrible and atrocious event in history, such as the Nazi regime, and being denied? This despicable and discriminatory hate was on display for the entire world to see, and it is something we in Canada must recognize.

How can we claim the moral authority on the international stage without rectifying these mistakes? Our past is truly filled with shameful instances, but I believe our country is willing to fix it. The fear is that those past haunts will continue to haunt existing generations, and the fear is for the next generation. We must ensure a place of safety for them here in Canada.

This year, shockingly, we witnessed violent and undemocratic protests right outside this building, this Parliament, which is meant to be a symbol of our democracy, our unity and our diversity.

Private Members' Business

Among them, Canadians witnessed something terrible. They saw truly disturbing visuals of hate symbols, such as the Confederate flag and the swastika.

These groups are beginning to accumulate copious amounts of power, with explicit intentions to increase crime, division and a continuation of the undermining of our democratic institution. This is precisely how power works. Large displays of anti-Semitic hate symbols on Parliament Hill must not become mainstream elements of our society. We must deny them. The power to control that narrative belongs to us, to those who are elected to speak on behalf of others.

We must confront these harsh truths. As a country, we must radically shift the gears to never forget and never again, by force and by action. We must never forget the crimes committed by the Nazis and continued by horrid hate groups around in Canada today.

New Democrats have always, and will always, stand for fighting against hate, and I am proud of my incredible caucus members who have proven their solidarity with vulnerable communities and brought them stern legislation to outlaw hate.

I would like to take this moment to thank my colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby for introducing the private member's bill that would outlaw hate symbols such as Nazi swastikas.

I want to conclude by thanking many of those Jewish Canadians who continue to fight for justice, continue to fight anti-Semitism. I stand in firm solidarity with Jewish Canadians across our country in ending anti-Semitism as it spreads.

• (1850)

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-250, presented in this House by my colleague from Saskatoon—Grasswood. I thank him for that, and I thank other colleagues for their speeches today.

I rise to speak to this bill on the eve of Yom HaShoah, a day that commemorates the six million innocent Jewish men, women and children who were systematically murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust. On this eve, Canadians across the country reflect on the unique horror of the Holocaust and pay tribute to the innocent victims, honour the survivors and recognize the righteous who risked their own lives to save the lives of strangers. The Holocaust was one of the darkest chapters in human history and on this day, we are presented with a sobering reminder of that history, which is why Yom HaShoah presents a fitting opportunity to debate this bill.

Private Members' Business

I will admit this bill is not entirely clear-cut for me, nor for everyone in the largest Jewish community in Canada, whom I have the distinct honour of representing in this House as the member of Parliament for Thornhill. It is not entirely clear-cut for those connected to the Holocaust directly, either one generation removed or two generations removed, or indirectly as Canadians who, on this day, help dignify the memory of its victims, of the survivors and of its unthinkable horrors.

Remembrance is at the core of this debate, so that this never happens again. For many, the protection and promotion of free speech are paramount. Given my own world view, it is difficult to square the circle on the necessity in the face of ideological purity. Hate speech is not free speech. In an ideal world, Holocaust education, remembrance and research would be sufficient to ensure a future where the denial of history would simply cease to exist, but sadly, that is not the case.

There is an enormous amount of evidence, of survivor testimony and of eyewitness accounts from those who liberated death camps. There are survivors among us still, our grandparents, our friends, those who bore witness to what happened. In the face of all that, Holocaust denial and distortion persist. Because they persist, it is a necessity to fight with the tools of legislation when existing laws fail to protect the truth, the truth about the horrors of the Holocaust.

Denial and distortion need to be prosecuted successfully as a powerful deterrent to say that this is not acceptable, that this is not okay, that this is not allowed in this country. Countering Holocaust denial and distortion is necessary to combat the efforts of those who blur the facts of what transpired about those complicit in the horror of trying to rewrite history. We must combat the distortion that insults the victims and the survivors. We must combat the distortion that perpetuates anti-Semitism. We must combat the distortion that fans the flames of violent extremism.

