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# House of Commons Debates

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Wednesday, October 5, 2022

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 5, 2022

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1400)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### *COME FROM AWAY*

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what started as an idea of my friend Michael Rubinoff became the most successful Canadian musical in history, which features five days, 19 animals, 7,000 strays and one small town that welcomed the world. *Come From Away* ended its five-year Broadway run on Sunday, but the story of the 7,000 plane people, who landed in Gander after 9/11 and were lovingly cared for by the community, will continue to warm hearts in productions around the world.

I am proud to say I was there from the start of a moment. Written by Irene Sankoff and David Hein, it was first workshopped at Sheridan College in Oakville in 2012. Its themes of kindness and of welcoming strangers in need resonates as much today as it ever did. *Come From Away* is a great example of the importance of investing in the arts. When I was in Gander recently, I heard about the economic impact this musical has had on the province.

I thank everyone involved. Canada is proud of them.

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• (1405)

### OTTAWA SENATORS

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me be perfectly clear that I am a Vancouver Canucks fan. However, today I want to say something nice about another NHL team, the Ottawa Senators, and give special thanks to former

defenceman Wade Redden, who 25 years ago made it his mission to visit sick kids at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

One of those sick kids was my then young nephew, Julian, who was fighting cancer at 13 years old. Julian has fond memories of those visits. Such a small gesture for an NHL star had such a huge impact on a kid's life.

Today, 25 years later, Julian is a healthy, happy and vibrant 38-year-old man. He is a husband and a father of three children. Just the other day, Wade and Julian were reunited at the Canadian Tire Centre at the home opener game against the Montreal Canadiens. It was a very happy reunion.

I give a big shout-out to the Senators, Mr. Redden and CHEO for working with our sick kids.

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### WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to celebrate the launch of my all-new accessible website, which is compliant with Canada's accessibility guidelines and can now be used by more people in our communities and from across Canada.

The new design can be optimized for a wide range of impairments, including those that affect visual, auditory, motor and cognitive skills. My website features a seizure-safe profile, a vision impaired profile, an ADHD-friendly profile and a cognitive disability profile, as well as keyboard navigation and screen readers.

Ensuring that everyone has equal access and opportunity to contact me or visit my website is extremely important to my team. I hope that by initiating this change, we will inspire other MPs to begin to follow suit and ensure users with impairments and other limitations can experience their websites the same as any other user.

*Statements by Members**[Translation]***35TH ANNIVERSARY OF LOCAL NEWSPAPER**

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. President, 35 years ago in Vieux-Boucherville, Charles Desmarteau Sr. founded a newspaper and called it La Relève. It was a bold move given that another well-established weekly paper, La Seigneurie, had already occupied the market for over 20 years.

Thus, a rivalry began. It continued until 2018, despite the difficult environment that the news media are facing. They are not on a level playing field with the web giants.

Despite the challenges and hurdles, La Relève has stood the test of time. Today, Charles Desmarteau Jr. has taken over from his father, maintaining the newspaper's recipe for success: Produce quality information by staying in touch with the community.

The people of my riding identify with their newspaper and are proud of it. Having been a paperboy myself, I also feel that I was part of this success.

Bravo to the passionate and incredibly dedicated employees, and happy 35th anniversary to La Relève.

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**NATIONAL SENIORS DAY**

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, October 1 marked National Seniors Day, and I had the pleasure of celebrating with a group of people whose heads are far greyer than mine.

Supporting our seniors has always been at the forefront of our priorities. That is why we increased old age security for seniors aged 75 and over by 10%; increased funding for the new horizons for seniors program by \$20 million; made dental care free for seniors as of 2023; invested \$6 billion to improve home care; allocated \$20 million to dementia research; and introduced a multi-generational home renovation tax credit.

In short, we are putting in place measures to limit the impact of inflation on everyone, particularly on our seniors.

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*[English]***EVELOCK CLOWATER GILKS**

**Mr. Jake Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to acknowledge the sudden passing of a man who impacted many lives for the better, who improved his community, and did so with kindness and flare.

I have stated before that the people of Miramichi have long been known for our large personalities, our sense of humour and our ability to turn a phrase.

Evelock Clowater Gilks stood out, and he will be fondly remembered as a legend and an institution on our river. Evelock was born on April 4, 1948, in Blissfield, New Brunswick. He was a loving husband and father, an avid golfer, a proud legion member, and an

accomplished fisherman who was passionate about the Miramichi River, the people and communities who live along it, and the Atlantic salmon who call it home.

The river at home feels a little empty since his passing. The unfortunate curse of a personality as large as his is the silence that is left behind. I would like to express my deepest condolences and send these words of comfort to his wife, Eleanor, and his children.

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● (1410)

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS**

**Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when Sharron Harley prepares for her day, she slips a photo of her late husband Charlie into her uniform and heads into the same spot she has worked at since 1977, the McDonald's on Upper Gage and Mohawk, in my riding of Hamilton Mountain.

A familiar and friendly face to many, Sharron turned 75 this year, and she credits her job with keeping her active and engaged with her friends and community. Sharron is the social connector for many seniors who live in the area. She draws them in to socialize over coffee, food and great company.

It is critical for seniors to stay healthy and remain involved in their communities. Two days shy of International Day of Older Persons, I was thrilled to present Sharron with two certificates, one commemorating her 75th birthday and the other acknowledging her incredible 45-year career at McDonald's.

I send my congratulations to Sharron.

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**ANDREW HONG AND TRAVIS GILLESPIE**

**Mr. Paul Chiang (Markham—Unionville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in the House to pay tribute to two Canadian heroes who tragically lost their lives as members of municipal police services in the GTA.

Constable Andrew Hong of the Toronto Police Service was shot and killed in an ambush on September 12 in Mississauga. He leaves behind two teenage children and will forever be remembered as a larger-than-life personality who got along with everyone and cared deeply for his community.

Constable Travis Gillespie of the York Regional Police was killed in a collision with an alleged impaired driver on September 14. He has been remembered by friends, family, and co-workers as someone who demonstrated "true leadership by leading from the front and always showing strength for the team."

Emergency services personnel around Canada put their lives on the line every day to protect their communities and keep Canadians safe. As a retired police officer of the York Regional Police, and as someone who currently has a son-in-law in policing, I offer my sincere condolences to the families and friends affected by these tragedies. We will always remember their sacrifice.

### RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to pay tribute to a long-standing member of the Speaker's team who has decided to take a well-deserved retirement from this institution. Becoming a bit of an institution herself, Heather Bradley has served five speakers as director of communications. We, and I, have benefited from her wisdom and expertise.

MPs are elected as members of a political party and sit as a caucus. As such, each member has a tremendous amount of support when it comes to communications, but speakers leave those teams and can no longer count on that network, so the need to have an effective communications director is all the more important.

Heather was an absolute joy to work with. Her extensive knowledge of the precinct, members and historical precedence was invaluable. Her ability to interact with journalists, and the trust she had built with all parties over the years, was essential in assisting the Speaker as part of a non-partisan office in the backdrop of a highly partisan environment.

I could always count on her for excellent advice, from issues of the board to the modernization of disclosure. She was there for Parliament's big move out of Centre Block, and, of course, the tragic shooting that occurred there. She was always calm, thoughtful and rational, and had an impeccable track record of honesty and transparency.

I would like to thank Heather for her many years of service to Parliament, supporting speakers dating back to 1994. I also would like to thank her husband, Mike, and her boys, Nick, Jake and Sam, for lending her to us. We are all the better for it. I wish her all the best in her retirement.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

\* \* \*

● (1415)

### CANADIAN BEER

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to recognize the contribution of beer and brewing in Canada on this 4th annual Canadian Beer Day.

Brewing beer here from locally grown barley and other grains predates Confederation by over 200 years and remains a source of pride for Canadians as a symbol of Canada around the world. Widely known as a drink of moderation and of social gatherings, beer helps bring neighbours together and is a part of celebrations of important life milestones.

Canadian beer is now brewed from coast to coast to coast in communities large and small, and it is a true Canadian agri-food success story that should be celebrated and protected for future generations.

[*Translation*]

I want to thank Beau's, Wood Brothers, Tuque de Broue, Étienne Brûlé and Cassel, all local breweries in my riding, for their excellent beer.

### Statements by Members

[*English*]

I say cheers to beer's economic, social and community contributions, and happy Canadian Beer Day.

\* \* \*

### CANADIAN BEER

**Mr. Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian Beer Day is an occasion to celebrate Canadians beer, and the men and women who brew it, sell it, deliver it, serve it and, most importantly, enjoy it. From the prairie farmer to our neighbourhood pub staff, the production and sale of beer helps support over 149,000 jobs in Canada, and 88% of the beer consumed in Canada is brewed in Canada.

Sharing a beer with one's friends is one of life's great pleasures, and it should remain an affordable activity for generations to come. Sadly, this is no April Fool's joke, but every April 1, our favourite pints will be hit with an automatic Liberal escalator tax. Even without a vote in this place, beer is going to get more expensive.

Raise a glass and thank a Liberal for making it more expensive today. People may not believe it, but it is Trudeau. If everyone would raise their glass, we will say cheers to the Liberals for making beer more expensive.

**The Speaker:** Once again, I want to remind hon. members that using another member's name in the House is not permitted. When referring to someone, do it by their title or by their riding. If members are going to try to be clever, try to be a little less obvious.

The hon. member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake.

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### ENERGY INDUSTRY IN ALBERTA

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the new Conservative leader will put people first: their savings, their paycheques, their homes and their country. Canada has the third-largest oil reserves in the world, yet due to Liberal policies, we import 130,000 barrels of oil a day because Liberals prefer to support dirty dictator oil as opposed to responsible Canadian energy.

*Statements by Members*

Conservatives understand that when Fort McMurray works, Alberta works. When Alberta works, Canada works. Only Conservatives are fighting for pipelines and energy corridors to secure the long-term viability of Alberta energy and to get Alberta energy to the world. Conservatives will repeal Liberal anti-energy laws and replace them with a law that will protect our environment, consult first nations and get things built. We will support economic reconciliation with indigenous communities and, within five years, we will set a goal to end dirty dictator oil in Canada altogether.

We will not back down from politicians in this country and in this chamber who seek to land-lock and firewall our energy, leaving our workers without jobs. Canada and the world need Alberta energy.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN**

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on October 1, people around the world demonstrated in solidarity with Iranian women. These people have been rising up since the tragic death of Mahsa Amini.

[English]

In Montreal, I joined thousands on the streets who called for freedom and justice. Mahsa Amini was a vibrant 22-year-old Iranian woman. She was arrested by Iran's morality police and died a short while after, while in custody.

[Translation]

According to Amnesty International, more than 75 people have been killed.

[English]

More than 1,200 have been arrested. The government has cut off Internet access. Iranians' voices will not be silenced. They are being heard clearly and loudly across the globe. We must support them. We do support them in their struggle for freedom and justice.

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**SAVANNA PIKUYAK**

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, Savanna Pikuyak moved from my riding to Ottawa in pursuit of becoming a nurse. Savanna was murdered before the school year began. We all have failed her, her family and all indigenous girls, women and two-spirit people.

Words of empathy are not enough. As parliamentarians, we need to do better. We must work in our constituencies to seek justice for Savanna and for all missing and murdered indigenous girls, women and two-spirit people.

As parliamentarians, we need to take action. As parliamentarians, we all must take steps to end genocide. We must heed the calls for justice as recommended by the MMIWG commission.

• (1420)

[Translation]

**ANDRÉE FERRETTI**

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Andrée Ferretti, a staunch separatist from start to finish, passed away on Thursday.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I want to offer my condolences to her children Lucia and Vincent, and her immediate family and friends.

Born Andrée Bertrand in a working-class neighbourhood in Montreal, Andrée Ferretti discovered very early a common thread that she would follow her entire life: freedom for the people of Quebec, which would lead her to join the Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale in 1963, then fight her entire life to make Quebec a country; the freedom of words, discovered alongside Miron, Aquin and so many others, developed in her novels, her essays and her articles; freedom for workers, doubly exploited as labour and as Quebeckers; and freedom for women, in politics and anywhere else.

Named patriot of the year in 1979, Andrée Ferretti also made a name for herself by winning several literary awards.

Today we bid a final farewell to Andrée Ferretti, separatist, writer, activist and free woman.

\* \* \*

[English]

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the new Conservative leader will put the people first: their paycheques, their savings and their country. After years of government mismanagement and Liberal-made backlogs, it is time to get the gatekeepers out of our immigration system.

Conservatives are bringing hope to doctors, nurses and newcomers who are dreaming of coming to our country but are blocked from working in their profession simply because of the country they come from. We will team up with the provinces to fix the broken foreign credential recognition system by guaranteeing within 60 days that immigrants applying for work in their profession will get an answer based on merit, not on their country of origin.

As Canada faces a labour shortage, we need to empower workers to fill the gaps in our workforce. Red tape and bureaucracy should not stop newcomers from achieving their dreams.

Enough talking, enough empty rhetoric and enough broken promises. It is time to remove the gatekeepers and get more doctors, nurses, skilled workers and inflation-protected paycheques for our hard-working and skilled immigrants.

### RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a resident of my community of Ottawa—Centre who has been an invaluable resource to the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

That person is Heather Bradley, Director of Communications at the Office of the Speaker, who is leaving us after 28 years of service to begin her well-deserved retirement.

[*English*]

Throughout her time on Parliament Hill, Heather Bradley has served five Speakers over 10 parliaments. She has seen it all. Despite the often hectic pace of the House, she has been calm, competent and always kind.

[*Translation*]

Our success as parliamentarians depends on the quality of the staff who support us. Ms. Bradley was one of the best.

[*English*]

I thank Heather for her service. She leaves behind a legacy of excellence and hundreds of grateful colleagues who will miss her.

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### RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

**Hon. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.):** I would like to take a moment to add to the remarks of hon. members in recognition of Heather Bradley's upcoming retirement.

[*Translation*]

In my role, I was privileged to receive advice from Heather, a consummate professional with the gift of wisdom, intelligence and tact.

• (1425)

[*English*]

Heather has that singular gift of great leadership to steer one in the right direction without feeling pushed in any way.

[*Translation*]

Under Heather's leadership, we also achieved greater transparency and efficiency in our communications. She helped Speakers of the House fulfill their roles more effectively and become more informed about parliamentary procedure and traditions.

[*English*]

Heather almost always had the answers, and if not, she knew exactly who to talk to. Her contact list was amazing, a veritable who's who of Parliament Hill.

We thank Heather for her decades of service. We hope that retirement brings her time to enjoy her beautiful family and many friends, as well as time to reflect on the legacy of excellence, kindness and everything else that she brought to this place.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

### Oral Questions

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

### CARBON PRICING

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, according to Le Journal de Montréal, growing numbers of students affected by the rising cost of food are turning to food banks. A survey showed that the majority of Canadians—51%—are struggling to feed themselves. The carbon tax is a tax on food because it is a tax on farmers and the truckers who deliver our food.

How much will groceries cost families when the Prime Minister implements his plan to triple the carbon tax again and again and again?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, students and families across this country know full well that climate change is real and that we must fight it. At the same time, they also know they need help to buy groceries and gas. That is why our price on pollution is returning more money to the families who need it than it costs them. That is why we continue to put families first, to protect the future. Unfortunately, the plight of Atlantic Canadians shows just how costly climate change is. Inaction costs more. We will support families at the same time.

[*English*]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was at the Metcalfe Fair over the weekend and a farm family told me that they spent \$12,645 on carbon taxes in July alone. Obviously, that gets passed on to customers. That is \$12,645 in one month. Now the Prime Minister wants to triple the tax on that family, which they will have to pass on in even higher food prices, which have already gone up more than at any time in 40 years.

How much will this family have to spend on carbon taxes when the Prime Minister triples them?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition does not seem to understand that clever slogans do not help families. Investments in Canadians help families and cheques help families. That is why we were so pleased when he reversed his earlier opposition to our GST tax credit and is now supporting that direct support for Canadian families. Why will he now not move forward and support our investments to support low-income families with rent and low-income families with dental costs for their kids? Will he support rental and dental for low-income Canadians?

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, feeding people is not a clever slogan; it is a necessity of life.

*Oral Questions*

This family spent \$12,645 on carbon taxes in a single month, but it is still not enough for the Prime Minister. He wants to triple the tax, increasing the cost for that farmer, who then has to pass it on to the customer. It means that more of our food will be produced abroad and shipped up here, polluting more of our environment by shipping, training and trucking that food.

Again, will he answer the question? How much will this family have to spend on carbon taxes once he has tripled them?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I just got back from Atlantic Canada, where people are reeling from the impacts of hurricane Fiona. The reality is that these 100-year storms are going to be arriving with greater and greater frequency. We know that climate change is real and that it takes real plans and supports to fight climate change. That is what we have been working on for the past seven years.

At the same time as we have moved forward with ensuring that it is not free to pollute anywhere in this country, we are putting more money back into average families' pockets with the climate rebate. This is the focus we need to continue to have for Canadians.

• (1430)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one, his climate rebate comes nowhere near \$12,645 for this farm family. Two, his carbon tax has not hit a single solitary emissions reduction target; it has not worked. Three, in the month of July, when this family was paying \$12,645 in his carbon tax, supposedly for the environment, the Prime Minister jumped on his private jet 20 times. It is high-carbon hypocrisy.

If he cannot tell us how much the tax will cost, will he tell us how much carbon he emitted in the month of July when he was raising taxes?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we do not have to convince Albertans or Saskatchewanians, who have dealt with wildfires, that climate change is real. We do not have to convince British Columbians, who have seen record levels of floods, that climate change is real. We certainly do not have to convince Atlantic Canadians, who are rebuilding after yet another storm of the century, that climate change is real.

People know we need to take action on that, and that is exactly what this government has done by putting a price on pollution to ensure that it is no longer free to pollute anywhere in the country and by giving more money back to families that need it. When is the Conservative leader going to get serious on climate change?

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has not gotten serious on climate change. He has a tax plan, not a climate plan, that has raised money for his government but has not reduced emissions or hit targets. Now the Prime Minister has the audacity to call this farm family polluters while he jets around in his private jet across the country. The effect of his plan will be to drive up domestic food production costs and drive that production out of our country to more polluting lands where it has to be transported longer distances.

Why does the Prime Minister want to drive prices and emissions up, and farm production and opportunity down?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition put as much energy into building a plan to fight climate change as he does into concocting elaborate theories and attacks, we might be better off and might be able to compare a real climate plan from the Conservatives to what the government has been doing for the past seven years. However, he would prefer to focus on me than focus on Canadians and their future.

We are going to stay focused on fighting climate change and putting more money back into Canadians' pockets. That is what Canadians expect. That is what we are going to keep doing.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebecers voted for a majority government on Monday, a majority the Prime Minister twice fantasized about but failed to even come close to winning.

The Quebec government wants more power in matters of immigration, while some want all immigration powers and others, like us, want to have absolutely all the power, period.

Let us look at the first scenario, more powers in immigration. The Quebec lieutenant said yesterday that Quebec has all the powers it needs. Meanwhile, the French language is in decline while English is flourishing.

Does this government see that as a successful language policy for Quebec?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague is well aware, our government has always been there to protect French across the country and in Quebec. I look forward to continuing to work with Premier Legault on this.

With regard to immigration, Quebec already has all the tools it needs to increase francophone immigration, if it wants to do so. Quebec has those tools, and we will gladly work with that province to end the labour shortages and help communities grow while also protecting the French language.

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister himself is saying that giving Quebec more immigration powers is out of the question. The only thing this government wants to see Quebec get more of is immigrants. I agree, but only as long as we can successfully integrate them in French.

Has he thought about discussing this with a premier who holds about three-quarters of the seats in Quebec rather than pretending to be his best friend from a distance?

• (1435)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Quebec government has enough control over immigration to double the number of immigrants that it currently accepts. Our government would be more than willing to work with Quebec if it wants to do so.

If Quebec wants to bring in more francophone immigrants, we are there to help. We know that businesses across Quebec are facing a labour shortage, we know that immigrants are needed for economic growth, and we also know that immigrants deeply enrich Quebec life.

We will always be there to work hand in hand to improve the lives of all Quebecers.

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### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is getting harder and harder for people to pay their bills.

On the one hand, we have the Minister of Environment and Climate Change who wants to protect the profits of big oil companies, and, on the other hand, we have the CEO of Shell who says that, to help people, the government must force big oil companies to pay their fair share.

How does the Prime Minister explain that?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, building an economy that works for all Canadians has always been a priority for our government. We have always strived to do so by asking the wealthy to do a little more and by lowering taxes for the middle class.

Those were the first things we did when we took office and it is what we have continued to do every day for the last seven years. We will always be there to ask for a little more from the wealthy, to help the middle class and to create more prosperity and more opportunities for all Canadians.

[English]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is more interested in protecting the profits of big oil and gas than helping people in need.

The cost of gas is going up by 10¢ a litre today. “Governments need to tax energy producers to help the poorest people deal with the soaring cost of fuel.” Who do members think said that? It was definitely not the leader of the Conservative Party. It was certainly not the Minister of Environment. It was the CEO of Shell.

How is it possible that the CEO of Shell is more interested in helping people deal with the cost of fuel than the Prime Minister?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we recognize that the oil and gas industry is making record profits right now, but we also recognize that they need to be investing in the clean transition. They need to be reducing their carbon emis-

sions and preparing for Canada to be a source of energy in a net-zero world.

That is what Canada can do, and that is why we are going to ensure that successful corporations pay their fair share of taxes and that we continue to support low-income Canadians and middle-class Canadians, including with our measures on a GST rebate and our measures on rental and dental support for Canadians. We look forward to working with all parties on those issues.

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### SPORT

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in 2018, the government was made aware of a horrific allegation. It was an allegation with regard to gang rape by eight members of the Hockey Canada team. The government was made aware but chose to do nothing, absolutely nothing. Canadian tax dollars continue to flow to the organization. Zero accountability was put in place. It was swept under the rug until four years later.

Why did the government fail to act when it first came to light?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a government, we have always taken allegations of sexual misconduct seriously in any organization. We have always acted and we will continue to do so.

What Canadians are continuing to see come out of Hockey Canada is absolutely unacceptable. Parents across the country, like me, who have had kids in hockey, families and young kids care about hockey in this country. We know that we need to see a better organization than that.

Hockey Canada's tone deafness to the fact that it has lost the confidence of Canadians needs to end, which is why we stopped funding it and why we are calling for change.

• (1440)

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I did not ask whether there was still support for hockey in this country. I recognize that it is a national sport and that we are proudly behind it. However, we should not be proudly behind the behaviour that has been exhibited by members of the team.

I am asking the Prime Minister why, for four years, the so-called feminist government did absolutely nothing when it had the power to do something and had the information in its hands.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have already imposed some of the strictest penalties and limits on funding toward Hockey Canada. Right now it is for Hockey Canada to understand that it has completely lost any trust or faith among Canadians.