We must combat that distortion not only for the Jewish community, but for the thousands of people who defied the rules set down by the Nazis, set down by Hitler, and collectively saved countless LGBT people, disabled people, Roma and other minorities from certain death. The perversion of Holocaust denial attempts to erase their bravery and courage against Hitler and his followers. We must combat the distortion so that it does not threaten our own ability to understand the past and learn from it. Most importantly, we must combat the distortion so that the distortion does not become history itself.

The bill ensures the successful prosecution of neo-Nazis and Holocaust deniers, and in the end should aim to prevent the resurgence of Nazism.

There is a rising tide of anti-Semitism. I have talked about it here in this House. I have talked about it outside of this House. It is not just rising out of the far right, and it is not just rising out of the far left. It is rising out of faculty clubs. It is rising on our university campuses, out of our social justice organizations and out of those very close to government.

• (1855)

There were 2,799 recorded anti-Semitic incidents of hate in 2021. One of the most common forms of that hate in attacking Jews

was the denial and the distortion of the Holocaust. Almost eight incidents occurred every single day in 2021. That was a 59.8% increase from 2017. Those numbers should be alarming to everybody in this place, and those are not my statistics. They are from B'nai Brith's most recent audit, which we heard about this week. There is no question that they are under-reported, and that should be of concern.

The long history of the Jewish people has been characterized as a repetitious cycle: eras of oppression and darkness are interrupted by all-too-brief golden periods of liberation and flourishing creativity. However, as we know, the old anti-Semitism of persecution, pogroms and Nazi gas chambers has become a new, more subtle, but just as dangerous, cancer. It has an indirect genocidal goal that targets the Jewish national homeland.

Its proponents vilify Israel because it is the home of the Jewish people, and while this bill would not address that fact, there is no question that it is a driver of hate levelled against the Jewish people, and it is difficult not to acknowledge in a conversation about anti-Semitism in the House. Some members of the House have been complicit in fanning the flames of rhetoric against Israeli statehood that fuel the pernicious rise of a new anti-Semitism cloaked in Zionism, and they say to those who fan those flames outside of the House that this is okay.

Our former prime minister, Stephen Harper, talked about anti-Semitism in a speech at the Israeli Knesset. He was the first and only Canadian Prime Minister to do that. In that speech, he named a new anti-Semitism. It uses sophisticated language: words that are acceptable in polite society. That Prime Minister said, "I find it interesting that when I'm in Israel I'm asked to single out Israel. When I'm in the Palestinian Authority I'm asked to single out Israel. And when I am in half the other places around the world you ask me to single out Israel."

The public displays of hate we have seen lately across Canada have yielded no action, and that is why this bill is important. They have been encouraged by those in the House, those close to it, and those in polite society singling out Israel, as described by the Prime Minister in his speech, as okay.

It was unacceptable to see the flag of the Hamas terror group at an anti-Israel protest in Toronto just before the last election, when Hamas calls for the genocide of Jews in its charter; to see an anti-Israel manual sent to the country's largest school board by somebody on the school board in Toronto; to see the overt Jewish hatred of kids playing hockey for the Avenue Road Ducks, in the largest organized sports league in the city I am from; to see the countless swastikas drawn on schools, playgrounds, parks and homes in my community and communities across the country; or to see an open display of anti-Semitism last week in the streets of Toronto, as a pro-Palestinian rally cheered enthusiastically for rocket attacks on civilians.

It is anti-Semitism dressed up as anti-Zionism and anti-Jewish statehood, and any suggestion that the two are separate is part of the problem. Through this bill, the understanding that the Holocaust is a very unique history and that its denial drives hatred, perhaps someone will choose principle rather than coddling prejudice the next time the opportunity for courage presents itself, and that opportunity will come very soon.