*Oral Questions*

The organization must be transformed or, as we are seeing with Hockey Québec, which is saying it is not going to engage with Hockey Canada anymore, more and more organizations across the country are simply going to turn their backs on this organization, which is not worthy of building strong futures for our kids.

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**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Michel and Jeannette farm in beautiful Embrun, Ontario, but a quarter of their fuel price was carbon taxes. If the Liberals triple that carbon tax, they have said they are going to be paying \$18,000 a year.

Now, unlike what the Prime Minister is saying, that is not revenue-neutral. They will get pennies back through the Liberal rebate. I have heard from farmers across the country who have said that if the Liberals triple the carbon tax, it will bankrupt them.

Will the Prime Minister cancel his plans to triple this tax on Canadian farm families like Michel and Jeannette?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians across the country, including farmers, are dealing with more and more extreme weather events. Climate change is real and we need to tackle it together. The way we are doing that is by putting a price on pollution and returning the cost of that to average families across the country.

On top of that, we are working with the agricultural industry, which recognizes how important it is to protect our environment and protect our planet. We are ensuring that families, including farm families, can continue to succeed in the coming years, even as we fight against climate change.

Why do the Conservatives not believe in climate change?

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister realizes that they will not succeed. The biggest threat facing our farmers is the triple threat offered by the Liberals: fertilizer tariffs, higher interest rates and higher carbon taxes. This has put thousands of family farms on the brink of insolvency. Even Canadian consumers understand the threat of the triple threat, as grocery prices are up 10%, which is driving food costs even higher.

Does the Prime Minister understand that by tripling the carbon tax, the end result will be no fertilizer, no farms and no food?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the Conservative Party wanted to help Canadians, it should do what it has done on the GST tax credit, reversing its position to support our support for families, and do the same with our low-income supports for renters and our supports for families on the costs of dental care for kids.

These two measures are concrete and will help Canadian families. The Leader of the Opposition flip-flopped and is now supporting the GST proposal. Will he now support renters and the dental support that Canadians need? That is something tangible we should all be able to agree on.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister would have Canadians be-

lieve that there is nothing Canada can do to combat inflation. In the meantime, we have learned that Laval University in Quebec City is being forced to cancel the construction of a new pavilion because of the rising costs of construction.

Across Quebec, families are cutting back on their groceries to pay for other bills. The Prime Minister wants to triple the carbon tax, which will only increase these costs.

If he wants to help Canadians, will he cancel the carbon tax increase?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Quebecers and all Canadians know just how important it is to fight climate change. We have a plan that does exactly that. I look forward to hearing the Conservatives' plan at some point.

If the Conservatives really want to help Canadian families, they should not just support our GST-HST credit increase. They should also support our dental care benefit and our assistance for renters. We are here to help Canadians.

Will the Conservatives support us and work with us to help Canadians?

● (1445)

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, clearly, the Prime Minister's plan is not working. A government report came out today, stating that the food inflation rate is 11%, that nearly nine million Canadians are now cutting back on the amount of food they buy because of inflation, and that the vast majority of those people are women. In addition, 2.5 million Canadians are skipping meals and paying for groceries with a credit card without knowing when they will be able to pay it off.

Will the Prime Minister commit to not raising taxes on Quebecers and Canadians on January 1?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know how much Canadians are struggling with inflation, which is a global phenomenon. That is why we are helping them in a concrete way by increasing the GST/HST credit, a measure the Conservatives finally chose to support after having criticized it so harshly.

I would now ask the Conservatives whether they will also support our proposals to help low-income renters and help low-income families with dental care for their children. We know how meaningful this help will be for families. Will the Conservatives finally support us on this?

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what is happening at Roxham Road is, first and foremost, a humanitarian issue.

The humanitarian thing to do would be to have migrants come in through regular border crossings, not put them in handcuffs and expose them to human smugglers and criminals. Would it not be better to invest half a billion dollars or more to hire qualified staff at the Department of Immigration rather than spend it on walls?

Would that not be the humanitarian thing to do rather than send them back or deport them after they have made a good life for themselves in Quebec or in Canada?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is indeed a land of values, generosity and openness to the world.

Every step of the way, we ensure respect for Canada's foundational principles and values. We work with the U.S. government every day to improve the safe third country agreement. When people come to Canada, we make sure we follow the rules and protect them at the same time. We are here to support Quebec, which is doing a lot of work in relation to Roxham Road. We will always stand up for our values and our system.

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, under the circumstances, I would like to mention the presence of the member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

I will now talk about trios. In Quebec, there are now three big political players. On immigration and the French language, the Prime Minister is in the minority there too.

Is Roxham Road not a humanitarian issue that sometimes gives the government ideological comfort when, in reality, it is a way of giving money and contracts to friends of the Liberal Party?

**The Speaker:** Before the Prime Minister answers the question, I would like to remind members that they must refer to their colleagues by their title, position or riding.

Furthermore, they must not allude to the presence or absence of a member in the House. We know that members sometimes have commitments outside the House. A member's absence from the House does not mean that they are not doing their job; they may be fulfilling other responsibilities.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has one of the best immigration systems in the world. Furthermore, we have the advantage of having a population and a Parliament that are very much in favour of immigration. That is a significant asset on this planet in the current geopolitical context.

The reality is that we have a labour shortage. We need to create population growth, and we will welcome even more immigrants. The reality is that we must do so using a fair and rigorous system that is rooted in our values. That is what we always try to do.

## Oral Questions

[English]

## CARBON PRICING

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, gas prices hit \$2.40 a litre in Vancouver. They just jumped 10¢ a litre in one day in other markets. What is the NDP-Liberal solution? It is more price gouging. The costly coalition voted to triple the tax on gasoline and other essentials. The biggest price gougers in Canada are these two parties that form this costly coalition.

When they do triple the tax, how much will it cost across Canada to buy a litre of gas?

• (1450)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, six years ago this government moved forward to make sure pollution was no longer free anywhere in this country. That is a core part of fighting climate change. At the same time as we moved forward with a price on pollution across the country, we ensured we returned more money than the average family pays out with that price on pollution in the areas in which it applies. That is how we ensure we are fighting climate change and putting more money in Canadians' pockets who need it.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is factually false. His own Parliamentary Budget Officer said that in the four provinces where the rebates exist, 60% of people pay more in carbon tax costs than they get back in rebates. In six provinces out of 10, they do not get any rebate at all, even though the federal government will force those provinces to triple the tax after a vote by the costly coalition of the NDP and Liberals.

How much will eastern Canadian rural families be forced to pay in higher taxes on their home heating when the Prime Minister triples the carbon tax?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what eastern Canadians are saying right now, and this is what they told me, is that they are worried for the fact that there are going to be more intense storms in the coming years, and that their kids and their grandkids are going to face a world in which extreme weather events are increasingly frequent, which will threaten not just their communities and not just their way of life but their very future.

The fact is we need to continue to step up in the fight against climate change, which is something Conservative politicians do not seem to understand. The model we have of putting a price on pollution returns more money every year to families who need it. That is the model we have. That is how we are helping Canadians as we fight climate change.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is not working. He has not hit a single, solitary climate target since he brought in this tax. According to the Liberal Premier of Newfoundland, rural families will have seen an 80% increase in their home heating costs when the carbon tax kicks in there. Forty per cent of Atlantic Canadians live in energy poverty. The Prime Minister can insult these people and call them polluters while he jets around in his private jet, or he can recognize that heating one's home in January in rural Newfoundland is a basic necessity.

How much will he impose in extra costs on those families when he—

**The Speaker:** The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all Canadians want to see a better future for their kids and for their grandkids. That only happens if we continue not just to fight against climate change but to invest in the jobs and the transformation of our economy that is going to be needed to ensure good careers for them and good opportunities for those communities and families.

That is what our plan to fight climate change does. The Conservative Party chooses to deny that climate change exists and refuses to put forward a plan to fight climate change. That is not what Atlantic Canadians, or indeed any Canadians, need.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister does not have a climate plan; he has a tax plan. His climate promises have failed every single year, and now he has a tax hike on farmers. I asked him how much a farm family would have to pay, and he did not have an answer. Here is the answer: That family will pay more, which means more of the food production will be sent other ways, to other countries, where they have lower environmental standards. That food will then have to be shipped, trained and trucked back to Canada, adding more pollution and leaving us more dependent on foreign farmers.

Why does the Prime Minister want to drive pollution up, farm production out and jobs down?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I could just as well ask why the Leader of the Opposition wants to make pollution free again. The reality is that farm families, like all families across the country, are worried about their kids and their kids' futures. They are worried about the land that sustains us and this extraordinary country that provides us all so much.

That is why we need to be better stewards of the land all together, which is why we are moving forward with a strong plan to fight climate change that includes supports for farm families and supports for the agricultural industry as we reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and as we create good jobs and a good future for all Canadians.

\* \* \*

● (1455)

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is clear that wages have absolutely not kept up with inflation, and there is no evidence to suggest that high wages in any way con-

tribute to inflation. However, there is mounting evidence that corporate greed is driving up the cost of living. Given that, it is outrageous for the Bank of Canada to tell employers not to increase workers' wages.

My question is to the Prime Minister. Does he agree with the Bank of Canada that employers should not be increasing wages to keep up with inflation?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know how much inflation, this global phenomenon, is hurting Canadian families. That is why it is important to get inflation under control. That is why we have measures to support Canadians, whether it is with the GST rebate, which is delivering for Canadians across this country, whether it is support for low-income rentals or whether it is support for families with low incomes who want to get dental care for their kids. We know that those will be real supports for Canadians while at the same time not driving up or contributing to further inflation. We need to make sure we are getting inflation down as quickly as possible. That is the focus that the Bank of Canada has given. That is the focus of this government.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, since the Prime Minister is unclear on where he stands, let me speak directly to workers and let them know that we stand on their side for better wages. If the only response to inflation and the cost of living going up is for the Bank of Canada to increase interest rates, that will only mean more pain. It will mean more pain for families paying their mortgage and more pain for people buying their groceries on credit cards.

We know that corporate greed is driving up the cost of living. Will the Prime Minister tackle corporate greed?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know the leader of the New Democrats cares about our institutions, and I know he did not mean to slight the independence of the Bank of Canada. We have strong, rigorous institutions in this country that make determinations around how to best serve and fight inflation. We support them in their independent work.

At the same time, in this House, we have a responsibility to be delivering for Canadians, which is why we are moving forward with a GST credit that is going to help millions of Canadian families, and moving forward with support for renters and dental support for low-income families that I certainly hope, like the NDP, the Conservatives will choose to support.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, hurricane Fiona was a stark reminder of the work we need to do here in this chamber, and an example of the fact that in times of crisis, Canadians come together. The truth is that these once-in-a-generation storms are happening nearly every year. Our oceans are warming, and comments like the one from the Conservative member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, who asked why the carbon price did not prevent hurricane Fiona, are not rooted in reality.

Can the Prime Minister please address why we need to fight climate change?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for St. John's East for her question and her passionate advocacy for all Newfoundlanders. I have spoken with a number of Atlantic Canadians and Quebecers since the storm whose lives have been forever altered by hurricane Fiona. Their feedback to me was clear: We have to use every tool we have and work together to fight climate change, even as we support them and rebuild in their provinces.

In order for us to continue the fight against climate change, the leader of the Conservative Party needs to accept some core facts, like that climate change is real and we have to keep doing more to fight it.

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### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, is the IRGC a terrorist group, yes or no?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have recognized that Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism. We continue to move forward in holding the IRGC to account, including by putting sanctions on a number of its top leaders to ensure that they cannot take safe haven or buy property in Canada.

We will continue to hold this bloodthirsty regime to account as young Iranians, and people around the world with them, stand in defence of their fundamental rights and freedoms.

• (1500)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we do not need drama. We do not need acting.

This group killed 55 Canadian citizens, whose only crime was to get on a plane, whereafter they were shot out of the sky by a terrorist organization that can still legally operate in Canada because the Prime Minister has not put it on the list of terrorists.

Again, yes or no, is the IRGC a terrorist organization?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has some of the strongest sanctions in the world against the bloodthirsty regime in Iran. We have stood with the families of PS752 over the past 1,000 days to ensure accountability and justice. Of course, the Iranian government continues to resist any calls for accountability and justice, but we will continue to hold it to account, including on the international stage.

We have listed the IRGC Quds Force as a terrorist organization. We will continue to sanction the leadership of the IRGC as we

### Oral Questions

make sure that it is fully accountable for the crimes it is committing.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I asked a simple yes-or-no question.

The Prime Minister has as his primary job to protect our citizens. Fifty-five of them were murdered by this terrorist group, which shot their plane out of the sky, a civilian aircraft.

Does the Prime Minister believe that the group that fired that missile and killed our people is a terrorist group, yes or no?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have recognized that Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism. We have seen listed the IRGC Quds Force. We have just recently moved forward with strengthened sanctions against the IRGC leadership to ensure that they cannot find safe haven in Canada, but I will also say, having sat with families of the PS752 victims, it was not just 55 Canadian citizens. There were close to 150 or more people on their way to Canada, permanent residents, students, whom we also grieve for every single day and whom we stand with as we hold this Iranian government to account, and will continue to.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I asked a simple yes-or-no question.

The Prime Minister has had 1,001 days to think about the answer. His officials informed him that this group murdered our citizens, yet by failing to list the group as terrorists, he is allowing it to raise money, coordinate, plan, operate and recruit right here on Canadian soil. It is not banned from doing any of those things.

One last time, will the Prime Minister show some respect and actually answer a question? Is this a terrorist group, yes or no?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have clearly identified Iran as a state supporter of terrorism. We have moved forward with strong sanctions against the leadership and the responsible people in the IRGC to prevent them from benefiting from the crimes they commit or purchasing or holding property in Canada.

We will continue to stand up in support of the Iranian people, who are so bravely contesting and protesting against this bloodthirsty regime. The young women who are waving their hijabs in the face of these criminals and the strength that they are showing every single day in standing up for their rights is something that all Canadians stand with together.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**SPORTS**

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Hockey Canada set up not one but at least two funds to cover the costs associated with sexual misconduct cases. We can all agree that that is unacceptable.

Everyone in the House already unanimously agreed to support a Bloc Québécois motion last June calling for an independent inquiry into how Hockey Canada handles sexual misconduct complaints.

An independent inquiry would allow us to finally get to the bottom of this, as well as get some concrete recommendations that could apply to all sport federations.

Will the Prime Minister finally launch an independent inquiry, or does he want to continue to wait for the results of an internal investigation by a tone-deaf organization?

• (1505)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians all know full well that Hockey Canada's actions are absolutely unacceptable.

It is inconceivable that Hockey Canada officials think they can continue to operate. All federal funding has been suspended. In addition, I know that organizations like Hockey Quebec have already cut ties with Hockey Canada.

I think the only people who believe that Hockey Canada has any kind of future are the folks at Hockey Canada, because Canadians have completely lost faith in that organization. Hockey Canada officials need to wake up and they need to stop doing their job. They must be replaced—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I hear what the Prime Minister is saying, but his credibility is at stake.

As a side note, the Bloc Québécois would like to commend the leadership at Hockey Québec. They have cut all ties, including financial, with Hockey Canada. The hope is that this will put pressure on the organization to clean house from the top down.

The Prime Minister has to step up the pressure. In order to be credible, he must launch an independent, public inquiry into Hockey Canada's handling of sexual misconduct complaints. The top brass needs to know that everything they have done will be uncovered and made public.

I am urging the Prime Minister to act. If he wants to clean house and get things done, when will he launch a real independent investigation?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Hockey Canada no longer has any credibility or legitimacy. I say that as a prime minister, as a parent, and as a Canadian who is proud of our national winter sport.

We will always be very clear that Hockey Canada's actions have been unacceptable. The sooner they understand that it is time for them to get off the ice, the better for all our children who want to

continue to play hockey, but whose parents no longer trust the organizations that are connected to Hockey Canada.

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[English]

**DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government has pledged only a third of a probable over \$1 billion for the cleanup after hurricane Fiona. The residents of Cumberland—Colchester are calling our office every day to try to understand the process of obtaining funding. Once again, the government of inaction and no planning has no answer.

On the east coast, we are tough but people need this support now. When will the Prime Minister have a concrete plan for Atlantic Canadians?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to sit down with Premier Houston in Nova Scotia just yesterday to reassure him of how disaster assistance works in this country. Unfortunately, as a country we are getting better at it, whether it is because of wildfires or floods across the country.

The federal government is there to backstop up to 90%, in some cases, of the expenditures put out by the provinces on disasters like these ones. We will be there. We will be there to support Atlantic Canadians as I have said. We put forward \$300 million in funding for cases that are not covered and issues that are not covered by the DFAA. We will be there across the board to support Atlantic Canadians.

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Atlantic Canadians need help now, not two years from now.

The Prime Minister's sad, inadequate hurricane relief program would not even cover the cost of rebuilding wharves. If the Prime Minister had a fisheries minister, he would know that the most immediate problem is income lost for lobster fishermen in the Northumberland Strait.

That is because the season is over now and they cannot fish again until the winter fishery. Why is there no immediate emergency income relief support for fishermen in Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and New Brunswick?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know for a fact that all Canadians, and everyone in the House, stand united in our support for Atlantic Canadians right now. It is not a moment for partisan disagreement. It is a moment to be there for Canadians.

What I have said repeatedly to Atlantic Canadians and to their premiers is that we are there as partners. We are flowing money now. We will be flowing money for the years to come. The federal government is there to help rebuild. We will do everything necessary in order to get people's lives back in order. That is the promise I made directly to folks on the ground. That is a promise I am happy to repeat here in the House.

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister announced a third of the funding over twice the time needed to rebuild industries and infrastructure in the wake of Fiona's devastation. Small craft harbours alone need a half-billion dollars to rebuild and fortify, while fish harvesters need at least \$50 million to cover their losses and damages, not to mention what is needed to rebuild tourism and agriculture.

Why is the current Prime Minister letting down Atlantic Canadians who have put so much trust in him?

• (1510)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I got to sit down with people like Sean and Amy, who had the roof from a house two blocks away land on the side of their house. I talked to Barb, who lost her antique shop. I talked to Mitch, who saw his seafood shop completely devastated by rising waves, and I made a commitment that we would be there.

With my \$300-million announcement yesterday, we are announcing that we are going to be there right away, including for things that are not covered by the already existing disaster financial assistance agreement.

We will be there to fund the province's efforts to close to 90%. We will be there to help rebuild.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday we observed the day of action to raise awareness of the national crisis regarding missing and murdered indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Reports show that they are more likely to experience violence than any other Canadian. At yesterday's gathering on Parliament Hill, families and survivors called on our government to support their healing and justice initiatives.

Could the hon. Prime Minister update us on what is being done to end this crisis?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking the member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle for her question and her hard work.

Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people have the right to be safe in their communities, wherever they live. We will always stand with communities and families in responding to this crisis, and we will continue to work on concrete measures, while ensuring that our initiatives are trauma-informed and focused on those who are still suffering.

### Oral Questions

[English]

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is not enough to put our hands over our hearts, light up Parliament and say we stand with Zhina Mahsa Amini and the victims of flight PS752 and their families.

We know the Liberals are soft on crime. Now we know they are also soft on terrorism, as the Liberals continue to let IRGC agents plan, organize and raise money here in Canada. These are the same people who killed our people.

The Prime Minister is denying victims of Iran's brutal regime justice. Does he believe the IRGC is a terrorist organization, yes or no?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has some of the strongest sanctions against Iran of any country in the world. We have recognized Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism. We have moved forward with strong and meaningful sanctions against the leadership of the IRGC, and we will continue to do more.

Over the past 1,000 days we have stood with the families of the victims of PS752. We have worked with the international community, including the ICJ, ICAO and other places, to ensure accountability for Iran. We will not rest until this regime is held to account for its bloodthirsty, murderous actions.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the brutal murder of Zhina Mahsa Amini, the massacre of flight PS752 and the long list of human rights violations of the IRGC requires more than just symbolic sanctions. The IRGC is a terrorist organization that brutalizes Iranians and citizens of other countries. It is currently allowed to organize and raise money here in Canada.

Once again, does the Prime Minister believe that the IRGC is a terrorist organization, yes or no?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has some of the strongest sanctions in the world against the Iranian regime. We have continued to recognize Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism and we will continue to ensure that the IRGC leadership does not find a safe haven for its money, its properties or itself in Canada. We know we need to continue to do more and we will, as Canada and people around the world stand with the girls and women in Iran who are standing up against this regime in memory of Mahsa Amini, in memory of the PS752 victims and in memory of all those this bloodthirsty regime has murdered.

• (1515)

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on January 8, 2020, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps shot down a civilian airline, flight 752, killing 55 Canadian citizens and 30 residents of this country. My question for the Prime Minister is very simple: Does he believe that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is a terrorist organization, yes or no?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the IRGC is an arm of the Iranian military. Iran is a country that we have recognized as a state sponsor of terrorism. We have continued to move forward on strong sanctions against IRGC leadership to ensure they cannot find safe haven in Canada and cannot find a safe place for their money or their fundraising in Canada.

We will continue to work with the international community to get justice for the victims of PS752 and support for the families to hold this murderous regime to account.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, extreme weather events, hurricanes, floods and droughts are taking a toll on our farmers' mental health. Many of them find it difficult to ask for help.

This is Mental Illness Awareness Week, and we need to talk about it. We also have to recognize that the pandemic affected many groups that were already marginalized, such as youth, women, indigenous communities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. We need to do more.

Can the Prime Minister tell us what the government will be doing to support Canadians' mental health?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Pontiac for her important question and her hard work.

Mental health care must be treated as an integral part of our universal health care system. That is why we invested in a national suicide prevention service in crisis centres across the country. We are getting ready to launch the 988 line next year. Our government will keep working with all our partners to improve mental health support services available to Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

[English]

**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, indigenous families and communities across Turtle Island grieved and demanded answers for their missing loved ones. Families have been calling for justice and urgent action from the government.

Instead of doing everything they can to ensure that no more lives are lost, the Liberals have been doing only the bare minimum. They have spent only a fraction of the funding they promised for violence-prevention initiatives and have barely implemented the calls for justice from the MMIWG2S report.

The Liberals have been in power now for seven years. When will they finally start delivering the justice indigenous women, girls and two-spirit folks deserve?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our hearts remain with survivors and families of missing and murdered indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Addressing this ongoing violence requires living up to our goals as a country and living up to all the calls for justice.

We are taking a whole-of-government approach, supported by an over \$2-billion investment in concrete measures to keep people safe and a close to \$2-billion investment to support indigenous housing needs.

We understand that there is always more to do. We will continue to work urgently on it alongside indigenous people.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**SPORTS**

**Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, this week we learned that Hockey Canada has not one, but two funds for handling cases of sexual assault. These funds are built from young players' registration fees. Despite the fact that every member from every political party is appalled and offended, and despite all the actions that have already been taken, the directors and executives do not seem to be getting the message.

Can the Prime Minister speak for all Canadians and officially, here in the House, call for all the Hockey Canada directors and executives to step down so that a real culture change can begin at this organization?

*Routine Proceedings*

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. As Canadians, we are all frustrated and shocked by Hockey Canada's behaviour and by its insensitivity to the real concerns of Canadians, parents and survivors across the country.

That is why Hockey Canada has lost the trust not only of our government, not only of Canadian parents, but also of other affiliated organizations such as Hockey Québec. I know that in the coming days, more organizations will say enough is enough and will stop doing business with Hockey Canada. Maybe then Hockey Canada will realize that it is time to get off the ice.

\* \* \*

• (1520)

**POINTS OF ORDER**

ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

[*English*]

We have strong, capable women ministers, and the member for South Shore—St. Margarets is saying that we do not have a fisheries minister. I am shocked.

**The Speaker:** I am afraid that this is not a point of order. That is more debate, so we are going to let that rest.

The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is rising on a point of order.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising just to suggest that the Standing Orders say we must not speak disrespectfully of each other here as members. I am not questioning your ruling, but in light of Standing Order 16, I think that might have been within the rubric of a point of order.

**The Speaker:** I think the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands has a point and it is a good point of order.

I just want to remind everyone that when we are referring to each other, we should do so with respect and dignity so that we can keep decorum in this chamber and have Canadians respect the work we do for them.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[*English*]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

HEALTH

The House resumed from October 4 consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:20 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, October 4, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the third report of the Standing Committee on Health.

[*Translation*]

Call in the members.

• (1530)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 184*)

**YEAS**

Members

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Aboultaif                       | Aitchison                            |
| Albas                           | Aldag                                |
| Alghabra                        | Ali                                  |
| Allison                         | Anandasangaree                       |
| Angus                           | Arnold                               |
| Arseneault                      | Arya                                 |
| Ashton                          | Atwin                                |
| Bachrach                        | Badawey                              |
| Bains                           | Baker                                |
| Baldinelli                      | Barlow                               |
| Barrett                         | Barron                               |
| Barsalou-Duval                  | Battiste                             |
| Beaulieu                        | Beech                                |
| Bennett                         | Benzen                               |
| Bergen                          | Bergeron                             |
| Berthold                        | Bérubé                               |
| Bezan                           | Bibeau                               |
| Bittle                          | Blair                                |
| Blanchet                        | Blanchette-Joncas                    |
| Blaney                          | Block                                |
| Blois                           | Boissonnault                         |
| Boulerice                       | Bradford                             |
| Bragdon                         | Brassard                             |
| Brière                          | Brock                                |
| Brunelle-Duceppe                | Calkins                              |
| Cannings                        | Caputo                               |
| Carr                            | Carrie                               |
| Casey                           | Chabot                               |
| Chagger                         | Chahal                               |
| Chambers                        | Champagne                            |
| Champoux                        | Chatel                               |
| Chen                            | Chiang                               |
| Chong                           | Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek) |
| Collins (Victoria)              | Cooper                               |
| Cormier                         | Coteau                               |
| Dabrusin                        | Dalton                               |
| Damoff                          | Dancho                               |
| Davidson                        | Davies                               |
| DeBellefeuille                  | Deltell                              |
| d'Entremont                     | Desbiens                             |
| Desilets                        | Desjarlais                           |
| Dhillon                         | Diab                                 |
| Doherty                         | Dong                                 |
| Dowdall                         | Dreeshen                             |
| Drouin                          | Dubourg                              |
| Duclos                          | Duguid                               |
| Duncan (Etobicoke North)        | Dzerowicz                            |
| Ehsassi                         | El-Khoury                            |
| Ellis                           | Erskine-Smith                        |
| Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster) | Falk (Provencher)                    |
| Fast                            | Fergus                               |
| Ferreri                         | Fillmore                             |
| Findlay                         | Fisher                               |
| Fonseca                         | Fortier                              |
| Fortin                          | Fragiskatos                          |
| Fraser                          | Freeland                             |
| Fry                             | Gaheer                               |
| Gallant                         | Gameau                               |
| Garon                           | Garrison                             |
| Gaudreau                        | Généreux                             |
| Genuis                          | Gérretsen                            |
| Gill                            | Gladau                               |

*Private Members' Business*

Godin  
Gould  
Gray  
Guilbeault  
Hallan  
Hardie  
Hoback  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Ien  
Jeneroux  
Jones  
Julian  
Kelloway  
Khalid  
Kitchen  
Koutrakis  
Kramp-Neuman  
Kusie  
Kwan  
Lalonde  
Lamoureux  
Larouche  
Lauzon  
LeBlanc  
Lehoux  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
Lloyd  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKenzie  
Maguire  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathysen  
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McLeod  
Melillo  
Mendicino  
Michaud  
Moore  
Morrice  
Morrissey  
Murray  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Patzner  
Pauzé  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Powlowski  
Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rood  
Sahota  
Saks  
Savard-Tremblay  
Scheer  
Schmale  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Shields  
Sidhu (Brampton East)

Goodridge  
Gourde  
Green  
Hajdu  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Holland  
Hughes  
Hutchings  
Idlout  
Jaczek  
Johns  
Jowhari  
Kayabaga  
Kelly  
Khera  
Kmiec  
Kram  
Kurek  
Kusmierczyk  
Lake  
Lambropoulos  
Lapointe  
Lattanzio  
Lawrence  
Lebouthillier  
Lemire  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lightbound  
Lobb  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacGregor  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Maloney  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
Mazier  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLean  
McPherson  
Mendès  
Miao  
Miller  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Motz  
Muys  
Nater  
Normandin  
Oliphant  
O'Toole  
Paul-Hus  
Perkins  
Petipas Taylor  
Poilievre  
Qualtrough  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Ruff  
Sajjan  
Sarai  
Scarpaleggia  
Schiefke  
Seeback  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Shipley  
Sidhu (Brampton South)

Simard  
Singh  
Sorbara  
Steinley  
Stewart  
Strahl  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Therrien  
Thompson  
Tolmie  
Trudel  
Uppal  
Van Bynen  
Van Popta  
Vandenbeld  
Vidal  
Viersen  
Villemure  
Vis  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Weiler  
Williams  
Yip  
Zarrillo  
Zuberi— 323

Sinclair-Desgagné  
Small  
Soroka  
Ste-Marie  
St-Onge  
Stubbs  
Tassi  
Thériault  
Thomas  
Tochor  
Trudeau  
Turnbull  
Valdez  
van Koeverden  
Vandal  
Vecchio  
Vien  
Vignola  
Virani  
Vuong  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Wilkinson  
Williamson  
Zahid  
Zimmer

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Epp  
Martel

Joly  
Ng— 4

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

● (1535)

[*English*]**FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS ACT**

The House resumed from September 28 consideration of the motion that Bill C-237, An Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act and the Canada Health Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-237 under Private Members' Business.

● (1545)

[*Translation*]

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

*(Division No. 185)*

YEAS

Members

Barsalou-Duval  
Bergeron  
Blanchet

Beaulieu  
Bérubé  
Blanchette-Joncas

*Private Members' Business*

Brunelle-Duceppe  
Champoux  
Desbiens  
Fortin  
Gaudreau  
Larouche  
Michaud  
Pauzé  
Plamondon  
Simard  
Ste-Marie  
Therrien  
Vignola

Chabot  
DeBellefeuille  
Desilets  
Garon  
Gill  
Lemire  
Normandin  
Perron  
Savard-Tremblay  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Thériault  
Trudel  
Villemure— 32

Gould  
Gray  
Guilbeault  
Hallan  
Hardie  
Hoback  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Ien  
Jeneroux  
Jones  
Julian  
Kelloway  
Khalid  
Kitchen  
Koutrakis  
Kramp-Neuman  
Kusie  
Kwan  
Lalonde  
Lamoureux  
Lattanzio  
Lawrence  
Lebouthillier  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
Lloyd  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKenzie  
Maguire  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathysen  
May (Saanch—Gulf Islands)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McLeod  
Melillo  
Mendicino  
Miller  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Motz  
Muys  
Nater  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Patzner  
Perkins  
Poilievre  
Qualtrough  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Ruff  
Sajjan  
Sarai  
Schieffe  
Seeback  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Shipley  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Small  
Soroka  
Stewart  
Strahl  
Sudds

Gourde  
Green  
Hajdu  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Holland  
Hughes  
Hutchings  
Idlout  
Jaczek  
Johns  
Jowhari  
Kayabaga  
Kelly  
Khera  
Kmiec  
Kram  
Kurek  
Kusmierczyk  
Lake  
Lambropoulos  
Lapointe  
Lauzon  
LeBlanc  
Lehoux  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lightbound  
Lobb  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacGregor  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Maloney  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
Mazier  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLean  
McPherson  
Mendès  
Miao  
Moore  
Morrice  
Morrisey  
Murray  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
Oliphant  
O'Toole  
Paul-Hus  
Petipas Taylor  
Powlowski  
Rays  
Reid  
Richards  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rood  
Sahota  
Saks  
Scarpaleggia  
Schmale  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Shields  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Singh  
Sorbara  
Steinley  
St-Onge  
Stubbs  
Tassi

## NAYS

## Members

Aboultaif  
Albas  
Alghabra  
Allison  
Angus  
Arseneault  
Ashton  
Bachrach  
Bains  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Battiste  
Bennett  
Bergen  
Bezan  
Bittle  
Blaney  
Blois  
Boulerice  
Bragdon  
Brière  
Calkins  
Caputo  
Carrie  
Chagger  
Chambers  
Chatel  
Chiang  
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)  
Cooper  
Coteau  
Dalton  
Dancho  
Davies  
d'Entremont  
Dhaliwal  
Diab  
Dong  
Dreeshen  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Erskine-Smith  
Falk (Provencher)  
Fergus  
Fillmore  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fraser  
Fry  
Gallant  
Garrison  
Généreux  
Gerretsen  
Godin

Aitchison  
Aldag  
Ali  
Anandasangaree  
Arnold  
Arya  
Atwin  
Badawey  
Baker  
Barlow  
Barron  
Beech  
Benzen  
Berthold  
Bibeau  
Blair  
Block  
Boissonnault  
Bradford  
Brassard  
Brock  
Cannings  
Carr  
Casey  
Chahal  
Champagne  
Chen  
Chong  
Collins (Victoria)  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
Damoff  
Davidson  
Deltell  
Desjarlais  
Dhillon  
Doherty  
Dowdall  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Ehsassi  
Ellis  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Ferrerri  
Findlay  
Fonseca  
Fragiskatos  
Freeland  
Gaheer  
Garneau  
Gazan  
Genuis  
Gladu  
Goodridge

*Private Members' Business*

Taylor Roy	Thomas
Thompson	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudeau
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Virani	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Weiler
Wilkinson	Williams
Williamson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zimmer	Zuberi — 292

## PAIRED

## Members

Epp	Joly
Martel	Ng — 4

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

\* \* \*

## PROTECTION OF FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE ACT

The House resumed from September 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-230, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (intimidation of health care professionals), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-230 under Private Members' Business.

● (1600)

[*English*]

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

(Division No. 186)

## YEAS

## Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Ellis	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Gallant	Généreux
Genuis	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray

Hallan	Hoback
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lake	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mazier	McCaulley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perkins
Poilievre	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shipley	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson
Zimmer — 115	

## NAYS

## Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bennett	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi

*Private Members' Business*

**PAIRED**

Members

Epp Joly  
Martel Ng—4

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion defeated.

\* \* \*

**COPYRIGHT ACT**

The House resumed from October 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-244, An Act to amend the Copyright Act (diagnosis, maintenance and repair), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred record division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-244 under Private Members' Business.

● (1610)

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

*(Division No. 187)*

**YEAS**

Members

Aboultarif	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arnold
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bennett	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Bragdon	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab

El-Khoury	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lemire
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saainich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Medicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Noormohamed	Normandin
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Pauzé
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Plamondon	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Ste-Marie
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koevorden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 208

*Private Members' Business*

Doherty	Dong	Patzer	Paul-Hus
Dowdall	Dreeshen	Pauzé	Perkins
Drouin	Dubourg	Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Duclos	Duguid	Plamondon	Poilievre
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Rayes	Redekopp
Ellis	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Reid	Rempel Garner
Falk (Provencher)	Fast	Richards	Roberts
Fergus	Ferreri	Robillard	Rodriguez
Fillmore	Findlay	Rogers	Romanado
Fisher	Fonseca	Rood	Ruff
Fortier	Fortin	Sahota	Sajjan
Fragiskatos	Fraser	Saks	Sarai
Freeland	Fry	Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Gaheer	Gallant	Scheer	Schiefke
Garneau	Garon	Schmale	Seeback
Garrison	Gaudreau	Serré	Sgro
Gazan	Généreux	Shanahan	Sheehan
Genuis	Gerretsen	Shields	Shiple
Gill	Gladu	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Godin	Goodridge	Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Gould	Gourde	Singh	Small
Gray	Green	Sorbara	Soroka
Guilbeault	Hajdu	Steinley	Ste-Marie
Hallan	Hanley	Stewart	St-Onge
Hardie	Hepfner	Strahl	Stubbs
Hoback	Holland	Sudds	Tassi
Housefather	Hughes	Taylor Roy	Thériault
Hussen	Hutchings	Therrien	Thomas
Iacono	Idlout	Thompson	Tochor
Ien	Jaczek	Tolmie	Trudeau
Jeneroux	Johns	Trudel	Turnbull
Jones	Jowhari	Uppal	Valdez
Julian	Kayabaga	Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Kelloway	Kelly	Van Popta	Vandal
Khalid	Khera	Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Kitchen	Kmiec	Vidal	Vien
Koutrakis	Kram	Viersen	Vignola
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek	Villemure	Virani
Kusie	Kusmierczyk	Vis	Vuong
Kwan	Lake	Wagantall	Warkentin
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Waugh	Webber
Lamoureux	Lapointe	Weiler	Wilkinson
Larouche	Lattanzio	Williams	Williamson
Lauzon	Lawrence	Yip	Zahid
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Zarrillo	Zimmer
Lehoux	Lemire	Zuberi — 323	
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)		
Liepert	Lightbound		
Lloyd	Lobb		
Long	Longfield		
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)		
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor		
MacKenzie	MacKinnon (Gatineau)		
Maguire	Maloney		
Martinez Ferrada	Masse		
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)		
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier		
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)		
McGuinty	McKay	Nil	
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean		
McLeod	McPherson		
Melillo	Mendès		
Mendicino	Miao		
Michaud	Miller		
Moore	Morantz	Epp	Joly
Morrice	Morrison	Martel	Ng — 4
Morrissey	Motz		
Murray	Muys		
Naqvi	Nater		
Noormohamed	Normandin		
O'Connell	Oliphant		
O'Regan	O'Toole		

NAYS

PAIRED

Members

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

Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology.

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

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, a report of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the meeting with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD, and the third part of the 2022 ordinary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, from June 20 to June 24, 2022.

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• (1615)

### PETITIONS

#### GENDER PARITY

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the petitioners for whom I am honoured to stand to present a petition are calling for gender parity, particularly in this place, the House of Commons. Since 50% of our population is female but only 30% of MPs are women, obviously we are not properly represented in the House. We are a long way from the top of the list of parliaments around the world that properly reflect the participation of women.

The sustainable development goals, which Canada has signed onto, specifically call for, in goal 5, gender parity and empowerment of all women and girls.

The petitioners have a novel approach. They think, and propose to the House of Commons for our consideration, that only parties that have recognized the importance of full gender parity and have gender parity reflected in their slate of candidates in the upcoming election should be able to receive official party status. By tying electoral success to the representation of women in this place, the petitioners believe we can finally confirm publicly, and make steps toward, reaching the goal of gender parity in the House of Commons by the year 2030.

#### MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition today from many Canadians who are concerned about the lack of conscience rights for medical professionals. They strongly support the aim of Bill C-230, so it is truly disappointing that the Liberal government does not respect the rights of many.

As I said in my speech on this matter last week, I truly believe that as a society we must find a way to give Canadians something without taking something away from others. The protection of conscience rights does just this by ensuring lawmakers can, in good conscience, give access to certain medical procedures without unjustly compromising the existing freedoms exercised by others.

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I too rise today to present a petition calling on the Parliament of Canada to enshrine in the Criminal Code the protection of conscience rights for physicians and other medical professionals.

### Routine Proceedings

Of course, Canadians are calling for protection because there are incidents of coercion or intimidation with regard to medical assistance in dying and making sure that those services are provided. Not every practitioner should be obliged or forced to make this recommendation, so Canadians are calling for their protection going forward.

The petitioners are asking that subsection 2(a) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which protects freedom of conscience, be respected in this regard.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

The first is a petition calling on the Parliament of Canada to enshrine in the Criminal Code the protection of conscience rights for physicians and other medical professionals regarding coercion or intimidation over participating in medical assistance in dying.

The petitioners note that coercion, intimidation or other forms of pressure intended to force physicians and health care workers to become parties in assistance in dying is a violation of the fundamental freedom of conscience, and that subsection 2(a) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects freedom of conscience.

#### CHEMICAL BAN

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from constituents who are concerned about the number of gophers or Richardson's ground squirrels that are devastating agricultural lands.

The petitioners are petitioning Health Canada to review the fact that it is banning the use of strychnine, especially while there is no suitable replacement for this important tool that farmers have for controlling the population of Richardson's ground squirrels. When it is used properly, strychnine is the most effective, efficient and economical means to deal with this particular issue.

#### MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to follow gophers, but I rise today to present a petition on behalf of 90 Canadians calling on the Government of Canada to enshrine in the Criminal Code the protection of conscience rights, for physicians and other medical professionals, from coercion or intimidation to participate in euthanasia.

Petitioners note that coercion, intimidation and other forms of pressure intended to force physicians and health care workers to become parties in euthanasia are a violation of their fundamental freedom of conscience. They also note that section 2(a) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects freedom of conscience.

*Routine Proceedings*

• (1620)

## PAROLE ELIGIBILITY

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present two petitions today.

With the first petition the petitioners are expressing concern with the recent Supreme Court decision of Bissonnette, in which the court struck down consecutive parole ineligibility periods, a law passed by the previous Harper Conservative government to ensure that the worst of the worst killers never see the light of day. They note that the government has tools at its disposal and are calling on the government to use those tools, most specifically the invocation of the notwithstanding clause, to override what they consider to be an unjust decision.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I wish to present is one in which petitioners are calling on the Parliament of Canada to enshrine in the Criminal Code the protection of conscience rights for physicians and other medical professionals who are being subjected to coercion and intimidation to participate in medical assistance in dying. Such a law would be consistent with protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed to all Canadians under section 2(a) of the charter, that being freedom of conscience, which is being infringed upon. It is disappointing that just a few moments ago the government voted down a bill that would have protected those rights in law.

## OPIOIDS

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I table a petition on behalf of constituents of mine from Courtenay. They are stating that over 30,000 Canadians have died since 2016 due to preventable drug poisoning resulting from a toxic drug supply. They say that those who died as a result of the preventable drug toxicity crisis were loved and valued citizens of this country. They were children, siblings, spouses, parents, family members, clients and friends. They state that our current drug policy has proven to be ineffective in the prevention of substance use and exacerbates its harmful effects. They say that the war on drugs has resulted in widespread stigma toward those who use controlled substances, that the war on drugs has allowed organized crime to be the sole provider of substances, and that problematic substance use is a health issue and is not resolved through criminalizing personal possession and consumption.

They call on the government to reform drug policy, to decriminalize simple possession and to provide a path for the expungement of conviction records for those convicted of simple possession. They ask the government, with urgency, to implement a health-based national strategy for providing access to a regulated and safer supply of drugs and to expand trauma-informed treatment, recovery and harm-reduction services and public education and awareness campaigns throughout Canada.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition in support of Bill C-230.

The petitioners, who come from across Canada, are concerned about doctors and health care professionals who might be coerced

into engaging or supporting euthanasia against their conscience. They want these conscience rights and second options to be protected. The petitioners note that doctors deserve freedom of conscience and that the Canadian Medical Association has confirmed that conscience protection would not be a limit to their use. The petitioners also describe how, during the Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying, witnesses stated that conscience rights should be protected by the government in the response to the Carter decision.

The petitioners are calling on Parliament to enshrine in the Criminal Code protection of conscience rights for physicians and health care workers from coercion or intimidation, so that they would not have to provide or refer for assisted suicide or euthanasia.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have only one petition to present today.

I am pleased to be presenting a petition in support of an initiative from my colleague that we just voted on. Unfortunately it was voted down, but I was pleased that all Conservative members stood strong in support of protecting conscience rights.

This petition recognizes conscience protections that exist in our charter and, at the same time, the reality that in certain provinces, substantively, conscience is not actually protected, in that physicians may be forced to refer for or provide services that go against their deeply held conscientious beliefs. Whether those beliefs have their origin in a faith tradition or they do not have their origin in a faith tradition, protection of conscience should be available for all, regardless of the origin or philosophical basis of those beliefs.

Petitioners want to call on Parliament to enshrine in the Criminal Code the protection of conscience for physicians and health care workers from coercion or intimidation to refer for or provide assisted suicide or euthanasia.

\* \* \*

• (1625)

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE

**The Speaker:** The Chair has notice of a request for an emergency debate from the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have given notice, under Standing Order 52(2), seeking leave today, Wednesday, October 5, to request an emergency debate on the mental health and substance use crisis in Canada.

Yesterday, the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction released a joint report on the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of Canadians, which detailed some alarming findings.

According to polling conducted for the report, 35% of respondents reported moderate to severe mental health concerns. It also found that fewer than one in three people with current mental health concerns and fewer than one in four with problematic substance use are accessing services. The report identified the key barriers to accessing services: financial constraints, not having readily available help, not knowing how and where to get help, and long wait lists.

The report identified financial concerns as a top stressor during the pandemic and discussed the links of income and unemployment with mental health concerns. With the rapidly rising cost of living and speculation of an impending recession, there is a real risk that the mental health and substance use crisis will worsen in the months ahead.

We also know that medical professionals have been raising the alarm for months that our health care system is on the brink of collapse. As we head into colder months, when the burden on hospitals and health care workers is expected to increase, a worsening mental health and substance use crisis will only push our health care system closer to the edge.

The mental health crisis has been referred to as a “parallel pandemic”, but Parliament has not had a debate on how to respond. As such, I believe an urgent debate by parliamentarians is warranted on the steps that should be taken to support the mental health of Canadians and reduce the social and economic impacts of this crisis.

## SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni for his intervention. However, I am not satisfied that his request meets the requirements of the Standing Orders at this time.

## Government Orders

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## COST OF LIVING RELIEF ACT, NO. 1

The House resumed from October 4 consideration of the motion that C-30, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (temporary enhancement to the Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax credit), be read the third time and passed.

**The Speaker:** I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded division, Government Orders will be extended by 50 minutes.