This law is necessary as the number of Holocaust survivors, eyewitnesses to the event, declines. It recedes into history and gets further and further away, and as these views become more mainstream and creep into popular culture, the law will be able to avoid the problem of proving the Holocaust in court before those who deny it are held to account. Members should be aware that this proposal has found its way into the budget. There have been seven years of inaction that have seen anti-Semitism become an even more pervasive problem in this country.

I hope this is not theatre. I hope members will support this bill. From what I have heard tonight, I think that will be the case. I will certainly trust the intentions of what is in the budget, but I hope that members will support this bill.

I will end with this: Ignorance fuels intolerance and, as my colleague said, education is the safeguard of history. We must continue to teach the truth. The passage of this bill would protect that truth.

• (1900)

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

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

JUSTICE

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, they say the devil is in the details, and Bill C-5 is an excellent example of this. While the parliamentary secretary will only want to talk about criminal justice reform, the reality is that buried deep in Bill C-5 are insidious changes that will deeply harm the most vulnerable. Bill C-5 would extend house arrest to a number of serious crimes, including criminal harassment, sexual assault, kid-

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napping, abduction of a person under 14 and trafficking in persons for material benefit, in section 279.02. Extending house arrest to those offences places victims at serious risk from their abuser or trafficker. When I asked the minister about this, he seemed unaware that this was in his own bill, and when I asked the parliamentary secretary about it, he claimed that Bill C-5 would help marginalized communities, except that these changes proposed in clause 14 of Bill C-5 would only lead to more harm to marginalized communities.

Victims of human trafficking deserve to have confidence that the justice system will put their safety first. Indigenous women are significantly overrepresented, estimated to be at least 50% of the victims of human trafficking in Canada. By letting the traffickers serve their sentences in the community, the government is telling victims that their lives and safety are not a priority. Victims of human trafficking experience anxiety, depression, substance abuse, suicidal tendencies and PTSD because of the abuse by their traffickers. They also experience physical abuse, torture and injuries such as broken bones, burns, scars and broken teeth. These are all very common injuries. Also, after conviction, pimps and sex traffickers will seek out their victims and continue to retraumatize them through psychological and emotional abuse.

The one hope victims have that gives them strength and courage to come forward and testify is that the trafficker will be locked away for a few years. Now the Liberals are destroying this hope for survivors by allowing their traffickers to live at home in the community. It is these victims, many of whom are indigenous or racialized, who will be further harmed by the changes in Bill C-5. If these changes go through, their traffickers will be eligible to serve their sentences in the community.

This past month, a human trafficking trial has been taking place in the small Ontario town of Cayuga for a young woman who was forced into prostitution. Like the vast majority of victims here in Canada, she knew her trafficker before he began trafficking her. He was her drug dealer when she was only 17. When she turned 18, she was convinced by the drug dealer that he was her boyfriend and that he could help her get her dream career. Instead, he and his friends advertised her body online for sexual services. For months she was forced to perform sexual acts on eight to 10 men per day in hotels throughout southern Ontario. She was blindfolded between locations. The five traffickers monitored her phone and profited from her exploitation.

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Let us say this trial ends in the conviction of all five of these traffickers. Under Bill C-5, the court could sentence these traffickers solely to house arrest rather than prison. How is this mindful of the survivors of trafficking? The safety and healing of these survivors are not even accounted for in Bill C-5.

Human trafficking is a serious crime and it is happening within 10 minutes of where we live. It has long-term, serious effects on its victims and is much closer to home than we think. In no world should convicted traffickers stand a chance of not serving jail time.

• (1905)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak to Bill C-5, particularly to dispel some possible misunderstandings about the impact these sentencing reforms would have on the human trafficking regime in the Criminal Code.

Some critics of this bill suggest the proposed reforms would allow hardened human trafficking offenders, who may be linked to organized crime or who are otherwise observing harsh sentences, to serve their sentences at home. This is simply not true.