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Northern Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to rise and speak on third reading of Bill C-30. Bill C-30 addresses the cost of living for many Canadians by looking at targeted relief programs. In this bill and the previous bill, that includes tax relief by increasing the GST credit and the HST rebate for low-income earners or those whose incomes are under the \$39,000 threshold per year, and also the implementation of dental care benefits.

We know on this side of the House that Canadians are having a difficult time right now. Many of them are certainly feeling the rising cost of living, no matter where they live in this country. Those living in the north are probably seeing those costs escalate at a higher rate and by a larger margin, as many others in northern Canada can attest, but it is happening throughout the country, whether it is higher food prices or higher prices on other commodities, especially building materials, for example. I have heard so many people talk about not being able to do maintenance and repairs on their homes because of the doubling and tripling costs of building materials.

I have heard many stories from families living on low incomes, who are having difficulty meeting the food security needs within their families. The one we hear quite often is the rising cost of fuel services, vehicles and the purchasing of all commodities in people's lives. For those who travel because they have kids who participate in many events across the country, in sports, in theatre and in student exchanges, participation in all of these things is costing more every single day.

*Government Orders*

We know that affordability is getting more difficult for many families, but we also know there is a limit as a government in terms of what we can do. We have introduced targeted measures that we hope will make it a little easier for so many families in this country. Those targeted measures will be an investment of over \$12 billion in new supports for families.

One of them that I want to talk about today is the doubling of the GST credit for six months, as is proposed in this bill. By doing that, we are allowing many families with lower incomes to have extra money that will enable them to meet some of the demands and needs for household costs they are currently having to deal with. I know, for example, there are many families across my riding, especially many seniors, who are on the low-income spectrum and having to run their homes and families. I know this will make a huge difference for them. Having that extra money coming in over that six-month period will certainly help them get to where they need to be.

The investment in the HST rebate program, which will give extra money to low-income families, will mean an extra \$2.5 billion of investments by the Government of Canada that will go to low-income families and seniors who need them. This will help them through this critical period of time, and it is a necessary investment by the government right now. I know we often take tremendous criticism on this side of the House for investing in programs that are supporting food security, heat security, children and families, but we do not make any apologies for this, because we know that in the time we are in, this financial assistance is totally necessary.

I hear from so many seniors in my riding who live on low incomes and are experiencing challenges with the higher food prices and with the ordinary cost of running their homes. I know this plan of doubling the GST credit for the next six months is going to make a huge difference to them.

• (1630)

The other thing we are doing with the cost of living relief act is that we would bring in the Canada dental benefit. This is a benefit that would allow many families who have no health insurance coverage for dental care to get the dental services they need for their children under the age of 12.

This is a program we would phase in over the next couple of years, but the first phase of the program, which would be implemented immediately, would provide the benefit to Canadians who do not have dental insurance policies, have an income of less than \$90,000 annually and have children under the age of 12 years old. Those children would be able to access dental services as a result of this legislation. At this point, it would specifically be for children under the age of 12 in families who do not have dental care and an income of \$90,000 a year or less.

Under the Canada dental benefit, direct payments would be made over a two-year period, which would allow people to claim back up to \$1,300 per child for dental care services. This would start this year.

The next phase of the program would ensure seniors have dental coverage and that other Canadians have the coverage they need for dental care, depending on their income levels. It is expected that

under this particular program over 500,000 Canadian children would benefit. Nearly \$1 billion has been targeted to provide this particular service.

I know a lot of people are wondering how the benefit would work, how it would be paid out and how long it would take for the first stage of the government's plan to deliver coverage for families and get to the next level of care, which would be for seniors. I want to confirm the provinces and territories and private industry have all been engaged with regard to timelines, the longevity of the program and how it would roll out. The government remains committed to implementing this dental care program.

This is going to have a huge impact on many families and children. I remember growing up in the north in a community with no dental services, and we had to fly out for those services. If a child would go to a hospital with a toothache, the first thing they would do is pluck the tooth and not provide any other dental care.

We have moved way beyond that in Canada. Looking after the dental needs of kids helps prevent other diseases and illnesses. I know I am going to run out of time but I would like to tell a very short story. A lady was having many problems with her back, and doctors could not figure out what it was. They eventually determined she had a disease of her teeth and gums that was affecting all her body and causing infections that were causing so many other illnesses. It just goes to show that, if a person looks after their teeth and their dental hygiene, it can provide much better health outcomes for children and for all people in the population.

I am really happy to support the bill, to support the increase in HST for families who are earning \$39,000 and under, and to support dental care for kids under 12 in Canada. These are good moves that help with affordability for many families. I hope my colleagues will support the bill.

• (1635)

**Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I have looked at parts of this, I am curious to know how this bill would actually have a positive impact on the underprivileged, those who have a limited income, when the department and the act say that tax filings are going to be used from the CRA to make the determination of who gets this funding. Reports I have been seeing indicate the concern around this bill is that those individuals who really need it will not get it because they are not going to be filing CRA income tax returns.

I want to know what the parliamentary secretary thinks of that particular concern that Canadians have raised.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Mr. Speaker, first of all, in order to provide the HST or GST supplement to Canadians, they have to be qualified for it. That means they have to be under certain income thresholds in order to be eligible. Obviously, the real place to go is to check with the CRA as to what their last income tax earnings were. It will be based on that.

What I can say is that, from our projections, this will be able to support about 11 million Canadians with regard to additional income under the GST program.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

This is a fairly simple bill that gets right to the point. I think it is a good measure that will in fact give low-income Canadians a break in this time of inflation.

My colleague spoke of seniors in her speech. We know that retired seniors are on a fixed income and that those who have a very low income receive the guaranteed income supplement. Those who applied for the CERB or the CRB last year will receive reduced GIS payments this year.

I would like to know if my colleague thinks it would be a good idea not to reduce this benefit payment so seniors can get a break.

[*English*]

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to seniors that is a really good question. I think we have all had to deal with this over the last few months.

First of all, for any seniors who are under the threshold, in terms of what their supplementary allowances provide them in Canada based on their incomes, it did not change. While there was extra money paid out and extra benefits paid out, most of the people who were impacted were people who had other smaller pensions coming in from the side, so their cumulative income reached a different threshold level with that bump in payment.

What I can say is that very few seniors in this country who are dependent upon supplementary benefits have any room at all to make adjustments in their budgets. Their incomes are very fixed and they have very little room in terms of other escalating costs that may be happening in their lives. I think increasing the GST for many of these people will be a tremendous help for them, going forward.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I certainly send strength to Newfoundlanders as they rebuild from hurricane Fiona. We, as New Democrats, will be there to support my colleague's efforts as well.

It is great in this House to see the Liberals come on board and support the doubling of the GST tax credit. Even the Conservatives and the Bloc, all parties, are getting on board so this is an exciting moment. My colleague talked about dental care, which she voted against a year ago. It is great to hear the Liberals get on board with dental care. We need a health care system that is head to toe.

Mental health is health. Just yesterday it was announced that 35% of the respondents to the Mental Health Commission survey, people across Canada, said they had mental health challenges. One out of three did not even access care because they could not afford it or could not get access to it.

Will our colleague tell us when they will roll out the \$4.5-billion mental health transfer that Liberals promised Canadians to help them get the help that they need.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my colleague but I want to correct him on something. If he is referring to the dental bill that came forward in the House by the former member for St. John's East, I did support that motion. I wanted to correct that for the record.

I also want to say that I support the bill that is here today. I supported the motion at the time because I know the need for dental care in the riding that I represent and in many other northern and rural ridings across Canada. I know how important it is for families to have that kind of treatment for their children, and I am happy to support the bill that is before us today.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention that I will be sharing my time with my esteemed and talented colleague from Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix.

We have been living through unprecedented times for a little over two years now. Certainly, this is not the first pandemic. The last one was a hundred years ago. Of course, this is not the first war humans have experienced. Moreover, this is not the first inflationary crisis we have lived through. However, it is the first time that those three elements have overlapped, and during the communication age no less.

The pandemic seems to have been the catalyst that exposed global weaknesses in the supply chain, dependence on foreign production and flaws in long-term political vision. This was compounded by the war in Ukraine, yet that is not the only war being fought. There are other wars in other countries, in different forms, with serious repercussions for the people. However, the war in Ukraine is putting additional pressure on supply chains, especially agricultural and food supply chains. That pressure is aggravating situations that were already tragic in a number of countries, such as those in Africa.

In Canada, that pressure is felt in the form of higher prices, such as input prices for farmers and consumer prices for ordinary Canadians. I could cite a long list of elements that led to the current inflationary crisis, given that inflation is a fairly complex phenomenon that is never caused by only one or two factors.

### *Government Orders*

Just the same, before I begin, I would like to highlight one other factor that increases the pressure on Canadian households. The rise in the cost of housing, whether one is purchasing or renting, is not inconsequential. It is the result of an increase in population, both in Quebec and in Canada, and of a decrease in the amount of social and affordable housing being built. I am talking about housing such as co-operatives, low-income housing and other models that can be found in Quebec, in particular.

Social housing allows low-income people to spend less than 30% of their income on housing, while still living in an environment where they can receive services and support, and where they can participate in a rewarding community life.

To recap, I would say that the current inflationary situation has a direct link to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. As such, it is important to implement solutions with a positive long-term vision. We need solutions that are sustainable and predictable, but also flexible.

We must not forget that the current situation is having repercussions now and that it will continue for a long time if nothing is done. It will have repercussions on the health care system, on the workplace and in community settings.

While we all aspire to reach the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, in other words, meeting our need for accomplishment through self-actualization, by achieving our full potential and our creativity, the current situation directly attacks the first two steps of the pyramid that are physiological needs, or basic needs, and the need for security.

A society has everything to gain by ensuring that the majority of its population reaches the last steps of Maslow's pyramid, the need for esteem and the need for accomplishment. I say the majority because in a person's life there is always a moment or a situation that brings them back to the physiological needs, the need for affection and the need for security.

However, in a strong society, that person can overcome adversity to reach the upper levels, esteem and self-actualization, again. Society has everything to gain, because people who meet their need for esteem and self-actualization tend to be engaged in all the spheres of their lives, professional, social and family. They are happier and healthier, and they take better care of themselves and their loved ones. That directly relieves some of the strain on the health care system and positively impacts workplaces and, by extension, GDP and productivity.

In addition, if we spend less on health care, we can spend more on the second-biggest item in any government's budget: education. A population that achieves esteem and self-actualization is a population that strongly values all forms of education and invests in its education system to enable future generations to achieve esteem and self-actualization too.

• (1645)

The pandemic first attacked the middle part of the hierarchy, in other words, love and belonging. Think of the children and seniors who felt lonely and isolated. Think of the adults who get their sense of self from their jobs or their sporting activities, but they too found themselves stuck at home alone.

After that, the pandemic and inflation combined to attack people's safety needs and essential needs. Here are the repercussions of that: People are exhausted and stressed by the fear of not being able to make ends meet; children are just as anxious because they sense their parents' stress better than anyone else, even though kids try to hide their stress and its causes from their parents. Parents usually try to preserve their kids' innocence and the beauty and generosity of childhood.

The current solution of increasing the GST credit alleviates the stress of people who face the prospect of not being able to meet their basic needs. The fact remains that it is a temporary measure, yet it can do some good, especially as people must purchase necessities for the approaching winter season. However, the current situation will have short-, medium- and long-term impacts. We must have a medium- to long-term vision when implementing solutions. If not, there will be dramatic repercussions for the health and education systems, work environments, communities and community organizations. We cannot let people become overwhelmed by the stress of seeking the means to meet basic needs and the need for safety.

I will come back once again to Maslow's hierarchy. To make it possible for people to reach the higher levels of the pyramid by meeting their physiological needs, safety needs, need for love and belonging, we must have a holistic vision and work on the root causes of the problems in order to find lasting solutions. I would like to humbly and simply list some potential solutions. Unfortunately, I do so without explaining them, but we could talk about this further. I simply want to provide some food for thought.

Since 2016, 100,000 social housing units should have been built every year, but they were not. We need to increase funding so we can make up for some of that delay, which has a direct impact on the current price of housing. Then, we must maintain the funding so that such "gaps" in construction never happen again.

Quebec and Canada are welcoming places. Newcomers must have access to adequate housing, without forcing us to neglect the desperate needs of First Nations or of other segments of the population who have been in Canada for years or even decades.

I remind members that social housing offers rent that represents less than 30% of the tenants' income. It is not 10% off the price of a \$2,500 a month apartment rental. For this type of housing, it makes more sense for projects to be overseen by community organizations whose mission is to provide relief to people, instead of by companies whose mission is only to make a profit.

As we have been saying for a long time, inflation has a direct impact on people with fixed incomes. There are those over the age of 75, but there are also those aged 65 to 74, and we must enable them to catch up with inflation and access a tax credit that would allow them, if they so wish, to go back to work and earn a little more, without having their guaranteed income supplement or pension clawed back.

We must also think about developing our regions. Canada is full of beautiful regions to discover, and we must develop them. To do this, we need better means of transportation. It would be wonderful if we had a railway system worthy of the 21st century, not the 19th century. We need companies that will settle in our regions and young people who want to follow them to take advantage of tax credits for new graduates who go work in the regions. I would also like to see an energy transition that allows people to have electricity and heating without falling prey to speculation.

In short, the GST payment is a good thing at this point in time. However, as elected officials, we have a duty to protect the dignity of the less fortunate. It is both possible and necessary to do so in the long term. As elected officials, we must stop thinking only in terms of polls, the next election or the issues of the day.

• (1650)

We need to think in terms of the next 10 to 50 years.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-30 is a part of the solution for assisting people through inflation.

There is no one issue, as the member rightfully said, that causes inflation. We could talk about the war in Europe, the pandemic or supply issues. There is a number of factors to it. Canada is doing relatively well in comparison to other countries. Having said that, there is a need for us to respond.

Bill C-30 is one of three pieces. There is Bill C-30, the next one is Bill C-31, for the dental and rent subsidies, and then we also have the disability legislation. I am wondering if the member could provide her thoughts on the other two pieces of legislation, because they complement this particular piece and indirectly, if not directly, deal with some of her other concerns.

• (1655)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola:** Mr. Speaker, we are not against this bill. However, as I said at the end of my speech, these are temporary solutions to deeply rooted problems that call for long-term vision, not just a vision for the next few months.

[English]

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is great to see the Bloc come on board with doubling the GST, which would provide help to people right now.

What I am really concerned about, in the discussion around people who need help, are workers and ensuring seniors get the help they need. I have heard the member speak in support of getting seniors the help they need. Most seniors do not have enough money saved and they rely on CPP. We are hearing Conservatives fighting against increases to the CPP, calling it a payroll tax, when in fact it is ensuring that people who are retiring have retirement security. It is deferred wages.

Would my hon. colleague agree that it is important to increase the CPP, and that it is not a payroll tax?

### Government Orders

[Translation]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola:** Mr. Speaker, I am lucky because I can put a little money in an RRSP or a pension fund myself. Not everyone can do that.

Quebec's and Canada's pension funds are there for people who have worked hard their whole lives to raise their kids and put food on the table. They may not have been able to save money, or if they did, they had to withdraw it because they went through tough times.

That is why the Canada pension plan exists. It enables people to save without really thinking about it. It is necessary. It is essential. It is no more a tax than our RRSPs are.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my hon. colleague from Beauport—Limoilou. Her speeches always include little snippets that are very poetic and moving.

My question has to do with temporary foreign workers. Quebec has jurisdiction over labour matters. We have the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail and the Conseils régionaux des partenaires du marché de travail. Each sector is analyzed to determine labour needs, but the temporary foreign workers program comes under Ottawa's jurisdiction. It is appalling. You have to knock on one door and then another and another. It is ridiculous.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

**Mrs. Julie Vignola:** Mr. Speaker, foreign workers are essential to our businesses. Everyone can agree on that.

What is not essential during a labour shortage is forcing businesses to conduct studies to prove that their employees are essential. Make no mistake, they are essential. People from other countries are not brought in if they are not needed. Quebec needs to have full jurisdiction over foreign workers.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there is so much to do.

I feel privileged to rise to speak to Bill C-30 and other pertinent essential measures that I will be commenting on in the House.

People are already experiencing the pain of the “precession” in the wake of the pandemic and the Liberals' financial complacency concerning government spending. We have already seen many businesses close down, while others have decided to reduce their hours or have been forced to raise the price of their services considerably.

### *Government Orders*

There is also the price of gas, which automatically increases transportation and supply costs. Then there is inflation, rising poverty and the feeling that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Within these walls, which insulate us from the realities of everyday life, it can seem like an abstract notion. However, I can confirm that it is very real and palpable within our communities.

In addition, there are the so-called multiplier effects, such as the shortcomings of the EI system. It is giving many dedicated workers nightmares right now. For the past few weeks, seasonal workers, such as those who work in tourism, have been watching as their employers shut down their businesses temporarily or, even worse, permanently. Some will face this reality in the coming days.

Companies may be forced to significantly reduce their activities due to a dearth of tourists. Employees, qualified and competent people, will now be deprived of the special assistance received during the pandemic and will return to square one. Worse still, they will return to where they were left before the pandemic, with employment insurance eligibility criteria that disqualify many seasonal workers.

These people who have been without work for several months nonetheless stay in the region. They stay and they buy local products with that EI money. Without that, they would have to relocate to urban centres to find permanent employment. They will no longer receive EI despite being involuntarily without work or unable to find another job, even though the employer and the employee paid into the fund.

Many are unable to fill vacancies in the regions because their location makes transportation extremely difficult or because their experience and diploma do not correspond to the jobs that are available. A housekeeping employee in a seasonal hotel cannot be asked to work on the snow cannons at a ski resort. Some things cannot be done. There are situations where it is just not possible.

It is simply awful to ask Canadians to find work 70 kilometres from home while starving them, when they have no means of buying a car and there is no public transit in the community. There are many major repercussions. Let us imagine if all these people in the regions, forced by the government's indifference and unwillingness to adapt employment insurance criteria to the realities of the regions, leave their region, their home, their social and family life to move closer to the major centres to find non-seasonal work. How would the seasonal tourism businesses make up for that exodus of qualified workers? Whatever happens, businesses, no matter how dynamic, would close their doors due to a labour shortage. Without urgent action by the minister, those workers will leave our regions. The closing of tourism businesses, or a change in their vocation, is the death of a fundamental part of regional vitality.

Let us call a spade a spade. Although there is resilience, and there is even more in the regions, it has its limits. It can no longer be counted on. Some may want to come relax in the magnificent nature of our beautiful regions in a small cozy accommodation with personalized comfort and a very gourmet meal. I can tell them that it will no longer be as possible if the minister does not recognize seasonal work. It is over. It is serious, sad and deplorable, from an economic and human standpoint. It is even more so when we con-

sider the principle of EI, which is a fund that workers and employers pay into, and realize that it is government management that is failing.

• (1700)

Think of the competent and indispensable hotel housekeeper who cannot turn into a snow cannon operator, or a sommelier who cannot turn into a line worker, or a single mother who needs a job to provide for her family and who cannot work the night shift as a personal support worker, but who could work at a restaurant during the day, even if it is only seasonal work. There are hundreds of examples like these, hundreds of people out there who no longer have any income right now because they do not qualify for EI and cannot take jobs that are available outside their area. That is the reality.

Not to worry, I will get to Bill C-30, because there is an important connection to make. It is fine to provide support measures in the form of cheques that make the Liberal government look good. The Bloc Québécois agrees with that. In fact, that has been one of our proposals for some time now.

There are simple measures that can be taken quickly to save many families in the regions from a financial crash and to support tourism businesses at the same time. There is a desperate need. We hope that the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development will listen to reason and take swift action to immediately readjust the eligibility criteria for seasonal workers. That would be an important and appropriate gesture to help people at this time, just like temporarily increasing the goods and services tax credit by sending a cheque. A cheque sure is popular in politics, is it not?

In any case, the Bloc Québécois is voting in favour of Bill C-30, since it brings in a measure that we had previously suggested.

The Liberals' election platform, with its \$100 billion in scatter-shot spending, did not take this approach whatsoever. The Bloc is focused on the green recovery, and that is where the resources should be going. The financial aid that the government provided during the pandemic to support families, workers and businesses was necessary. If it had not done this, the outcome would have been much worse, but the real challenge of the economic recovery is playing out now. We are not against public spending, we are against waste.

The Bloc Québécois immediately called for adjustments to assistance programs to make them more efficient and avoid a unilateral approach. The aim is to better respond to the difficulties facing workers and businesses while limiting expenditures. The Liberals took far too long to review the programs. We have the same message when it comes to stimulus: yes to stimulus spending, provided it is targeted and thoughtful and serves to help those most affected by the situation.

Once again, this must include things like social housing, the purchasing power of seniors, maintaining the independence of the central bank and fighting the labour shortage, which I have discussed at length. It also includes creating a tax credit for graduates, appreciating experienced workers, transferring the temporary foreign workers program, reforming employment insurance, strengthening supply chains and the competition regime, and reducing our dependence on oil.

In closing, I would like to address the residents of the most beautiful riding in the world and all other Quebecers. I want to assure them that the Bloc Québécois will continue to work hard and pester the government until the minister understands the absolute urgency of adjusting the mandatory eligibility criteria for employment insurance.

I would like to quote one of the most famous Quebec bands, Harmonium:

We brought someone into this world  
Maybe we should listen to them

• (1705)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I must say, that was a unique and special touch to the conclusion of her speech. It is nice to see the Bloc and, in fact, all members of the House, recognizing the true value of this legislation, which would support Canadians in all regions of the country. It is estimated that 11 million Canadians would benefit from the passage of this legislation.

I understand and hear the message from the Bloc, that we have to look at ways we can make some changes more permanent. One that I would cite, even though it is one that I know they have a little bit of difficulty with, is the 10% increase for seniors 75 and over. I appreciate that the Bloc have some challenges with that particular issue.

This one piece of legislation is complemented by other pieces of legislation, the dental care and rental housing legislation and the disability legislation. Could I get the member's thoughts on those pieces?

• (1710)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. It is true, I do tend to personalize my speeches somewhat. It is a bad habit, but I think it brings a little light to this house.

I want to correct my colleague's comments. We are not against helping seniors over the age of 75. Rather, we are frustrated with the situation of those aged 65 to 75. We have always debated and advocated for this. We want help for seniors starting at age 65. We all agree that seniors are the hardest hit by the situation. Their fixed income, combined with inflation, is a disaster.

I invite my colleague to pass that on to his government.

### *Government Orders*

[*English*]

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the member with interest when she spoke about wanting to change eligibility for seasonal workers. In my constituency office in Kelowna—Lake Country, it is one of the issues our team is spending the most amount of time on, and it sounds like that is so for this member as well.

We have a very onerous, expensive and redundant process where, every year, people have to go through the application process. Especially in the farming communities, the same people come year after year, yet they have to do this paperwork every year.

What are the member's thoughts on that? Could she go into more detail on her thought process?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her very constructive question, which allows me to continue with my idea. In fact, what we would really like to see, very simply, is for the new employment insurance reform bill to include a status for workers who hold seasonal jobs. I like to emphasize that because it is not the worker who is seasonal, it is the job. I think that, in a specific context that meets certain criteria, we could establish a seasonal worker status with criteria that differ slightly from the usual criteria.

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague's speech was full of progressive ideas. The underlying issue here is that obviously Canadians are suffering. We have very high inflation, and one of the foundational questions I have, and it is one we struggle with in the NDP, is what the cause of this problem is. We see unbelievable price increases at gas stations, grocery stores and in the insurance industry. We see massive profits being made by corporations driving prices up.

My hon. colleague talked about workers. Does she agree with the NDP that the inflation today is caused by greedflation, by corporations raising prices beyond reasonable levels, or does she blame workers in this country for causing the situation, just as the Conservatives do?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Mr. Speaker, that is a very big question and it deserves a very big answer, but I think members would agree that we do not have much time. I quite agree with my colleague.

However, I believe fundamentally in the economic resiliency of our regions, as well as our urban centres and businesses. There has to be a balance, and we must achieve it domestically, not by letting foreign companies and investments boost or extrapolate production and supply costs, which is the crux of the problem.

We really need to take care of our own business. That is where things happen. That is how we will overcome and slow the skyrocketing inflation.

*Government Orders**[English]*

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that I will be sharing my time with the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

As always, I am proud to stand in the House with the privilege of representing the constituents of Peterborough—Kawartha. Today, I rise to speak to Bill C-30, an act to amend the Income Tax Act, meaning Canadians would get a one-time tax rebate. This bill would amend the Income Tax Act to double the GST/HST credit for six months, increasing the annual GST/HST credit amount by 50% for the 2022-23 benefit year.

Bill C-30 is another one of the Liberal government's attempts at a flashy headline that really would do nothing to address the core issues when it comes to our affordability crisis in this country. The Liberals want to think that they are saving Canadians, when, in fact, the Liberal government has put Canadians in this affordability crisis. Government supports should offer real results for Canadians who need it most, especially when we find ourselves in this cost of living crisis.

The GST rebate proposal would provide welcome immediate relief that Conservatives will support. However, let me be clear that we do not support the incompetence of the Liberal government and its inability to manage the Canadian economy while Canadians suffer to put food on their tables. There needs to be a long-term solution to address the real problem across our country. Inflationary deficits and taxes are driving up costs at the fastest rate in nearly 40 years.

Just last week in the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, we had a witness from Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada testify for the ongoing study of the mental health of young women and girls. I asked if they believe our current cost of living crisis is affecting our kids. Their answer, as indicated in the blues, was, “we have multiple anecdotes of families who are reporting increased stress. We're hearing it from the kids...We're actually meeting with our clubs in the next two weeks, and I think we'll hear more of those stories, where they've said food costs are a problem.”

When moms, dads and caregivers are stressed or worried about how to put food on the table, pay rent, or keep the lights on, that tension is noticed by our kids. The Liberal government is down-loading to our children its inability to manage the economy. Children do not need the burden of adult problems. They have endured so much these past few years, and they need to be children.

I have said it many times before in the House. The affordability crisis is a mental health crisis, and it is being exacerbated by the hurtful policies of the government. The government had the opportunity to support our Conservative motion to give Canadians a chance to breathe and to give them the break that they needed, as we put forth our motion to stop the planned increased taxes on January 1. However, instead of giving Canadians a break, the Liberals voted to tax their hard-earned paycheques even more.

The average Canadian family now spends more of its income on taxes, at 43%, than it does on basic necessities such as food, shelter and clothing combined, which is 36%. By comparison, 34% of the average family's income went to pay taxes in 1961, while 57%

went to the basic necessities. When families are spending more of their income on taxes than on any other necessity, coupled with the current rate of inflation, there is an affordability crisis. Something has got to give. Canadians are hanging on by a thread.

Next Monday is Thanksgiving, and Christmas is just 81 days away. With Canadians struggling to get by with the basic necessities, how are they ever expected to manage the extra spending that the holidays require? The price of turkey is up 15%. The price of potatoes is up 22%, and the price of cranberries is up 12%.

The one-time help proposed in this bill would give an average of \$467 per family. An individual without a child earning more than \$49,200 will get nothing. A family of two adults and two kids earning more than \$58,500 will get nothing. When groceries are up almost 11% and when inflation is at a 40-year high, this is not acceptable.

• (1715)

I want to read another message from Emily, who wrote to me. She said, “You know, it is interesting. I am even starting to get worried, and we own our house, one car, little to no commute, one child, emergency account, early to mid-forties. My husband is a professional engineer making middle six-figures and we are starting to get a little nervous, so imagine others.” With the impact of both parents having to work and not having a choice, and the impact on our kids, the mental health crisis is out of control.

The average family of four is now spending over \$1,200 more each year to put food on the table, and this does not even consider the rising cost of gas with the government's carbon tax or the cost of housing. Do members know who this stress and burden is passed down to when parents are stressed about paying for the necessities? It is our kids, especially our teenage kids. They are our future.

Mr. Owen Charters of the Boys and Girls Club of Canada explained it best when he said:

Too often, kids who come from underprivileged homes or homes where there's a single parent take on a burden that is like that of an adult at a very young age. They worry about those adult issues. They may not always let their parents know, because part of being a responsible member of that family is not to let that burden fester on the other members of the family. We see that as part of single-parent families especially or families where the parents are dysfunctional.

The irony in all of this today is that the Liberals want Canadians to believe they are saving them, when in fact they are responsible for the problem. They want Canadians to think they are coming up with solutions, when in fact they created this. It is like they are cutting someone's leg then offering a band-aid and patting themselves on the back for helping. It is ridiculous.

*Government Orders*

The jig is up, and Canadians know what the Liberals are doing. The government continues to think more spending will help with the cost of living. No, it does not work that way. How does taking home less from a hard-earned paycheque help the economy or mental health? How is tripling the carbon tax helping Canadians? It is not. Do members know what we need to make food and housing? It is gas. Do members know what Liberals want to do? They want to increase the tax on gas, so the already outrageous food and real estate prices are going to keep going up.

Do members know what happens to people when they do not have hope and when they cannot see a light at the end of the tunnel? They get depressed. They get anxious. They use drugs and alcohol to escape the pain, and they might even attempt suicide.

We will fight for the people. We will fight for their paycheques, and we will fight for this country. Canadians deserve better. The children deserve better. Our seniors deserve better. They gave their lives to this country, and so many of them cannot even afford to buy milk.

We do not need to burden our children with adult problems, and they do not need to see their parents suffer. The Conservatives will keep pushing the Liberals to wake up, do the right compassionate thing and stop their planned tax hikes. I encourage all of the members on that side of the House to stand up to their government, because I know they are getting the same calls to their constituency offices that we are getting.

Canadians are suffering, and we were elected to bring their voices here, not to take this voice to them. It is wrong, what the government is doing. It is wrong, how it is making Canadians suffer and not recognizing the pain that is happening in this country. Yes, I will support Bill C-30, because Canadians need a break, but I will not allow the Liberals to forget that the reason Canadians need help is because of their inability to manage our economy.

I will continue, like all of my Conservative colleagues, to push the government to invest in development, not relief. That starts with not taxing Canadians and letting them keep their hard-earned paycheques.

• (1720)

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear the recounting of the increase in the price of things the hon. member mentioned. I am wondering if she can reflect on the fact that there have been no tax increases, yet a litre of gasoline out at the coast is \$2.40 or more right now. Food is up, but there has been no additional tax on food. However, the big oil companies are producing record profits and the big grocery chains are producing record profits.

Maybe she can tell the rest of us who is really responsible for the inflation we are seeing on the two key things that are driving the inflation rate: food and petroleum products.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Mr. Speaker, the government runs the country. The government is responsible for the economy.

I am not sure how, with all of the things that the member addressed, the cost of gas, the cost of groceries, how increasing taxes

is going to help Canadians when they cannot take home the paycheque they went to work to get.

• (1725)

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I agree very much with my hon. colleague that the current economic situation facing Canada is indeed concerning. We have a lack of energy sovereignty, as has been pointed out by my Conservative colleagues. We are failing to repatriate lost manufacturing jobs. We have a lack of affordable housing. In fact I think we have a crisis in affordable housing.

However, it was Conservatives who opposed and dismantled Petro-Canada, Canada's national company, which would have helped achieve national energy security. It was Conservatives who signed neo-liberal trade deals that saw capital flee Canada, with all of the jobs, to low-wage jurisdictions. It was Conservatives who cancelled CMHC's social housing function a generation ago, helping to lead to the situation we face today.

Why should Canadians have any faith that Conservatives could fix problems today, when they played such an important role in creating the problems we are facing now?

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Mr. Speaker, again, we are here to discuss Bill C-30 and a one-time tax rebate that is going to cost Canadians even more money. Spending more money rather than investing in our country is not going to be the solution we need.

Right now in my riding of Peterborough—Kawartha, people are ready to build houses. They are ready to help with the housing crisis, yet they have to wait months, sometimes years, because of the administrative, bureaucratic nonsense that prevents people from achieving what they need to do. The government needs to get out of the people's way, let them achieve their work and let them earn their paycheques, not tax them.

**Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member outlined, explained and showed passion and compassion specifically for seniors, but really specifically for our young adults and our teenagers. I have three teenagers, young adults, so I understand where she is coming from.

With regard to the mental health issue, and with regard to putting food on the table and putting fuel in vehicles, would the hon. member agree with me that the Prime Minister and the Liberals are out of touch with everyday Canadian families?

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Mr. Speaker, I would agree absolutely, and I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that this week is Mental Illness Awareness Week. The Liberal government promised \$4.5 billion to mental health transfers, and not one dime has been sent. We have a mental health crisis in this country.

[*Translation*]

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

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, indeed, I am the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent. Louis St. Laurent was the prime minister of Canada during the 1950s. He was the one who, among other things, balanced the budget after the Second World War.

I make that historic reference today because I want to talk about the issue of public finances, the direct repercussions they have on Canadian families, and the management by this Liberal government, for seven years minus two weeks now, of Canadian public funds. Their management is really very different from that of one of their Liberal predecessors, the Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent, who balanced the budget after the Second World War.

The bill we are considering today has in its title the words, “cost of living relief”. The Liberal approach is not the best one, in our point of view, since the best way to relieve the cost of living for Canadians is not so much by giving them money, but by leaving more money in their pockets, which is exactly the opposite of what these people have done for the last seven years minus two weeks.

What have we seen in the seven years the Liberals have been in power?

Seven years ago, during the 2015 election campaign, they promised to run three modest deficits and then achieve a zero deficit in 2019. Instead, there were three major deficits that kept growing and, in 2019, the zero deficit promise was thrown away. We are paying for it today with staggering debt and high deficits.

Some people will point out that the Liberals had to deal with a pandemic. Yes, of course, but they were already having a hard time being economical and responsible with the economic prosperity that we left behind after our time in government. Do not forget that we left them a balanced budget and the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. However, they took advantage of that and spent lavishly.

It is becoming clear that inflation is the number one problem for all Canadian families. This government has not done the one thing that all other industrialized countries, particularly our G7 partners, have done. Whether it is Japan, France, England, Italy, Germany or the United States, under Joe Biden, the current Canadian Prime Minister's good buddy, the other six G7 countries have all lowered taxes and the tax burden on their citizens at some point in recent months. All the G7 countries have done so, except Canada under this Liberal government.

That is not the right approach.

The more money people have in their pockets, the lower the cost of living. The more money is printed, the more inflation rises. This is a fundamental economic principle, but one that this government has not wanted to embrace. For months now, we in the official opposition have been calling on the government to follow the lead of all the other G7 countries and lower taxes. It did not do that.

Worse, the very least the government could do to ease the burden on Canadians during this inflationary time is not increase taxes. On January 1, there will be an extra charge for employment insurance. This will affect everyone.

To be clear, we are in favour of setting money aside at the right time, but we are against taking money out of taxpayers' pockets for

additional spending today. That is the principle we should be respecting.

Worse yet, on April 1, the government plans to increase the Liberal carbon tax. It does not want to increase it by a little bit. It wants to multiply it not by one or two, but by three. The Liberal government wants to triple the Liberal carbon tax on April 1.

Every Canadian family is struggling because inflation is increasing, and now the government wants to take advantage of this horrible situation that Canadian families are going through and raise taxes. That is outrageous.

What planet do these people live on? Not only are they not cutting taxes as the leaders of every G7 country have done, but they are going to triple them. Some will say that that does not apply to Quebec. Just a minute. The Liberal carbon tax did not apply until now.

● (1730)

That is because Quebec has a cap-and-trade system. I should know that because I voted for it when I was a member of the National Assembly. Thus, in Quebec, the Liberal carbon tax does not apply because the revenue generated is about the same. However, what will happen in four or five months when the Liberal government triples the Liberal carbon tax?

My colleague asked that question yesterday. The minister replied that he would give him a briefing since he did not understand how it works. However, it was a very simple question. Does tripling the Liberal carbon tax affect Quebec, yes or no? We have been unable to get a clear and precise answer. It is not looking good for Quebecers. We will have an opportunity to discuss this again with the Quebec government that was re-elected just two days ago.

Increasing taxes, increasing the tax burden, is not the best way to reduce the cost of living. The best way is to let Canadians hang on to more of their money to mitigate the impact of inflation, which is affecting us all.

Facts are facts, and the facts are disturbing for sure. As we speak, Canadians are paying, on average, 43% in taxes, which is more than they spend on food, housing and clothing.

What worries me most in all this is food. If there is one basic good we have to protect, it is food. This is not about indulgences, sweets and treats. This is about a basic need, the need to eat. I talked about that in the House on Monday. Last Friday, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, I attended an event in support of Comptoir Agoshin, a food bank in Wendake. I also attended the grand opening of a community fridge in Val-Bélair. The fact is, these two organizations exist to provide food aid for people in need. The people in charge told me they cannot source enough to meet demand. People who used to donate not that long ago are now coming in for help.

For a G7 country, that is just terrible. Canada is rich because of its people, its resources and the work done by its citizens. If a G7 country's food banks cannot meet demand, that is bad news for all Canadians. When butter costs 17% more, bread costs 18% more, pasta costs 30% to 32% more, and soup costs \$20 more, basic needs are being taken away. There is a reason that, unfortunately, four out of five Canadians are trimming their food budget because of inflation. That is not a good thing. It is very concerning.

That is why we must tackle the inflation problem directly, in a positive and constructive manner. We know that it is a global problem. I am sure my friends across the way will say that inflation is not just happening in Canada, it is everywhere. I would reply that taxes have been cut everywhere except in Canada.

This government is greedy. This government is all too happy to take money out of Canadians' pockets, even when it comes to food. People will say that gas has nothing to do with food. On the contrary, the food on our supermarket shelves does not fall from the sky. It is transported. It comes from somewhere. When it is transported, it is highly likely that the vehicle that transported it consumed energy, which is often gas. The Liberal carbon tax has a direct impact on that.

The same goes for production. There is no agricultural production in my riding, but all my colleagues who have farms and farmers in their ridings are telling us about the real and painful consequences that the higher gas taxes will have for farmers, especially with what is coming in April.

We have to watch this government and make sure it does not triple the Liberal carbon tax. That is what it plans to do.

That is why we have serious reservations about this government's approach to the management of public funds and the inflation crisis. We seriously urge the government to rethink its position and to lower taxes.

● (1735)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, less than a year ago, when my Conservative friends campaigned, they knocked on doors and told Canadians they supported a price on pollution. Well, a lot has happened since. They have a new leader, in particular, and now the Conservatives are back to being climate deniers.

**An hon. member:** All hail the leader.

### Government Orders

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Whatever happens on the floor of this chamber is okay. What happens in the lobby is great. Let us all try to keep the doors closed. Let us all work together on that.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that the Conservatives did a flip-flop with their new leader. Many would now say that all Conservative MPs are breaking a promise with regard to dealing with climate change. That is fine. What I do not necessarily care for is when the Conservatives try to misrepresent the facts. The Parliamentary Budget Officer said that a majority of the constituents of Winnipeg North are actually getting more money back than they are paying into the price on pollution, yet that is not what we would take as being said here.

How do the hon. member and his colleagues justify telling their constituents that they no longer support a price on pollution when they campaigned on it? Why try to mislead Canadians when a majority of them are actually receiving more money, as opposed to the so-called “triple, triple, triple” or “double, double”, whatever the Conservatives want to call it?

● (1740)

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, in two weeks, I will celebrate the seventh year that I have known my hon. colleague from Winnipeg North. It is a real pleasure to sit with him, even if we totally disagree, especially on the facts.

Let me be clear.

[Translation]

Barely a month ago, the Parliamentary Budget Officer tabled a report that says in black and white that 60% of Canadians do not get as much back as they pay into the Liberal carbon tax.

Earlier, during question period, I heard the Prime Minister speak.

[English]

The Prime Minister was so proud to say that, six years ago, he tabled that reality and tabled putting a price on pollution. The result is that the price is high and pollution is up.

[Translation]

The government has never met its targets, yet today, it has the gall to lecture us. It needs to start meeting its targets. Only then we can discuss this further.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I can assure my colleagues that I will not sing my question.

*Government Orders*

I would like my colleague to comment on his new leader's rather populist position on Canada's central bank. He wants to fire the governor even though the Bank of Canada is doing exactly what it needs to do to control inflation.

I would like my colleague to comment on that.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, a particularly apt song lyric springs to mind: "C'est une langue belle", it is a beautiful language. However, I will restrain myself. I would like to acknowledge the presence of my hon. colleague.

Ultimately, printing money is what drives inflation. That is why Conservatives believe that the most important thing a government can do is leave more money in people's pockets. That is the first thing the government should do to fight inflation effectively.

A government can leave more money in people's pockets by not raising taxes. We have been asking the government to lower taxes for over a year, but it has not done so. Every other G7 country has, but not Canada's Liberal government. All we are asking the government to do now is, if nothing else, to refrain from increasing the tax burden and raising taxes, but the Liberals are refusing to do that or commit to that.

[*English*]

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we were glad to see the Conservatives finally get on board with the New Democrat idea to double the GST credit for Canadians as a way to get money into the hands of the people most impacted by and most vulnerable to the high inflation we are experiencing right now. We believe as New Democrats that we need solutions that actually support families and help workers deal with inflation and the rising cost of living.

The member talked about other countries around the world that are doing things. He even mentioned Britain. The Brits gave tax cuts to the rich and their economy crashed. Their pound has taken a nosedive. However, one thing the Brits did do a good job of is going after big oil with an excess profit tax.

This week, the CEO of Shell, here in Canada, said that governments need to tax energy producers to help people deal with the soaring cost of fuel. This was not the leader of the official opposition, the Prime Minister or the Minister of the Environment, who are all standing up for big oil as the gatekeepers for big oil. This was the CEO of Shell noting the importance of making sure that energy producers pay what they owe to lower people's bills. It makes sense and Canadians deserve better.

Does my colleague not agree with the CEO of Shell that they should pay their fair share instead of—

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are almost completely out of time and I want to let the member answer.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the comment by my colleague from the NDP. We shall pay respects to each and every idea. It is why when we talk about taxation and putting a price on pollution, we say the Liberals have the ambition to triple the price on pollution that they impose on Canadians. It is not the right thing to do to triple a tax when we are addressing the inflation crisis.

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be part of this debate and to talk about a number of issues.

On Bill C-30, it is interesting to start this discussion by reminding Parliament in particular, because the public does remember this, that it was actually the Conservatives under Brian Mulroney who brought in the GST. It was then Jean Chrétien who campaigned against getting rid of the GST. Later on, it was Stephen Harper who brought in the HST and added new taxes, including taxes on hospital visit parking.

I find it very ironic, given the blame going back and forth, that there is no recognition of the fact that this taxing process creates a vehicle, at least in the short term, to get money to Canadians. That is the real issue. It is not necessarily what is at stake for members of Parliament and their political parties. It is what is taking place in the public right now.

In fact, in the public right now, not only is inflation an issue, but a series of cost of living problems have taken place over a number of years. It is why the NDP has been pushing for immediate solutions. That is what this one is. It is not perfect by any means, but at least it is going to provide some money and relief in a way that is not going to drive inflation higher, and will go to the people who need resources right away.

I cannot tell members how many emails I have from people who cannot get by anymore. They have challenges with paying not only their rent, but their groceries and a series of other things. If we go back in recent history, one of the biggest lies of the last number of years is going to be that "we are in this together". That is one of the things we are going to see economists, sociologists and others look back on to derive that there are winners and losers in the current restructuring of our economy, in many respects, because of COVID-19.

However, there are solutions to some of these matters. One of the ones we are proposing is the GST for right now, and in the long term, there is the dental care program. I will get into that more later, but I think it is important to recognize that many communities right now are seeking solutions outside of the federal government.

*Government Orders*

Today, I could not be home for one of the most exciting projects that I have seen in a long time. It has taken years to get here. It shows that we could have been there as a federal government for social housing for many years, but others found a way. Today, we broke ground with the Windsor Islamic Association to build five brand new buildings with more than 30 units for low- and middle-income seniors. It is going to be in Windsor West across from a mosque and has been 20 years in the making.

A number of different people were involved 20 years ago, including Mr. and Mrs. Peer, who were part of this as advocates. The neighbourhood was also involved, through Dr. Ahmed and Khalid Raana. A number of other individuals moved this through the city systems, including Atik, and other people put this together as well.

I want to thank our local city councillors. When we could not get this through, Councillor Jim Morrison worked very hard to get the community onside, which is very much a controversy at times with regard to new urban planning. He did a great job of that, along with Mayor Drew Dilken and the rest of city council. All those individuals helped make this happen. The Rosati Construction Group was very good as well.

I think this is one of the things that can inspire other housing units, because we are seeing that people want these things to take place across our country. If Parliament is going to be bogged down and is not finding new, creative solutions, then we are going to have challenges. Bill C-30 is going to provide rent relief and is going to provide GST—

• (1745)

**The Deputy Speaker:** We have a point of order from the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Mr. Speaker, I was so engrossed in my colleague's excellent speech that I did not want to interrupt, but he has forgotten to indicate in his speech that he is splitting his time with the member for Vancouver Kingsway.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I like when we talk about ourselves in the third person.

I am sure the hon. member for Windsor West has an update for us there.

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Mr. Speaker, I am splitting my time with the member for Vancouver Kingsway. I talked about dental care at the very beginning and I was supposed to mention it at that time, so I will return to that subject later on. I appreciate the intervention, because I did not officially recognize that I was splitting my time.

I will continue. One of the things I want to move to is some of the conditions we put ourselves in with regard to inflation and competition, and the lack that we have. A number of members have referenced gas prices. This House, in the past, with credit to Dan McTeague, a former Liberal, and Paul Crête, a former Bloc member, and this is something I worked with them on as well, passed a gas monitoring agency. This was supposed to be implemented under Paul Martin but it was not.