Currently, all offences that carry mandatory minimum penalties of imprisonment in the Criminal Code are ineligible for a conditional sentence. Bill C-5 would not change this. If the proposed reforms were to pass, offences carrying MMPs would continue to be ineligible for conditional sentences. To be completely clear, the offence of human trafficking, as well as any child-related trafficking offences, carries mandatory minimum penalties of imprisonment and thus would continue to be ineligible for a conditional sentence.

I want to make clear that when there is no MMP for any provision, CSOs can only be considered by the court in a specific set of circumstances. Namely, where a sentence of less than two years is appropriate, where serving the sentence in the community would not endanger the same of the community, and where such a sentence would be consistent with the fundamental purpose and principles of sentencing, including deterrence and denunciation.

Our government is committed to fighting human trafficking. With former bill, Bill C-75, which came into force in June of 2019, we took measures to facilitate the prosecution of human trafficking offences under the Criminal Code.

In September of 2019, we launched the national strategy to combat human trafficking, which brings together federal efforts and is supported by an investment of \$57.22 million over five years and \$10.28 million ongoing. This builds on previous investments of \$14.51 million over five years and \$2.8 million per year to establish a Canadian human trafficking hotline, which launched in May of 2019.

In February of 2021, we also launched the national human trafficking public awareness campaign to raise awareness among Canadian youth and parents of the misperceptions of human trafficking and increase understanding of the warning signs.

Our government has taken strong measures to combat human trafficking at its roots, instead of fuelling the ideological tough-on-crime narrative, which has not proven to be true empirically, has

not served our communities and has not made us safer nor helped victims.

Let me be very clear. Human trafficking is a serious offence for which courts impose stiff, denunciatory terms of imprisonment in the majority of cases, and that is what we and all Canadians expect from a court system. I have the utmost faith that, after the passage of Bill C-5, sentencing courts would continue to impose fit and appropriate sentences that reflect the seriousness of each offence and the moral blameworthiness of the offender before them in all cases.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Madam Speaker, one of the things I would note is that in northern Alberta we have an ongoing revolving door of criminals who continue to get out on bail, so I put forward initiatives around human traffickers having reverse onus bail. This bill would continue to allow human traffickers to get house arrest for being convicted of human trafficking.

In Alberta, our Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams, or ALERT, have been doing incredible work apprehending traffickers and helping victims regain their lives. In one case last year, they arrested traffickers in Edmonton involved in the sex trafficking case that Staff Sgt. Lance Parker described as “truly sickening”. Staff Sgt. Parker went on to say, “We owe it to [the victim's] safety and well-being to have these suspects in custody and prevent any other women from suffering the same”. Changes in Bill C-5 would allow traffickers like this to serve their conviction at home.

I once again ask the parliamentary secretary if he believes pimps and sex traffickers should be serving their sentences at home. I know he says that judges would not allow this to happen, but the bill would allow for pimps and traffickers to serve their sentences at home.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, Bill C-5 would provide judicial discretion to allow courts to craft proportionate sentences that consider all the relevant circumstances, including factors such as an individual's experience with systemic racism, their history of trauma or their need for community and health supports.

Should Bill C-5 be enacted, the human trafficking regime would not change. Conditional sentences would continue to be unavailable for the offence of trafficking in persons and trafficking of minors. In all cases, courts would continue to be required to impose sentences that reflect the seriousness of the offence and the moral blameworthiness of the offender.

Bill C-5 is an important step toward addressing systemic racism and discrimination in the justice system while also maintaining public safety.

- (1910)

CANADA POST

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, late last year, the Liberal government conducted polling to see if it could get away with cutting Canada Post services that Canadians rely on. This poll was a surprise to Canada Post and hard-working postal workers right across the country. The poll misled respondents by implying that Canada Post receives government funding before going on to ask about a possible restructuring and cuts to services and jobs, including closing rural post offices, moving remaining door-to-door deliveries to community mailboxes, reducing the frequency of mail delivery and using more automation to replace Canada Post workers.