What ends up happening is a lack of competition in this country, because there has been a lack of refinery development. We do not even have the same reporting process the United States have. One

of the key things creating a lot of uncertainty and some frustration among Canadian consumers is that we do not even have a good advocate for that. The Competition Bureau has some powers but very little. At the same time, gas prices are going up with very little explanation, and more importantly, less accountability, which has a cascading effect on our entire economy.

If we look at the specifics related to this, how many more refineries had to be closed in Canada? There was Montreal, Oakville and a number of others, including one in Vancouver. What was taking place was vertical integration in the industries, and a country like Canada is facing the same challenges when it comes to telecoms and others. Right now, additional charges will potentially be placed on credit cards, as well as extra taxes, where Telus wants to introduce an extra tax on Canadians.

All these things start to eat away at the pocketbooks of Canadians. For as much as we do, such as increasing the GST in this instance, it is going to be lost because of increases in services and fees.

At the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, we looked at issues during the pandemic such as food costing and food workers. What is interesting is that the record profits companies were enjoying also included record bonuses for the CEOs. What is amazing, and we cannot do anything about this because of the lack of supports in our legislation, is that all major grocery chains ended pandemic pay for their workers on the very same day. That is as close to collusion as we can possibly get.

What was discussed at committee was the fact that the lawyers were okay because the CEOs could talk to each other under our current system. This comes from an industry the Competition Bureau fined for fixing the price of bread. They actually had to come to a settlement on that. The number one staple for lower- and middle-income Canadians, which is bread, was actually price-fixed by these organizations similar to a cabal that would take advantage of people. This is one of the problems we have with some of our industries, where we have this vertical integration.

I want to talk a bit about where we can find a difference, and that would be with Bill C-31, the dental care bill. The member for Vancouver Kingsway has done a great job. Often we talk about it in terms of helping the children, and later on it would be seniors, persons with disabilities and the general public. As the industry critic, I can say our health care has always been a standard principled point to get investment for the auto industry and manufacturing, even during the darkest times, when the United States, with its different states, or their federal government, and other places like Mexico were lowering wages. All those competitive factors that go against investment in Canada were offset by our having a public health care system that was paid for.

*Government Orders*

That is one of the major controllables we have. When we look at small businesses and medium-sized businesses, SMEs have really struggled. Now their employees, and even the people who own these businesses and often do not have any benefits themselves or have very basic ones, will have that relief. When it comes to labour unions with large contract negotiations, it will also open up the door and take the pressure off for increased medicines and costs that can create some types of labour disruptions because of fights over benefit programs.

One of the things I really want to highlight is that these types of structural improvements are more important in the long term than Bill C-30, which is something that is short term. The long-term investments we are going to get in this other package will be very significant.

• (1750)

I know from the CEOs, the investors and all the other different people, the labour negotiators, that those types of infrastructure pieces that we have, including employment insurance, which needs a major overhaul, are things that will get investment and keep investment in Canada. That includes research development and innovation. We have a terrible record for patent development to go to manufacturing, for bringing products to market compared to other parts of the world and for getting our university innovation together, but these are the assets that we have.

As I wrap up, I want to say that I appreciate the fact that Bill C-30 is not necessarily the biggest solution that we have for this problem of structural inequality, but at the same time, it is a measure we can control right now. The quicker we get the bill through the House, the quicker we can get more investment, more innovation and more jobs for Canadians, because it is a structural point that we need to compete.

• (1755)

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our colleagues in the Conservative Party love tax cuts. I wonder if he could analyze the benefits that come from tax cuts. Who actually benefits if they cut taxes by let us say 5% across the board?

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Mr. Speaker, one of the things we ought to look at is comparing ourselves to the Americans, because they tax on worldwide profits. We do not do that here in Canada, so the tax cuts that can happen in Canada for some of the largest industries can actually get taxed in the United States. Therefore, Washington would get the money and not Canada. If we look at the oil and gas industry and others, they will benefit from that.

There is no doubt that we are out of step with respect to some of the other countries that are looking at corporate tax cuts and a number of different things, but I wish the Liberals would come onside regarding some of the larger corporations that are getting away scot-free on some of these things, especially when we look at the amount of money. It is amazing when we think about how 10 years before this time we had investments in companies, all kinds of different support programs and all the things we did throughout the pandemic. Meanwhile, there is no accountability for that right now because they are taking those profits and running with them.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke at length, especially in the first half of his speech, about oil companies. I would like to take the opportunity to come back to that.

I would like to remind members that the price of gas jumped 33.3% between December 2020 and December 2021. That was a determinant of inflation. We can all agree that the price of oil is set in New York and London, and that there is not much we can do about it. However, since the price of oil is fluctuating a great deal, we could try to stop relying on oil with an energy transition that would shelter our economy from fluctuating oil prices.

Could my colleague comment on this Bloc Québécois suggestion?

[*English*]

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question because it is really important. In fact, it is one of the reasons we need a national strategy, because we cannot do it province by province. That is one of the reasons the refineries, whether in western or eastern Canada or Ontario, were closed, because of a lack of competition. That has been the biggest problem we have, vertical integration in the industry. Therefore, one of the things we have to do to get investment in the industry is to get cleaner and greener, but more importantly to transition. That is why I think a lot of Alberta workers are also looking for options and real plans to deal with this. It is a complicated issue, but at the same time there are incredible possibilities. However, it is going to require a national strategy.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for always fighting for Canadians and trying to get them the help they need. Obviously, doubling the GST rebate is something he has been advocating for.

He talked about dental care. He talked about really important values around helping people when they need help. We, as New Democrats, want a health care system that is head to toe, universal health care. With respect to mental health, we know that a lot of our emergency rooms right now and doctors' offices are full of people who need help with mental health. In fact, five million Canadians cannot even get access to a doctor and they are waiting for supports around mental health. The Liberal government made a \$4.5-billion promise to Canadians so they can access mental health services, but it has not even rolled it out.

We know that over \$50 billion is spent each year on mental health in the health care system. It is draining our health care system. There has been \$6 billion in lost productivity. Does my colleague agree that mental health needs to be a top priority so that we can have a true universal health care system?

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague's work on mental health has been critical. We should do it for the right reasons, to start with.

Second, I will give economic reasons. Right now, countries are moving toward stealing some of Canada's infrastructure, which we have to compete to gain jobs and investments, through our health care system. Dental is now considered an asset, but the next one is going to be mental health. We have heard enough testimony through our industry committee right now that Canadians are being poached with online services and investment. If we want to keep them in our country as Canadian workers, then we need to invest in that right now. It would work really well.

● (1800)

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a privilege to rise in the House to speak on behalf of the people of Vancouver Kingsway, to bring their voices to this place, to reflect their experiences and to express how we can, in this House, best support them and their families and the businesses that operate in the wonderful riding that I am fortunate to represent.

Tonight, I rise to speak on Bill C-30, called the cost of living relief act, no. 1. Bill C-30 amends the Income Tax Act to double the goods and services tax or harmonized sales tax credit for six months, effectively increasing the maximum annual GST/HST credit amounts by 50% for the 2022-23 benefit year. What that means is that doubling the GST credit would provide about \$2.5 billion in additional targeted support immediately to roughly 11 million individuals and families who already receive the tax credit, including about half of Canadian families with children and more than half of Canadian seniors.

To give an example of the impact of this, single Canadians without children would receive up to an extra \$234 and couples with two children up to an extra \$467 this year. Seniors would receive an extra \$225 on average immediately. I want to stop at this point to say that this is an interim stopgap measure. By no means will this measure adjust or improve the systemic problems of the Canadian economy or address the long-standing inequities that exist along with the poor distribution of wealth in this country. In fact, the distribution of wealth has gotten worse over the decades, as wealth is concentrated in fewer and fewer hands and more and more people struggle. That has been the unmistakable, undeniable trajectory of how wealth and income have been distributed in this country over the last 40 years.

Given the horrible impacts of very unusually high inflation, New Democrats have been pushing for urgent action to address Canada's cost of living crisis for many months. We did not just start this yesterday. We identified this problem and have been advocating, working hard and fighting for Canadians in this place for the last six months.

If the Liberals and Conservatives had supported the NDP's call last May to double the GST credit, which is when we did that in this House, eligible Canadians could have received up to \$467 before the start of the summer. This money would already be in Canadians' hands if the two major parties in the House had the same commitment to working people and marginalized Canadians that the NDP has in this country. However, it is the fact that not six months ago both the Liberals and Conservatives voted against the very proposal before the House today to provide this essential relief to Canadians.

### *Government Orders*

New Democrats are now proposing that all parties work together to fast-track Bill C-30 through Parliament to ensure that people receive their increased GST rebate as soon as possible. Last week, Canadians were told by the Conservatives that they will have to wait even longer for relief, because the Conservatives refused to work evenings to get this urgently needed support out the door and, again, opposed the NDP's offer to work on an expeditious basis because we recognize the urgency of the problem today.

New Democrats are delivering real results for Canadians beyond this. The Canadian dental benefit will deliver up to \$1,300 to parents with children under 12 who do not have access to dental insurance. The top-up to the Canada housing benefit, again proposed by the NDP in the last election platform will deliver a \$500 payment to 1.8 million renters who are struggling so mightily with the cost of housing. This more than doubles the government's original commitment reaching twice as many Canadians as originally promised. Of course, doubling the GST credit will provide \$2.5 billion in additional targeted support, again, to some of the poorest and most needy Canadians in our country from coast to coast to coast.

Taken together, the result of these three NDP-driven proposals would mean that a family of two will receive between \$3,000 and \$4,000 due to NDP advocacy and hard work in this Parliament. That is the result of the NDP working for Canadians.

● (1805)

By way of background, the GST tax credit would help offset the financial impact of the GST for low- and modest-income people and families. That is the whole purpose of it. The credit is paid quarterly, in January, April, July and December, with benefit years beginning in July. The total annual value of this credit depends on family size and income. For the 2022-23 benefit year, eligible people can receive up to \$467 for single people without children, \$612 for married or common-law couples, \$612 for single parents, plus \$161 for each child under the age of 19.

I want to pause for a moment, because I have heard people in the House, mainly on the Conservative side, who have scoffed at the amount of money we are talking about here. They have said that this is not enough money, that these are crumbs and that this is an insufficient amount of money. I can tell them that to someone who is trying to live on \$20,000 a year or \$25,000 a year or \$30,000 a year, \$500 makes a big difference. I have said it before and I am going to say it again. It is easy for MPs, who make \$185,000 a year minimum, to stand in this House, like the Conservatives have done, and tell Canadians that \$500 does not mean much to them. That might mean a child's hockey; that might mean a child's school lunches; that might mean clothing for children for a year. That is what \$500 means to people who are earning between \$20,000 and \$40,000 a year, and that is meaningful.

*Government Orders*

The GST credit is indexed for inflation on an annual basis using CPI index data, but of course, for this year, for the July 2022 to June 2023 benefit year, the value of that GST credit grew by only 2.4%, because it was based on the CPI from 2020 to 2021. Because those increases are based on the inflation rate from the prior year, the current GST credit does not reflect the unusually high inflation that Canadians are experiencing now. Depending on where they live, it is somewhere between 7% and 9%. That is why this money urgently needs to get into the pockets of these needy Canadians as soon as possible, and the NDP will work hard to do that.

I want to pause for a moment to speak a bit about why we are where we are, because there are different views on that in the House. Why are we experiencing inflation of 8% or 9%? New Democrats believe that this is inflation driven by prices, and of course the data and empirical evidence support that. This is not driven by wages. Wages have not gone up 8%. This is not driven by anything other than prices at the gas pump, in grocery stores and in insurance bills issued by companies in this country.

The other thing is that the Conservatives like to pretend that the inflation was caused by the deficit. That may play some role, but everybody who has been paying attention knows that when prices started to rise in this country, it started with the beginning of the COVID pandemic in 2020, when supply chains began to be interrupted around the world. Then we had the Ukraine-Russia war, which of course interfered with all sorts of supply chains and energy resources, and now corporations are clearly using the cover of this to drastically increase their profits and prices, taking advantage of the current situation. Whether it is the so-called FIRE industry, the finance, insurance and real estate industry, the oil and gas sector or major grocery stores, the data from economists is clear. Their profits, not their revenue, but their profits, are at dramatically higher levels.

In the case of the FIRE industry, it is up 24%. Nobody earning wages has received 24% more income. What would justify a 24% price increase? Oil and gas companies in this country are reporting record profits. They have never made more money. Then there are the financial institutions and grocery stores. Every Canadian who walks into a grocery store can see what is happening with prices.

The answer here is not to blame workers; it is not to attack politically. The approach here is to attack the source of the problem, and that means making corporations pay for their excess profits so that the money can go to the government and it can use that money productively for Canadians, for things like dental care and other programs that will make such a huge difference to Canadians' lives.

• (1810)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as somebody who used to receive GST cheques, I understand how important it is to get that relief back. It is money that people paid and should get back, especially when they are below a certain income threshold.

It is a one-time payment, though. While getting people's money back into their hands is always a good principle, I wonder if the NDP would support increasing the GST payments in the longer term, so that rather than making a one-time payment, it would increase the amount of the GST rebates that people are receiving.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague, not only for sharing his experience but also for that thoughtful question.

When the GST was first proposed in this country, by Conservatives and Liberals, the New Democrats opposed it, because it is a regressive tax. By definition, the 7% tax, as it was at the time, applied to everybody. When a young single mother making \$20,000 a year pays the same tax in a store as a billionaire walking into the same store and buying the same object, it is clearly regressive, so bringing in a tax credit was an attempt to try to inject some progressivity back into the tax.

In theory, the suggestion by my hon. colleague is a good one. We should be injecting progressivity into our tax system, so that the amount of money being paid in tax goes up commensurate with the amount of income being made.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the hon. member's comments, particularly on the notion of regressive taxation, whereby a tax applied to somebody earning \$20,000 a year is a bigger hit than the same tax applied to somebody who is earning \$200,000 a year.

However, I want to ask the hon. member to reverse that and talk about tax cuts that would affect individuals. If we follow the Conservative line and cut tax, which they have tried to do in the past, and we look at the relative income and the relative impact on people, who would benefit the most on a personal income tax basis from across-the-board tax cuts?

**Mr. Don Davies:** Mr. Speaker, one of the benefits of being in the House for a period of time is that I have gotten to see different approaches to government.

I remember the Conservatives, when they were in power, being addicted to boutique tax cuts, which were essentially vote buying. They would appeal to a certain group of people and give them a tax cut to try to win their support. In my opinion, that is not the basis for sound tax policy.

The basis for sound taxes in any modern democracy should be based on a progressive system. I noticed that the Conservatives are talking a lot about the current economic system. They never talk about the massive profits made by large corporations. They never talk about the \$30 billion that was left on the table last year in uncollected taxes from profitable corporations. What they do talk about is tax cuts, which benefit the rich and the wealthy. That is not an approach that could sustain a country like Canada, and it is unfair.

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I know that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons stated that this bill and two others have measures to help people face inflation. That is fine. However, there may be other solutions available.

One of the solutions put forward by the Bloc Québécois was to enlist experienced workers. We know that some people who retire may be reluctant to return to the labour market to help out because the little income they would earn per year would be taxed. The Bloc proposed creating a tax credit for these people so this additional income would not be taxed. In addition to helping them cope with inflation, it could help alleviate the labour shortage.

Does my colleague agree with this proposal?

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Davies:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for that creative solution. She is absolutely right that Canada is facing a labour shortage that is really unprecedented. As health critic I see this most acutely in the health care sector, where across this country, in every profession, we have a shortage of workers and they are facing a crisis.

Any measures and policies that are fair, that are targeted at getting people back in the workforce, and that encourage people to work are something we should be looking at. Any policy that discourages someone from entering the workforce is something that is unacceptable and should be changed.

I am happy to look at any proposal that the Bloc has in this regard.

• (1815)

**Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, before speaking to Bill C-30, I want to look at what got us here today. When we look back at the history of the current government, which started in 2015, we see that there has not yet been a single budget that it has put forward that has been balanced. Every year, the government keeps borrowing more and more money. That is not to mention the carbon tax, which I will talk about later as well, and how much that is increasing the cost of everything that we produce.

I would like to tell a little story. Many times, when I am going to the airport, the cab driver will ask what I am going to the airport for. I will say I am going home, and they ask what I am doing here in Ottawa, so I say I am an MP. He puts a big smile on his face and he asks if I am a Liberal. I say no, that I am from Alberta, so I am a Conservative. He says, “Oh, the party that cuts and slashes.” I tell him that is one way of looking at it, but the way to really look at it is that we live within our means. I see a look on his face as though he is wondering what that is supposed to mean.

I explain it to him. Every year, if a person is driving a cab and makes \$50,000 a year, for instance, but spends \$80,000, how long are they going to survive financially, with borrowing or spending over \$30,000? He says, “Well, not very long.” I say that is actually what the government is doing, year after year after year. I can see this look on his face that says, “This is actually going to have an

impact on me.” Unfortunately, though, he makes another little smirk to say that it is okay, and that because government finances do not work the same as personal finances, it is okay for the government to borrow because it is not going to have an effect on us. Canadians now are realizing the effect of this borrowing year after year after year.

I know the government will talk about how, during COVID, it had to borrow so much money to do this. However, out of all the billions that the government borrowed, half of that actually went to COVID measures, and the other half went to various programs that the government had initiated. Therefore, there is quite a disconnect in the information that the Liberals talk about.

The next thing is that with the inflation rate that we have, it is hard to believe that the Liberals say wonderful catchphrases such as that inflation is a global phenomenon. That is like saying, “Where did this come from? We have no idea. It is just shocking.” I can understand that, when we have a Prime Minister who says he does not think about the financial program here, that he does not even think about monetary policy. That is what we get from a Prime Minister who is trying to run a country, so it is no surprise that our inflation rate is growing year after year after year.

Now, Canadians are looking for a reprieve. What is there to offer? It is double the GST back. Yes, it is a one-time payment that is going to help families, but really the cost of everything is escalating. It is unbelievable how families are not able to survive at this rate.

It is not only families. I think about the seniors I have spoken about. So many of them come to me and say, “What can we do? We had money in the bank. We had money in investments and they are just continually dropping. How can we survive?” They tell me that they planned into their eighties and nineties with no problems, but have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in the last while because of the inflationary prices that are going on to this day.

It is devastating what we are doing to Canadians here, and it is shameful what the Liberals have done to this country. That is what I am here to talk about the most: how they are not here to help Canadians. They love catchphrases. There is day care for \$10 a day. It is great for young families; it is doing nothing for seniors, though. That is one of the things I really need to talk about.

I would like to thank the House for giving me this opportunity to speak to Bill C-30.

• (1820)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6:20, pursuant to order made on Monday, October 3, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill now before the House.

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.

*Private Members' Business*

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded vote.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Monday, October 3, the division stands deferred until Thursday, October 6, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

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**COST OF LIVING RELIEF ACT, NO. 2**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt two motions, of which this is the first. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order, special order or usual practice of the House, later today, the House shall continue to sit beyond the ordinary hour of daily adjournment for the purpose of considering Bill C-31, An Act respecting cost of living relief measures related to dental care and rental housing, at the second reading stage, that during the debate, no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair, and when no Member rises to speak, or at 10 p.m., whichever is earlier, the debate be deemed adjourned, the House shall adjourn until the next sitting day and that the debate pursuant to Standing Order 38 not take place.

**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)

\* \* \*

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is the second request for unanimous consent. I move:

That, notwithstanding paragraph (e) of the order made Monday, May 2, 2022, the deadline for the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying to submit to Parliament a final report of its review, including a statement of any recommended changes, be no later than Friday, February 17, 2023, and that a message be sent to the Senate to acquaint Their Honours that this House has passed this order.

**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)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I suspect if you were to canvas the House, you would find unanimous consent to call it the appropriate time to begin Private Members' Business.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I believe we are there anyway, so I thank the member for that intervention.

It being 6:23 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business, as listed on today's Order Paper.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[Translation]

**BANK OF CANADA ACCOUNTABILITY ACT**

The House resumed from May 19 consideration of the motion that Bill C-253, An Act to amend the Bank of Canada Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are here to discuss Bill C-253, an act to amend the Bank of Canada Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts, including the Auditor General Act. This bill seeks to ensure that the Auditor General of Canada and the auditor for the Bank of Canada have access to the Bank of Canada's operations.

Basically, as the member for Carleton and others have suggested, this means that the Auditor General could conduct an audit of the money spent during the pandemic, for example, which actually came from money printing by the Bank of Canada. Essentially, the idea is to examine and evaluate Canadian monetary policy through an audit by the Auditor General.

Since the Bloc Québécois will always respect Canadian institutions as long as Quebec is part of Canada, it should come as no surprise that we believe that the Bank of Canada should be totally independent.

In my speech, I would like to add some qualifications to the Conservative Party's comments and also recall the importance of the Bank of Canada's independence.

First, I would like to clarify some of the comments made by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, the sponsor of the bill. He said that the Bank of Canada is exempt from the Auditor General's oversight. I would like to qualify that. The Auditor General can review the bank's operations and records related to its roles as the government's fiscal agent, advisor on public debt management, and manager of the exchange fund account.

I will start by saying that the Auditor General has access to a study on the structure of the Bank of Canada, the review of audits, certain records and so on. It is not the Auditor General's role to assess the quality of a policy, let alone the quality of monetary policy. It is very important to make that clear.

Moreover, control measures are already in place for the Bank of Canada. I would like to list a few of them. Under the Bank of Canada Act, once a year, two independent firms are to audit the affairs of the bank simultaneously. The Minister of Finance has the authority to enlarge or extend the scope of the audit and to request special audits and reports.

The point is, the Bank of Canada already has an accountability process; it is accountable to the government. The Bank of Canada also reports to the committee, and it is up to the committee to determine whether certain monetary policies are appropriate.

I happened to be there when the Governor of the Bank of Canada appeared before the Standing Committee on Finance. Committees can call Bank of Canada governors and deputy governors to appear. They can review the bank's books and make recommendations in that respect. Committees can oversee internal and external audits. Lastly, they can review the adequacy of the bank's risk management, internal control and governance framework and its information communication.

Clearly, the Bank of Canada already has an accountability process.

The member for Regina—Qu'Appelle also suggested we should follow the example of our Commonwealth partners, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand.

Taking a look at what is done in some of those countries, we note that the auditor general of New Zealand can indeed audit the central bank. However, the AG's role is to ensure that the financial statements are accurate and free of any errors. It is explicitly stated in the constraints placed on the auditor general that he or she cannot comment on the efficiency of the central bank.

In Australia, the auditor general's objectives are to obtain reasonable assurances that the financial statements taken as a whole are free from significant anomalies, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report to confirm that.

Once again, in these countries, whose example we should supposedly follow, the auditor general has no mandate to audit monetary policy.

Things are a bit more complicated in the United Kingdom. We recognize that. The auditor general examines whether the Bank of England has a sufficiently ambitious strategy to develop appropriate efficient and cost-effective central services to help the bank deliver change and control costs.