Across the country, Canadians rely on Canada Post and its dedicated staff to provide an essential service every single day, especially in rural and northern communities. Canada Post is a key conduit to bring in community supplies and connect with families living in urban areas. It is a key part of local economies. Hundreds of thousands of people, including seniors and people with disabilities, rely on door-to-door delivery.

While he says he is a friend to labour, the Prime Minister continues to undermine union rights and well-paying jobs in Canada. The government failed to restore door-to-door mail delivery in communities that lost it under Stephen Harper, despite a 2015 campaign promise to save the service.

In the 2017 report entitled “The Way Forward for Canada on Post”, which was created and tabled by the current government, 26 of the 45 recommendations spoke to maintaining and expanding services. Instead, this poll suggests the government is eyeing cuts to services and jobs. However, the poll shows that Canadians are strongly opposed to closing rural post offices and, indeed, the minister's mandate letter speaks to ensuring that Canada Post services better reach rural and remote areas, so closing post offices should not even be on the table.

Canadians are also skeptical of automation. Postal workers have worked hard throughout the pandemic, helping Canadians stay home and healthy, and small business owners have pivoted to e-commerce to stay afloat. In 2020, Canada Post dealt with record parcel volumes, including a 52% increase in parcel revenue from small businesses alone.

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers has conducted its own polling that shows Canada Post is a trusted brand and that Canadians support expanding its services. Canada Post is actually positioned to play a very important role in our country's recovery from COVID-19. However, the government's polling in the strategic policy review it announced in budget 2022 raises a lot of questions about whether the government plans to actually pursue an austerity agenda.

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers has also championed initiatives that would actually help build inclusive and sustainable communities, such as postal banking and community hubs. These

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are exciting opportunities. Let us think about Nunavut, where most communities have no access to a bank branch. This contributes to continuing systemic inequities. Postal banking could help nearly two million Canadians access more affordable quality banking services where no services are currently available, and it could be critical and a key opportunity for reconciliation.

Across the country, there is also an urgent need to build electric vehicle charging infrastructure. We just heard last night from the people at the function for electric vehicles that they need more infrastructure.

There is an opportunity to build on Canada Post's established footprint and brand to provide needed services to Canadians, so why is the government considering cuts that would hurt communities and the collective rights of postal workers? What is the government's plan for Canada Post? When will the government be transparent with Canadians and postal workers?

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni for giving me the opportunity to address this important issue.

Canada Post has been connecting Canadians for more than 250 years, and it plays a vital role in our economy today. Our government fully understands that the services Canada Post provides for Canadians and businesses are essential, and we have always been committed to safeguarding this iconic institution. Its network of thousands of post offices serves as a crucial link for many rural, remote and isolated communities, especially in our northern regions.

Over the past two years, as we grappled with lockdowns and isolation due to the global pandemic, more and more Canadians turned to Canada Post. People were home and businesses were closed for long stretches, and we saw a dramatic shift in what was being delivered. The explosion of e-commerce drove unprecedented growth in the volume of parcels being sent across the country and around the world. Small and medium-sized businesses, in particular, greatly benefited from the services that Canada Post provides as they ramped up their online operations, and the corporation made great efforts to aid those businesses. It helped keep Canada running and continues to help ensure that we have a strong economic recovery.

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From the beginning, postal workers demonstrated an exemplary determination to serve all Canadians across the country in these unprecedented times, and for that we cannot thank them enough. We know that Canada Post must be nimble and must continue to evolve in order to meet the changing needs and expectations of Canadians. The Crown corporation operates at arm's length from the government, but I can tell members that it has been working hard to adapt to a rapidly changing environment.

Our government is committed to putting into action a renewed vision for Canada Post, one that puts services front and centre. That vision includes reinvesting in innovations and services so that Canada Post can continue to deliver mail in a timely fashion and at a reasonable price to Canadians no matter where they live, including in rural and remote communities. As part of this renewal process, we conducted a wide-ranging review and were in close contact with Canadians. We will continue to review and consult wherever necessary to ensure that our vision is in lockstep with what matters most to Canadians.