• (1825)

Once again, there is agreement that the auditor general does not make findings about the strategic objectives of the central bank. Consequently, an audit of a monetary policy would not be acceptable in any of these Commonwealth countries. There is no mention of issuing an opinion or criticizing a monetary policy. In short, in these three countries, the auditor general can audit the administrative integrity of the central bank, but not the effectiveness of its monetary policy.

The Bloc Québécois does not oppose the idea of increasing accountability. On the contrary, it is something we frequently ask for and we are quite in favour of the idea of asking the central bank good questions especially at committee. However, the Bloc is opposed to this bill because it does not use the right means to attain its objective, which is to evaluate a monetary policy by having the Auditor General conduct an audit. That is not her function, nor is it the place for her to carry it out.

I would now like to focus on the importance of the central bank's independence. I would never venture an opinion on monetary policy even if I were an economist. It is a very complex exercise that must be very nuanced. That is also the case for the independence of central banks. I would remind members that a central bank uses

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monetary policy to help establish price levels, for example. It has an impact on the level of employment in an economy. The central bank has a major impact on our economy.

That said, the medium- and long-term stability objectives of a central bank are completely different from the objectives of a government that is elected for a maximum of four years. A government's objectives are short-term, in some cases more than others. Long-term stability is a different objective, and that is why a central bank must be completely independent from a government. The two have different objectives. One is aiming for long-term economic stability, while the other is likely to develop a budgetary policy that is shorter term.

For example, when a central bank increases its key policy interest rate, that will affect the economy about 18 to 24 months later. I would remind members that we have a minority government with a potential lifespan of two more years. Therefore, at no time would the two objectives coincide. Developing a budgetary policy is completely different from developing a monetary policy, and that is why the central bank must remain independent. Without that independence, a government might choose a short-term monetary policy that is to its advantage, but that is not optimal in the long term.

Central bank independence falls within a wide spectrum. There are as many degrees of central bank independence as there are central banks. However, I would like to talk about the good practices developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which says, "Central banks hold considerable power in their countries' economies [as we know]. While their mandates vary, they generally aim to create the conditions for economic and financial stability. Their most important tools are monetary policies, which are decisions about the value of money. These include decisions about the amount of money in the economy and ways to keep inflation stable."

We agree that the central bank plays a tremendous role in keeping inflation stable and we agree that inflation is too high at the moment. The central bank set out to keep inflation at 2% and it had an agreement with the government on that. However, we know that the causes of inflation are much more complex than a monetary policy. In this case, there is indeed a shortage of labour, materials and semi-conductors. There are global supply chain problems. No central bank has managed to truly address the problem of inflation.

In conclusion, I would like to cite my favourite economist, in other words my father. He says that a monetary policy is as complex as medicine. Economists are a bit like doctors. The difference is that doctors have seven billion patients to test a drug or new method on, while economists have just one economy.

The central bank may make mistakes. It is the role of committees to look at its mistakes and ask questions. It is not for the Auditor General to do that. Independent institutions make for a healthy democracy.

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• (1830)

[English]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to rise at any point in the House of Commons. It is such an honour to be here. Today, specifically, we are talking about the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle's private member's business, which is called the Bank of Canada accountability act.

I am a little confused about this bill, to be honest. I read it through and looked at the reality and cannot quite understand why the member would pick this particular pathway to express his concerns about the country.

I think of some of the private member's bills that I have tabled. I am really focused on things like the right to housing and making sure that seniors get their guaranteed income supplement, even if they get their taxes done a little late. For me, people really matter. I know that the member would argue that this is about accountability, because it intends to have the Auditor General audit the Bank of Canada. I will get to that a little, but when I look at the role of the Auditor General, there is some significant and important work that is done in the country by that role.

The first thing that it made me think about is that, earlier this year, the Auditor General of Canada presented a report called "Processing Disability Benefits for Veterans" and I found that report to be incredibly helpful. The purpose of this report by the AG was to measure if Veterans Affairs Canada, or VAC, as it is called, is taking steps to reduce the wait times for disability benefits. If anybody has been paying attention to the House, we have heard, for numerous years, that many veterans in the country are applying for their disability benefit and they are waiting far too long. It is having a profoundly negative impact on the veteran and on the people who love them most.

If we are going to look at how we hold departments accountable, the Auditor General does important work. This is a perfect example of it. The report said that veterans are still waiting too long for their compensation and that veterans are still waiting to get the benefits that they need just to get through everyday life.

I hear this a lot. I hear this from veterans across the country, who contact my office and let me know that they are still waiting. I also get calls from the loved ones of veterans, who are worried because the veteran that they love and hold dear is struggling profoundly because they do not have those supports.

I think that this is an important conversation for the House, because it often feels like veterans serve this country and just get nothing back. The fact that they have to wait so long takes away from that commitment and sacrifice that they made, and the value of it to this country. That is something that I hope all parliamentarians are hearing from the veterans in their riding and that they are standing up for them in this place.

What the AG found was that the median waiting time was 39 weeks. Imagine that: Someone is a veteran, they served the country, they have a disability based on that service, and they are waiting around 39 weeks for a decision to be made. Their family is waiting. The people and their loved ones who are surrounding them are car-

ing for them and they are not able to get the supports that they need to be better, to be stronger, to take the next step in their own evolution.

The other thing that the AG pointed out is that VAC's data is so poor that it does not allow the department to realize or understand if the initiatives that they are taking are actually making an impact. That concerns me greatly and I am really glad that the Auditor General was able to put that into a report.

We need to be looking at VAC and saying that it is time for it to figure out how to gather data so that we know that, when it does something, it is actually working. At the end of the day, it is the veteran who matters. It is the people who love that veteran who matter. We want to see those application processes speed up but if we are not collecting the right information, we cannot verify if that is the truth.

Finally, the AG pointed out that the department does not have a long-term strategy in terms of staffing. I just want to say how concerning that is.

• (1835)

We all know, because we have heard it from our communities, from businesses and small businesses, that people are just trying to figure out how to find enough staff to do the things they need. It is getting increasingly harder to find people, because we have a population of retirees who are leaving. We do not have enough immigration, because we had a couple of years during COVID where we could not have people coming into the country. Staffing is just becoming incredibly hard.

To find out that Veterans Affairs does not have a strategy on how it is going to make sure it has enough staff to serve the people who served this country is shocking, so I thank the AG for doing this work and for this report because it tells us important things. Most importantly, it keeps that department accountable, accountable to all Canadians, Canadians who want to know that the veterans who served this country are being served well on the other side.

The bill that we are looking at today, in my opinion, is simply not useful. The Bank of Canada already undergoes two external audits simultaneously by two separate firms. By the way, the Auditor General also has the authority to audit certain aspects of the Bank of Canada's affairs under the Financial Administration Act, so there is already a component that can be looked at.

My concern is that the Auditor General is being asked to do more and more without the resources to be able to do it, without having the resources to make sure that the incredible people who work in that department are paid properly, looked after and can take on this level of accountability. We know, funnily enough, that the Conservatives cut funding to the Auditor General, so I find it interesting that when they were in government they cut the funding, but when they are over here on the opposition side they are asking the Auditor General to do more work without any more resources.

I appreciate accountability. I will always fight for more accountability and transparency, but this bill does not promise that. It also asks an already overworked department to do things it does not have the capacity to do and that do not make any sense. Hopefully, we will see something that comes forward soon from this member that actually thinks about the needs of the people in this country.

• (1840)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege this evening to speak to Bill C-253. I will try to summarize it for the people who are watching and listening. This is a bill designed to make the Bank of Canada, that is, the central bank, accountable to the Office of the Auditor General. It is no surprise that the Bloc Québécois is opposed to this bill. I will explain why.

As we know, the bill introduced by the Conservative member for Regina—Qu'Appelle talks a lot about inflation. They want to find the villains who are responsible for inflation. I am going to talk about who, or rather what, is responsible for inflation. I will also propose concrete solutions.

What we need to understand about Bill C-253 is that there are already accountability mechanisms in the Bank of Canada Act, and asking the Auditor General to do it is not the right way to go about it, precisely because the Bank of Canada must remain independent of any political influence. Also, of course, there is the fact that we must not interfere in monetary policy, despite what some of our colleagues would like.

Let us look at the accountability mechanisms in the Bank of Canada Act. The bank is required to be accountable. Once a year, two independent firms must audit the bank's affairs simultaneously. That is one example. The Bank of Canada is the only federal Crown corporation subject to this requirement.

To ensure that this accountability is in place, the act subjects the bank to oversight by virtue of which the Minister of Finance can also request special audits and reports. As we can see, there are already mechanisms in place.

Furthermore, the Office of the Auditor General is already authorized to exercise an oversight role in certain areas of the bank's business functions. It may review and audit the bank's operations and records, because the bank serves as the government's fiscal agent, advisor on public debt management and manager of the exchange fund account.

Given the mechanisms I just cited, it is not clear how the Conservative Party's proposal would add actual value to the current situation.

Let us now reflect on the Conservative Party's position in introducing this bill. Its position is disturbing. Beyond the legislative changes themselves, this bill is part of a broader ideological agenda on the part of the Conservative Party to question the competence of the Bank of Canada and to undermine public confidence in it.

I will go even further. The Conservative Party's approach is troubling and very dangerous. Of course, the Bank of Canada is a complex, even abstract, institution for the general public. Understand-

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ing its role, its responsibilities, the decisions it makes and everything that entails is not necessarily within the grasp of even those with a keen interest in economics. This makes it the perfect bogeyman for many politicians looking for an easy target to blame for the current economic climate and the record surge in inflation these past few years.

That much is quite clear. The new leader of the Conservative Party and member for Carleton said during the leadership race that he was even prepared to fire the current head of the central bank, in other words, the governor.

• (1845)

It is unbelievable that the leader of the official opposition said that. I think he did not look too far for his inspiration. I suspect he copied this formula from a certain neighbour to the south.

If the Prime Minister were to fire the governor of the central bank because he did not agree with his monetary policy or because he needed someone to blame for the current inflation crisis, that would seriously undermine the independence of this institution, which is one of Canada's fundamental institutions.

It would also be an irrational, even impulsive act that could have devastating consequences for Canada's international image, its stability and also its ability to attract foreign investors.

We can all agree that firing the governor of the central bank is an idea that we cannot really take seriously. We can understand the desire to identify those responsible for certain crises, but firing the governor of the Bank of Canada will not solve the inflation crisis.

I am not saying that we must refrain from criticizing the role of the central bank. What I am saying is that although the governor's decisions can be questioned, it is irresponsible to go so far as to dispute the economic situation or inflation.

We note that, in the past few years, the Bank of Canada still achieved good results. Yes, I think it is okay to question the role of the Bank of Canada. That said, in 1991, the Bank of Canada set a target in order to limit inflation. Since then, it has always managed to keep inflation within a range of 1% to 3%.

It is okay to question whether the central bank's monetary policy will allow us to tame inflation for Quebecers and Canadians. It is also reasonable to question whether the government used the central bank as an overly generous ATM because of the pandemic. However, we must take the time to put things into context and consider the big picture. We must, of course, avoid intellectual shortcuts, and avoid critics who take intellectual shortcuts.

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Everyone would also agree that it is a question of intellectual rigour and honesty towards our constituents. We must go beyond simplistic discourse. I will put things in perspective in order to explain the cause of today's inflation. I would say that the vast majority of the factors that influence inflation are beyond the central bank's control. I would say that nearly 70% of the external drivers of inflation are not necessarily related to what can be controlled here in Canada.

I am thinking of factors, other than monetary policy, over which the Bank of Canada has no control. These include supply chains, which are in shambles because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine. These factors have exacerbated inflationary pressures because of the impact they have had on the grain and fuel markets.

The central bank is one of the most respected central banks in the world. It has a reputation. The inflation that we are experiencing in Canada is not unique to our economy; it is being felt in all OECD countries.

Again, it is okay to criticize the central bank and its governor, but it is very dangerous and counterproductive to draft legislation containing language designed to attack the very legitimacy of the institution. That is what the Conservatives are trying to do through Bill C-253, which seems to be fuelling incendiary rhetoric.

The Bloc Québécois will not play along, and that is why we are voting against this bill.

● (1850)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start my comments by quoting today's leader of the Conservative Party. This is something he said earlier this year:

I will fire the governor of the central bank to get inflation under control.

It is hard to believe that a leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, His Majesty's loyal opposition, would make such a bizarre comment. I am sure there are many former Conservative prime ministers who would have been shaking their head, as the finance critic, the member for Abbotsford, did when he provided his thoughts in regard to the comments of today's Conservative Party leader. People need to understand that when we think of the Bank of Canada as an institution and about the work it has done for generations, for the leader of the Conservative Party today to undercut and make the comments he made is highly irresponsible.

I believe there are members of the Conservative Party who understand that. They would not say it, because they saw what happened to the critic or the shadow minister of finance when he tried to provide assurances to Canadians that it was not an appropriate thing to be saying, at the very least out loud. The Conservative leader might believe it in his mind, but to share his internal thoughts caused a great deal of concern and damage.

Then it was compounded by a former leader, the member who introduced the legislation. He says he is the ultimate leader. We all know who I am talking about: the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

He is the one who is introducing another piece of legislation about the Bank of Canada, calling into question the need for accountability.

Hon. Andrew Scheer: They failed.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: No, Mr. Speaker, the Bank of Canada has not failed. It has served Canadians well. I am getting heckled by the members across the way. Do they not understand the importance of having and respecting the independence of the Bank of Canada? Let us look at the years that it has put into effect sound policy.

● (1855)

At the end of the day, the Bank of Canada is recognized, not only within our borders but internationally, as an institution that has done exceptionally well for our country. Our previous governor actually went on to play an important role outside of Canada, in Europe.

The Bank of Canada is not a new institution. We are talking about going back to the 1930s. In fact, the very first building of the Bank of Canada was right across the street from the Parliament buildings, the old Victoria Building, where members of Parliament have offices today. It has been there since the 1930s, and it has been there for a good reason.

We could talk about the importance of monetary policy, like issues such as inflation. Let us remember the other wonderful idea that today's Conservative leader had on inflation. Instead of saying yes to Canadian currency and yes to the Canada banknotes that the Bank of Canada is ultimately responsible for, and our currency that the Bank of Canada monitors, what did today's leader of the Conservative Party say? He has more faith in cryptocurrency, Bitcoin. He has so much faith in it that he did not tell people to buy up Canadian currency; he told them to buy cryptocurrency, to opt out. He told them that the way to deal with inflation was to buy cryptocurrency.

Wow, what a brainer of an idea that was. Those individuals who followed that advice have lost 20%-plus, and some as high as, no doubt, 50% as a result. I do not know how many Conservative MPs followed that advice. Maybe the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle did. I would not want to admit to that.

● (1900)

At the end of the day what I see are economic policies coming from the Conservative Party. Are they serious? Do we want to talk about contrast? Let us look at what the Conservatives are proposing for inflation. The Conservatives are criticizing the Bank of Canada. Do they not realize that for generations the Bank of Canada has been held accountable? There are different ways in which that is done. There are independent audits that are conducted and provided to the government. Do they not realize that there are reports? I will give them a tip. They can get copies of those reports to see what the Bank of Canada has been doing, to provide them assurances that they are independent private audits that are done every year on the Bank of Canada.

Why is this legislation necessary? If anything, the Conservative Party of Canada is doubling down on that bizarre idea of firing the Governor of the Bank of Canada. Does it not realize the consequence of the types of statements it is making? It actually hurts the Canadian economy. It plants seeds of doubt regarding confidence in the Bank of Canada, because technically it is recognized as the official opposition. It is supposed to be the party in waiting. Hopefully it will be many years, possibly decades, that it will be waiting in opposition, based on the types of things we hear coming from it.

Canadians need to be concerned about it. I can assure the members opposite that when I have the opportunity to talk about economic policy and issues, I do not hesitate to talk about some of the bizarre things that we hear coming from the Conservative Party of Canada. We need to establish and support the Bank of Canada as much as we can with respect to building that confidence.

Dealing with inflation, we just spent a couple of hours earlier this afternoon, and we are going to spend more hours this evening, talking about the issue of inflation. As a government, whether it is the Prime Minister or members from across this country, we are concerned about inflation. That is the reason we have legislation such as Bill C-30, which we were debating just an hour ago and which has fortunately passed. It took us a little while to convince the Conservatives to support it, but they did. Kudos to them.

In about an hour from now, we are going to be talking about Bill C-31, again to deal with inflation. The Conservatives still have not come onside with that one, which gives dental benefits to children under the age of 12. It also provides support for low-income renters. I would think they would want to support that too.

We could pass that and then we could maybe go on to Bill C-22 and talk about the disability legislation, which is again legislation that would make a difference and would help Canadians in every region of our country. Instead, the Conservatives are bringing forward bizarre bills like the one the member has brought here before us today, which reinforces statements that the current Conservative leader has put on the record with respect to the Bank of Canada and the lack of confidence they have in it.

Let us get behind good legislation and pass it, and maybe put a pass on this one.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by setting the record straight. I believe Regina—Qu'Appelle and Winnipeg North are both beautiful areas that are blessed with many great constituents.

To the member who preceded me, the member for Winnipeg North, we thank him for his service. With every speech, I look forward more and more to his retirement party.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I do not know whether we should be talking about those kinds of things on the floor, but we all appreciate the member when he stands and speaks.

The hon. member for Northumberland—Peterborough South.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, in all seriousness, I am pleased to be standing here today for a very serious issue, which of

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course is Bill C-253. This act would give the Auditor General the authority, in the normal auditing cycle, to audit the Bank of Canada.

Before we get into the role of the Bank of Canada, how important this legislation is and indeed how important the Bank of Canada is, it is important to understand a bit of the context between the economy and the government. The first principle of any discussion of the economy in a political context is that productivity comes from our workers and business owners. In other words, the goods that are produced and the services that are delivered come from the private sector. When workers are more productive and when we are able to deliver services more efficiently and more effectively, by necessity the wealth of the country increases.

Monetary policy is, unfortunately, something our Prime Minister does not think about and perhaps should, given that we are in one of the worst monetary crises of the last 40 years. A little forethought on monetary policy would have perhaps been helpful, since, when we look at what monetary policy can do to an economy, we see that it can give it an artificial, temporary high.

When the Bank of Canada prints money or uses, as we call it, quantitative easing to fund the spending of a government, as with any country and any central bank, there is an initial exuberance as citizens see the money come into their bank accounts. However, that exuberance is, in fact, always replaced by a sense of extreme disillusionment as their bank accounts swell but they realize quickly that the cost of everything has increased. The troubling part about inflation is that it can be a self-perpetuating phenomenon, meaning that if we believe there is inflation, there is inflation. That inflation can linger on for many, many years after the money has been printed.

The true path to improving Canada's economy is through increasing productivity. It is the only real cure for the affordability crisis because it actually increases consumers' abilities to purchase. It also increases the power of their wages, increases the power of their pensions, creates jobs and, dare I say, as I know my friends in the NDP will cringe, increases profits. These are profits that can be invested back into the Canadian economy. They would take us away from where we are right now, which is last in the OECD in capital investment, and would allow our economy to grow and for our future generations to be prosperous.

However, while monetary policy at its best can push off bad things and perhaps give us a temporary high, monetary policy done wrong can have serious consequences. I will go through four of the Bank of Canada's responsibilities, but traditionally its mandate, at least up until the last two years, has been to be a bulwark against inflation, because inflation can have extreme and corrosive impacts not just on the economy but on the fabric of society. Many revolutions and civil disruptions have been created in the last 150 years to 200 years, and even before, because of rapid increases in inflation. Inflation is a really serious issue that affects people.

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The Bank of Canada has four primary mandates. One is supply of money. Its job is to keep the money circulating through the economy. The second is to promote “safe, sound and efficient financial systems”. Third is to design the dollars, notes and coins we all use. Fourth is to be the fiscal agent of the government, which means there is a necessary connection there, because the more debt the government has, the more it needs to print. While there can be little doubt that there should be some independence, in part there is a connection, and there are no two ways about that, between the government that spends the money and the bank that funds the spending. That connection is there.

● (1905)

For years, the leader of the official opposition has tried to put people first by raising opposition to and concern over the fact that the government kept spending money and the Bank of Canada kept printing money through quantitative easing to fund extreme expenditures. He said early on that we would face inflation, and guess what. He was right.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the government said there would not be inflation. She said, believe it or not, that there would be deflation and that this should be our primary concern. That is zero to 10 on a math test.

Who else said that? It was Tiff Macklem, the Governor of the Bank of Canada. At first he said there was no inflation. Then he said there was a little inflation. Then he said there was more than a little but it was just transitory, and then it was actually a lot of inflation but it was really just transitory. Now he says there is a lot of inflation and it is going to be with us for a while. There was one individual who was in this House of Commons publicly ringing the bell about the concerns of inflation, and that was the leader of our party. He should be celebrated. It is the Bank of Canada that got it wrong, not the leader of the official opposition.

I do not have to tell members about the real consequences that monetary policy has. We have seen tremendous pain. We have seen that 20% of Canadians have to change their diet and 20% more Canadians are going to food banks. This has real impacts. The need to have some type of oversight and accountability is incredibly important and urgent. We have seen a massive failure by the Bank of Canada. Its number one job and responsibility is to keep inflation under control, but we have food inflation at 11%, which will force children to go to bed hungry because the bank failed on a tremendous scale.

There has been lots of talk about different things that we are asking for. All we are asking for is that there be an audit by the Auditor General. That is not in any way compromising the independence of the Bank of Canada. It is just auditing.

Do members want proof? Look at the Public Service Investment Board. It is independent and has maintained its independence despite the fact that it is regularly audited by the Auditor General. It has been done and can be done. This is nothing new. We can certainly audit an organization. In fact, by definition, the auditor is independent; it is separate. There is no way that it is compromising the independence of the Bank of Canada. That argument is just silly. That is the only word for it.

The second argument I have heard against this legislation is that there are already auditors. There are different levels of auditing and different ways of auditing. Those audits are generally just looking at the numbers: Do the numbers make sense? Is the Governor of the Bank of Canada walking out with a briefcase of cash? No one believes that is an issue. I believe that the Bank of Canada can add and do its math and I am cool with that.

What the Auditor General does is it looks at the overall effectiveness of something. I had the great privilege of sitting on the public accounts committee and working with the Auditor General on her excellent work. She has raised the flag on a number of things that have spurred change. One is getting clean water to our indigenous communities. She had a great report condemning the government for its repeated failures.

To summarize, when we look at the issues, we have a significant failure by the Bank of Canada. All that Bill C-253, the great bill by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, is asking for is that we have accountability and transparency regarding an institution that has an impact on all 37 million-plus Canadians and can have a significant impact. We have seen it raise the cost of food and raise the cost of everything, making life harder. All we are asking for is accountability and transparency. Quite frankly, I am disappointed and very surprised that all members of the House will not support this bill, especially those from Quebec. Why they would not want additional accountability and transparency from the federal government seems strange.