Canadians deeply value Canada Post and its services. They want us to safeguard this iconic and vital institution. They want us to ensure that top-quality, affordable mail delivery services will be available across our country for many years to come, and that is precisely what we are committed to doing.

Before I close, I want to take another moment to commend all postal workers for their excellent work during these challenging two years. I know that all members of the House can agree that we owe our postal workers a great debt of gratitude for their dedication through tough times. Our government will ensure that Canada Post remains relevant and sustainable over the long term, providing vital services from coast to coast.

• (1915)

Mr. Gord Johns: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech, but what I did not get was an answer to why the Privy Council did the polling in the first place and a commitment that the government is not going to cut services.

I want to work with my colleague so that we can expand services for Canada Post, like postal banking, which is a huge opportunity for rural and remote communities that do not have financial institutions. Many of them are leaving smaller communities despite record profits in the financial sector for the big banks. In these communities, we are leaving the most vulnerable susceptible to payday loans and businesses that are making a profit off people cashing their paycheques. There is an opportunity here, especially for indigenous people in the north, in particular in Nunavut, where we know banking is a huge challenge for many rural communities. It is a real, true opportunity for reconciliation.

I hope my colleague will work with me, and I hope he will commit to protecting Canada Post, its workers and its services.

Mr. Anthony Housefather: Madam Speaker, I absolutely commit that we will work with the hon. member, and I know the minister shares the same view. We very much appreciate working with the hon. member. He is always ready to speak with us, voice concerns and share what he feels, and we obviously cherish that because it is a great relationship.

We also treasure the innovative services that Canada Post is providing. A lot of pilot programs have happened in this country. Canada Post and the union are both working hard to deliver for Canadians through experimental programs that yield better services, and that is exactly what we want to provide. I know that my hon. colleague and I will work together on this issue.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is great to be here tonight. The initial question I asked had to do with an agricultural issue, and I would like to continue along that theme.

The president of the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association recently stated, "Absolutely we are unfairly targeted because we are a primary producer have no way of dealing with the carbon tax.... It is a pure cost to us, and there isn't really a way for us to become more efficient."

That is the problem our agriculture producers face. It is not only the carbon tax, but also the carbon tax that is applied to truckers, to rail and to the moorage of the ships parked in the harbour waiting to be loaded. All of those taxes are downloaded back to the primary producer, the farmer, the agricultural producer, who has no way to recover against those costs.

Recently, there was a 25% increase in the carbon tax. That is a huge add-on to our agricultural producers. To get specific, in my riding, where we have huge irrigation districts, this is a cost that affects that irrigation. It is millions of dollars if we look at all of the irrigation districts, but particularly for the four largest ones in my riding, it is a significant cost. This is money that leaves the communities and the producers and is not returned in a rebate. That is the percentage that is not returned, the millions of dollars paid to provide that irrigation.

As well, 4% of the arable land in Alberta produces 29% of the agricultural production of the GDP in Alberta, which is huge, but their increased costs are also huge.

We have the most significantly efficient high-producing agricultural producers in Canada, but what they do not get credit for is the 384 billion tonnes of carbon they store in the soil. They use practices that keep improving the storage of carbon, but they get no credit for it.

A private member's bill from a member in our caucus, Bill C-234, is moving forward on exempting farm fuels from the carbon tax. That would be the first step.

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Then we get to the issue of fertilizer. Agricultural producers work very hard on the four Rs: right source, right rain, right time and right place. They are getting incredibly efficient at it. The fertilizer industry contributes \$23 billion annually to Canada's economy. That is 76,000 jobs. Now the government is talking about reducing the use of fertilizer by 30%, without a benchmark. Farmers do not want to buy fertilizer that is not needed. It is very expensive and harder to get.

Agriculture employs 2.1 million people and generates \$139 billion of Canada's GDP. By continuing to go after those things that increase production, which we are going to need in this world, Canadian farmers, who are the most efficient, the best equipped and the best at it, will not be supported by this, which is a challenge for the agricultural producers in our country.

• (1920)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the pressures created by supply chain disruptions and by the shift from buying services to buying goods are real. We are monitoring that situation very closely.

As it relates to inflation, there are other structural costs that make life less affordable for Canadian families, and chief among them are housing and child care. That is why our government has a robust national housing strategy and a child care plan that is covering Canadians from coast to coast to coast. The average Alberta family will save \$5,600 this year.

I would like to thank the hon. member for raising the question of inflation and its impacts on small businesses. It is an important issue that is top of mind for our government. In fact, the issue was top of mind when the Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister presented the federal budget a few weeks ago: our plan to grow our economy and make life more affordable.

Our government understands that the current inflation crisis is making it harder for Canadians and small businesses across Canada to make ends meet. Increases in prices for a variety of goods are a global phenomenon driven by the unprecedented challenge of restarting the world's economy, as well as the instability of global markets as a result of President Putin's barbaric invasion of Ukraine, which has jolted commodity markets with a surge in prices particularly for oil, natural gas and wheat. Even in that context, I would point out that Canada's inflation is lower than that of the United States, as well as the averages of the G20, the Eurozone and the OECD.

Our government is taking meaningful actions to make life more affordable in this country and to support small businesses as they grow. For example, in budget 2022 our government is proposing to cut taxes for growing small businesses by phasing out access to the small business tax rate more gradually, with access to be fully phased out when taxable capital reaches \$50 million rather than \$15 million. It would deliver an estimated \$660 million in tax savings over the 2022-23 to 2026-27 period that could be reinvested towards growing and creating jobs. This is concrete support for Canadian small businesses, and there is a lot that we can be proud of in our budget.

As well, our government has cut taxes for the middle class while raising them for the top 1%, and we are working to address housing affordability. We have now signed agreements with all provinces and territories to implement a Canada-wide \$10-a-day community-based early learning and child care system that would make life more affordable for families, create new jobs, get parents back into the workforce and grow the middle class, while giving every child a real and fair chance at success.

As we can see, our government is already working hard to make life more affordable for Canadians and to help small businesses make ends meet.

• (1925)

Mr. Martin Shields: Madam Speaker, agricultural business is small business, and I think I outlined why, as producers, they cannot recover those costs.

I want to shift slightly to another one. The federal and provincial governments announced a \$900,000 grant to do with hemp. Hemp is an incredible agricultural product. The problem is that it is not classified under agriculture. It is under health. We have decreased the amount of hemp grown in this country because the red tape and restrictions, when it is grown under health, are brutal. Other countries have figured this out. The United States is beginning to figure it out. It is not marijuana.

We want to grow hemp. It is an incredible product. It can be used for many things. I am encouraging the parliamentary secretary, as I have many on that side, to get hemp out of health and into agriculture. The government is investing money in it, in a project in Alberta. It is joining up with the province. Let us get it in agriculture.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I used to serve with the member across the floor on the heritage committee, and I am reminded of how enigmatic he can be.

Let me just say that we are already hard at work to make life more affordable for Canadians and help small businesses across the country. In fact, we proposed a number of measures in budget 2022 that would do just that. I would like to remind my hon. colleague that our government's economic plan is working.

Since the depths of the pandemic recession, the government's focus on jobs, on keeping Canadians employed and on keeping their employers afloat has ensured that Canada's economy has seen the best jobs recovery in the G7, having recovered 115% of the jobs lost and with an unemployment rate that sits at just 5.3%: lower than the 5.4% low of 2019 that was Canada's best in five decades.

We will continue to do whatever it takes to ensure Canada's economic recovery leaves no one behind—

Adjournment Proceedings

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

(The House adjourned at 7:29 p.m.)

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