● (1910)

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his support of this bill, and I would like to just quickly address some of the fallacies that came out of the government party in listening to the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. I cannot remember which Winnipeg riding the hon. member is from.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Winnipeg North.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is Winnipeg North. It has been a tough year for Regina-Winnipeg relations from a Saskatchewan point of view, given the Blue Bombers and Roughriders, but thankfully we will talk about something that should unite us all here: accountability.

Accountability should be the one thing that all members of Parliament embrace. I can never understand it, but only a Liberal would think that increased accountability somehow undermines confidence in an institution, even when showing Canadians more of what goes on behind closed doors and when showing Canadians more about why the bank took certain decisions, why it acted when it did and, most importantly, why it did not act when it did not. Only a Liberal would think that this somehow undermines the confidence in an institution. This is not surprising, because that is how we have seen the Prime Minister act with everything from access to information requests to redactions to refusals, even taking the Speaker of the House of Commons to court to cover up the scandal at the Winnipeg lab.

However, we are not talking about that scandal today. We are talking about the economic vandalism that has gone on since March 2020, ever since the Bank of Canada decided to create money right out of thin air to purchase government bonds, depositing that brand new money, not backed up by any growth or increase in production, into the bank accounts of the large financial institutions. The bank bought IOUs from the government, bought them from those large financial institutions and flooded those institutions with large amounts of currency through digital assets and digital currency. Of course, they increased the money supply in other ways, including by printing cash and running the printing presses.

My hon. colleague pointed out fallacy number one: Accountability undermines confidence. We all know that to be false. Accountability strengthens confidence in institutions.

Audits are already being done. As my hon. colleague pointed out, audits are being done but they are a different kind of audit than what this bill calls for. I wish the hon. member for Winnipeg North had taken the time to read that part of the legislation. This is not just about bringing in auditors like KPMG. It is about bringing in the Auditor General, who does performance audits and value-for-money audits.

While we are talking about value for money, did members know that the Bank of Canada, during the Prime Minister's tenure, for the first time in Canadian history is losing money. That is right. The state bank, the institution that has a monopoly on creating money in Canada, is losing money. That happened because when it bought government IOUs, when it bought those bonds, it did so at a time when interest rates were low. It put the new money as credits into the bank accounts of large financial institutions, and it has to pay interest on that. Now that it is raising interest rates, it is losing money on the money it received from the government because it has to pay even more to those large banks.

Can members imagine that TD Bank, Royal Bank and other large financial institutions that have these credits from the Bank of Canada are getting paid more from the bank than the bank is receiving in interest payments from the government? All that money just washes through the system, and the people who get the money first are the big winners. They can go out and buy a large number of assets, and when prices rise, they can sell them and make the difference on the spread.

My colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg North, said that for the first time in Canadian history people are raising questions about

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the bank. This is not true. His former boss and former leader, Jean Chrétien, campaigned on firing the Bank of Canada governor in the 1993 election.

This is the point I want to make today. Institutions are only as good as the human beings who run them, and human beings are not perfect. We are all capable of making mistakes. We have someone who has so much power in this country, with the ability to affect the value of the money that Canadians have worked so hard to earn, and when they make such monumental mistakes, they have to be held accountable. This is not about punishing someone for a mistake. This is about replacing the Bank of Canada governor with someone who knows how to keep inflation low.

That brings me to my final point. My colleague from Winnipeg North said that there has been no failure at the Bank of Canada. He should tell that to the hard-working families that are using food banks for the first time because inflation has gone up so high. He should tell that to students who are living in homeless shelters because they cannot afford to make rent. If that is not a failure in managing our monetary system in Canada, I do not know what it would take for a Liberal to think it is time to take action.

• (1915)

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 please rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask for a recorded division.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, October 19, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### COST OF LIVING RELIEF ACT, NO. 2

The House resumed from October 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-31, An Act respecting cost of living relief measures related to dental care and rental housing, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 7:18, pursuant to order made earlier today, the House will now resume debate on Bill C-31 at the second reading stage.

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place today to debate Bill C-31, an act respecting cost of living relief measures related to dental care and rental housing.

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When the Liberals introduced this legislation in September, they would have had Canadians believe that it was a bill aimed to partly address the affordability crisis many of us are facing, but we should not be misled or misguided by their political spin. This bill is less about addressing the affordability crisis and the soaring cost of living than it is about the Liberals playing more politics at the expense of our economy and, ultimately, the well-being of Canadians.

The Liberals are only being sustained in power right now through the support of the NDP, and the NDP are only supporting the weak Liberal government to advance items on their political agenda, which they cannot advance alone as they are a party with only 25 seats. One of these items is dental care. In fairness to the NDP, they are calling for the development of a comprehensive national dental care program, and this Liberal program falls far short of that.

What is Bill C-31? It is a temporary measure the Liberals came up with. They are using it to buy time and appease the NDP so they can keep their NDP-Liberal coalition alive and remain in power for the indefinite future. It is a program designed to make the government look like it is doing something when it did very little all summer to address the real concerns Canadians face.

Right now, 70% of Canadians have a dental benefits plan. In my province of Ontario, there are currently dental plans for low-income seniors and for those on social assistance, and programs for children under the age of 17.

At a time when the provinces have been asking for increased health transfers, which they have been asking for three years now, when will the Prime Minister meet with them to address their concerns so they can enhance existing programs and services such as these, which are currently being delivered to Canadians?

After seven years of Liberal governance in Ottawa, Canadians are realizing they are not better off today compared to when the Liberals first took power in 2015. This is especially true when we consider how badly Canadians are hurting today on matters of life necessities, such as housing, food and energy. Costs have skyrocketed on all three essential life necessities. These costs are largely being driven by federal government policies that are focused on excessive spending, increasing taxes and creating new taxes to pay for these bad spending habits from a bloated and growing government bureaucracy.

When it comes to housing, young Canadians have done everything they were supposed to do to achieve success and live the Canadian dream. They earned a degree and they are working hard, yet many are still living in their parents' basements or in a small, 400-square-foot apartment because the price of housing has doubled since the Prime Minister took office. Our housing bubble is the second largest in the world. Recently, we learned that the percentage of Canadians who own their own home is at its lowest level in over 30 years.

When the Prime Minister took office, Canadians were paying 32% of their income, on average, to maintain a mid-sized home. Now the average family has to pay 50% of their income just to keep their home. A one-time payment of \$500 will do nothing to address the real issues of housing affordability many Canadians

face. In fact, more than six out of 10 renters will not qualify for the Liberal's inflationary spending cheques.

Many of the inflationary issues and concerns we face are of the government's own making. We have pointed out for months that the Liberals out-of-control spending would lead to an increase in interest rates. The government has responded by telling Canadians not to worry, to go ahead and take out big loans, since interest rates would remain low for a long time and there would never be any negative consequences. Now we are seeing interest rates rise 300 basis points, or 3% in simple terms.

In terms of food and food production, the Liberal government has increased farmers' taxes. That increases the cost of fertilizer and energy needed to produce food. Now it wants to limit the use of fertilizer. That will require farming more land to produce the same quantity of food. Tractors and other equipment will have to cover a larger area, burning more diesel and other fuels. More food will have to be imported. Bringing this food from other countries to Canada will again require using more energy.

For Niagara agriculture, this means it will cost more to grow grapes and local produce like peaches and cherries, and make our local Canadian-made wine even more expensive. In terms of food consumption, these higher production costs get passed along to us, the consumers, when we go to the grocery store or local farmers' markets to buy our food to feed our families.

#### ● (1920)

Food price increases are already hurting many Canadians. For example, here are some of the headlines reported by the media that indicate this growing problem: "Child hunger a major concern in Canada amid skyrocketing food prices"; "Niagara Falls families straining under the weight of soaring prices"; "Food Banks facing unprecedented demand in Niagara"; "GTA food banks say they're facing the highest demand in their history"; "Nearly 6 million people in Canada experienced food insecurity in 2021, U of T study says". The list of these troubling headlines goes on.

This does not sound like the developed and strong country our parents and grandparents fought through two world wars for and built throughout their lives with their hard work and labour. After seven years of Liberal governance, the Prime Minister and his government have eroded and undermined our collective and individual wealth, massively indebted future generations and repeatedly blocked and suppressed economic and financial opportunities for Canadian workers, businesses and industries in all regions of our country.

Since 2015, the Liberal government has become big and bloated. It has grown too large. Its reach has become too wide, and its actions are becoming far too intrusive into the private lives of Canadians. It picks winners and losers based on its political priorities, and its bad spending habits are entrenched. That is why it is desperate to increase taxes and create new taxes against hard-working Canadians. It is so it can continue feeding its reckless big-spending appetite.

The bottom line is that Bill C-31 is just another big-spending Liberal plan that only serves to keep the NDP-Liberal coalition alive. Of course, it masks it using affordability language, but in reality, it does nothing to bring down the costs of necessities such as housing, food and energy, including fuel and heating. The Conservative leader said it best in his speech when he said, “That is our role, here in Parliament, to turn pain into hope. Canadians need hope.”

As I am about to conclude, I wanted to share the comments of one of my constituents, Jessica, who had some real concerns about Bill C-31. In her recent note to me, she wrote, “The \$600 benefit should not be going towards dental billing directly. As a low-income parent, for myself and my son, I have looked into some quotes for the bundle of dental, pharmacy and medical care, and I have seen quotes, at least for myself, at about \$100 per month (unaffordable though compelling).

“In other words, I am expressing that having a benefit to get started up on my family's medical and dental insurance is the help our family needs and should be getting from the government, rather than having the funds wasted on one or two dental visits when myself and my son could both get coverage, receive the \$600 (even half annually) and have more medical benefits to keep us healthy. This is important to me as well as I approach middle age.”

I am proud to support my new leader in his mission to make a real difference in Canadians' lives through supporting policy measures that will actually make life more affordable. Bill C-31 would not do that. It is not a bill that would actually help Canadians. It is a bill designed to keep the NDP happy so that the NDP-Liberal coalition can continue.

We need to give Canadians back control of their lives in the freest country in the world, where the dollar keeps its value, so our citizens can have the life they work so hard to build.

• (1925)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I wish I could thank the member for this speech, but I think his constituents, 30,000 of whom do not have access to dental care in his riding, would be a bit disappointed if I thanked him for his speech. The Conservatives are basically dumping on dental care and the expansion of the health care system, and on the support for housing, which is so essential to meet the housing crisis people are seeing right across the length and breadth of this country, including in his riding.

The sum total of the Conservatives' contribution to the debate on this bill, which would help people with dental care and housing, is a kill amendment that would destroy the whole bill. This is so disrespectful to the tens of thousands of Canadians in his riding, and rid-

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ings right across the country, who need access to dental care. The NDP's dental care plan, as he knows, rolls out over three years. What it would do is help 30,000 families in his riding by the end of the process. Housing also needs to be supported.

Why are the Conservatives opposed to real measures that would help people in their ridings at this critical time?

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli:** Mr. Speaker, again, the provinces have been asking the federal government for three years now to sit down and increase transfer payments so that they could properly fund the programs that currently exist. In Ontario, we have a program called “healthy smiles”. Children whose parents are on social assistance, under the age of 17, not 12, get coverage. Low-income seniors are covered at age 65. Did members know the Ontario government is currently undertaking a consultation program to provide benefit plans for those workers who do not have that? It is a portable program. Consultations go on until December.

Why is it that in the province of Ontario, Doug Ford is getting the support of labour? It is because he is getting the results for workers. What the current government needs to do is provide broad-based tax relief so that we get out of the way and put more money in the pockets of Canadians to assist them in providing the better future they are all looking for.

• (1930)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a bit of a surprise for the member, but provinces have been asking for increases in health care ever since I was first elected back in 1988. For over 30 years, every year provinces want more money for health care. That would be a wonderful debate to have on the floor, possibly as an opposition day motion.

My question is to follow up on the previous question. The bill is broken into two parts. A good part of the bill is the child dental care. There are children in the member's riding, as there are in mine, who have no coverage whatsoever for dental care. This bill would provide those children with dental care. Some of those children, if they do not get dental care, will end up going to hospitals where surgery will be done. We know that for a fact. How does the member justify to his constituents the fact that he is voting against a 12-year-old or a 10-year-old having dental care?

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**Mr. Tony Baldinelli:** Mr. Speaker, currently in the province of Ontario, there are programs that exist that support those low-income individuals. Children under 17 in the province of Ontario can get coverage. Let me just quote again this email that I received from Jessica, a constituent of mine. She says, “The \$600 benefit should not be going toward dental billing directly. As a low-income parent, for myself and my son, I have looked into some quotes for the bundle of dental, pharmacy and medical care and I have seen quotes, at least for myself, at about \$100 per month.” That is what Jessica is looking for. She is looking for a program that could provide her with health care coverage.

The Province of Ontario is currently undertaking a consultation to provide portable health benefit plans. Why can the Province of Ontario do that while the federal government continues to fail? The Liberals are more interested in sending shiny cheques to people and trying to take the credit, instead of providing the broad-based tax relief that they currently need.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Here is where I stand and give my daily reminder that the shorter the questions and the shorter the answers, the more we can get in so that everybody can participate in this great debate we are having on this bill.

Continuing debate, the hon. member for Port Moody—Coquitlam.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-31 is here at a very critical time for millions of Canadians. There are too many Canadians struggling with the rising cost of living and the challenge of keeping rent paid and food in the fridge. As the NDP critic for disability inclusion, I hear from the disability community of the realities of skyrocketing housing and food costs and how it is impacting them disproportionately.

Fifty per cent of food bank users are now persons with disabilities. This is unacceptable and the Liberal government has a responsibility to uphold the human rights of persons with disabilities and ensure that they have an adequate standard of living. That is why Bill C-22, the Canada disability benefit, cannot come fast enough for almost a million Canadians with a disability.

Inequality is rising at an exponential rate in Canada and, while grocery chains are bringing in billions of dollars in profits, everyday Canadians are falling further and further behind. Corporate greed is increasing. This crisis of corporate greed is driving inflation and it is affecting everyday Canadians. It affects some more than others. It especially affects persons with disabilities, single mothers and fixed and low-income families. These are long-standing issues. With the current greed inflation, crises are happening now all across communities in Canada and people need help immediately.

Many of them are renters. That is why the renters component of Bill C-31 is so important and why it needs to get out as soon as possible. This housing benefit is a one-time \$500 payment for Canadians who qualify, specifically families who earn a net income of less than \$35,000 a year. People are already asking me when this will become available.

This payment will help 1.8 million Canadians with the cost of living, and it will make a real difference in their lives. It is some-

thing that the government should have brought in months and months ago. Too many renters have had to rely on rent banks throughout this pandemic. Too many people have already lost their rental housing. They are living in their cars, in tents or are couch surfing. This is the reality in communities across Canada. Tents, and I spoke of this yesterday, are now homes for more and more Canadians as they search for stable, affordable rental housing

I want to take a moment here to talk about payday loans. We have so many in my community of Port Moody—Coquitlam who are having to pay their rent through a payday loan, and we know that those interest rates are out of hand. I just want to point out that there is a bill from my colleague here from New Westminster—Burnaby on reducing those interest rates. The interest rates, for the most vulnerable who use payday loans, are criminal.

The need to act cannot wait. We cannot have one more person lose their home because they cannot afford their rent. The NDP is committed to ensure that this legislation gets through quickly, so that people can get this payment by the end of the year.

Let us not forget how Canadians got into a situation where rents are unaffordable. Conservative and Liberal governments have overseen the financialization of housing. Instead of protecting our social housing stock, they encouraged upzoning and gentrification in the name of density. Density dreams are for developers. The financialization of housing is only working for the wealthy and is leaving people behind. The most impacted are renters in need of low- to mid-income affordable homes.

We are losing affordable homes at a rate of 15:1. For every new unit this government prides themselves on building, it has not protected 15 other renters who now find themselves evicted or demovicted from their homes. Truly affordable social housing has been sacrificed to create an asset class for pension funds and for the wealthiest people and companies across the globe.

Even after Bill C-31 passes, the government must immediately act to end the financialization of housing before more Canadians lose their homes, before more children are displaced from their schools and their friends, and before more seniors lose services, as they are forced out of the community in which they raised their children.

• (1935)

The second part of this legislation is related to the cost of living as well, and it will have profound and long-lasting benefits for millions of Canadians. It is transformational and will make a difference for generations to come. It is dental care.

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New Democrats have always known that everyone, no matter their income, should have access to basic health care, yet ever since the Canada Health Act was first passed, it has been a project incomplete. It has been a vision unfulfilled. Aspects of our health were not included in the legislation that created universal health care. Things like our eyes, mental health, which we are recognizing this month, and dental care are integral to our concept of health and to our health outcomes. They must be included in Canada's universal health care.

Today, with Bill C-31, we take the next step to universal health care by adding the long-awaited dental care. Thirty-five per cent of Canadians lack proper dental insurance and that number jumps to 50% when we are talking about low-income Canadians. Seven million Canadians avoid going to the dentist because of the cost. It is shameful. It is something that has to change. Canada's most vulnerable face the highest rates of dental decay and disease, and the worst access to dental care. There is something wrong here. It needs to change and New Democrats are going to make sure it changes.

The legislation in front of us begins with getting uninsured children of low- and modest-income families the care they need. Kids deserve it. The most prominent day surgery in hospitals among children is dental care. Shamefully, tooth decay remains the most common, yet preventable, chronic childhood illness in Canada because too many families cannot afford a visit to the dentist's office. It has taken 50 years to protect all children with this dental care plan. We are here now, so let us make it happen.

In closing, New Democrats are in a position to use their power to force the government to immediately make life better for people by providing rent support now and essential dental care in the long term. However, let us not forget why we are here in need of these emergency benefits. It is because of bad policies put forward by successive Liberal and Conservative governments, policies that put corporate profits and tax protections for the ultrawealthy before the social fabric of Canada.

Both the Liberals and the Conservatives turned their backs on investments in housing and health care in favour of a private market-driven model that is not working. In fact, it is hurting people. This decades-long lack of government investment in people is why we need Bill C-31, but make no mistake. It is just the beginning of building back necessary social supports so that all people can thrive. New Democrats will continue to lead that charge and use our power to work for Canadians.

• (1940)

**Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our colleagues on the other side are trying to blast this government by suggesting it is not helping Canadian citizens. I would like to remind all of them that once the COVID-19 pandemic started, the government took care of every single Canadian from coast to coast and took care of every business in Canada to help people confront the pandemic and live in decency.

Regarding the housing problem, does my colleague know how much money is allocated to building new houses? Does she know about our rapid housing initiative as well as our day care program? This government is taking care of parents so that they can go to

work and do not have to stay home to take care of the children. Regarding inflation, that is a worldwide problem. The economy created for Canada, thanks to this government, is still number one among the G7.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo:** Mr. Speaker, I will just remind the member that it was because of the NDP that many of those programs, like CERB, allowed people to stay in their homes over the pandemic. If it was not for the NDP, people would have received half of what they needed to survive.

I was actually looking at the rapid housing initiative numbers today on an Order Paper question. A number of rapid house initiatives have not yet been built and we see it manifesting on the streets of our communities. People are living in tents. It does not matter and we cannot fall back on the fact that this is a G7 problem. There are people in Canada suffering, and the government has a responsibility to put them into homes, to build homes, to have affordable homes available for them and to pass Bill C-31.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is this: Does the member recognize that inflation is hurting our economy and that inflation is directly related to government spending? The more we spend, the more we hurt people. There are thousands of dollars of buying power being lost. A single mom making \$50,000 would have lost thousands of dollars in real purchasing power. This would cover dental care. This would cover much more than one \$500 rental payment. This would put her in a much better position.

Does the member recognize the power of our businesses and our workers?

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo:** Mr. Speaker, as a woman standing here in the House, I am going to say there is a real problem with gender inequity in pay. There is a pay gap in this country that is long-lasting. These are inequalities that have brought us to this place. It has to do with the fact that we do not pay people enough. We exploit women and their work. We exploit immigrants and their work, and that is the problem. We need to raise salaries in this country.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam is an ardent defender of her constituents. We know there is a housing crisis across the country. We know there are, in each riding in this country, about 30,000 people who do not have access to dental care.

Could the member remind us about what the impacts will be in Port Moody, Coquitlam, Anmore and Belcarra as a result of this NDP bill getting through the House?

• (1945)

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question, because I did want to talk very quickly about rent banks.

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This legislation would make a huge difference to renters in my riding, in Port Moody, Coquitlam, Anmore and Belcarra. A rent bank came into being during COVID. A rent bank was necessary in my community, and the usage of that rent bank continues to increase.

The same thing is happening all across the country. We know in Ottawa the usage of the rent bank has gone through the roof. This legislation would stop people from having to visit the rent bank and having to go and visit the payday loans. They are almost impossible to return, so I also want to thank the member for his private member's bill on the interest rates of payday loans.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to be able to stand tonight and speak to this bill. I am going to speak slowly, because I just decided to do this and do not have anything to provide to the translators, so I promised them I would do my best to make it as easy as possible for them to translate what I have to say tonight.

It is really important we go back to the beginning of the current government, which was my first time in the House, and remember what happened as early as pre-COVID. We tend to focus on things as they are right now, but how did we get here? We have heard over and over again tonight the word “crisis” and that we are in a crisis. Absolutely, I agree, but why are we in the crisis we are in today, where Canadians are suffering so much within an economy that is simply not functioning the way it should?

We heard about sunny ways and how amazing life was going to be for Canadians with a new government. Honestly, it is true, there was a real sense of hope in Canada when the Liberal government came to power. However, seven years later, we are in a situation where the government, when it runs out of answers, goes all the way back to 2017 to talk about the amazing things it did.

It brought in a Canada child benefit, which, it claims, lifted all of these children out of poverty and no longer gave money to the wealthy, and which was just an amazing service that it gave to Canadians.

However, what the government does not talk about is how many of those whom they raised out of poverty were also being raised out of poverty previously, and also that the way it runs this program, where it picks winners and losers, costs a lot more. The way the government functions, bureaucratically, costs Canadians more.

As I walked along, knocking on doors, people would say to me that they get the child benefit but have to give it all back. At that point, I would ask if they owned their home, how many cars they had and if they both worked. In that circumstance, they did not need that money. I would tell them to set it aside, and when the time came, to pay it back to the government through their taxes.

However, what if something happened whereby that family lost its means of income in the course of that year? Let us say they worked in the oil field when the government came into power, and all of a sudden their jobs are gone. The way this program is set up, they would need to wait until the next year, after they filed their taxes, to show how desperate they were, and then have their child benefit reinstated. The way the program used to run, if someone hit

the end of that year and things were bad, they would have that money.

On the circumstances around lowering the taxes on the middle class and raising them on the wealthy, there are reasons to go that route to some degree, yet the government claimed it was revenue neutral. We know it was not. We are talking millions of dollars in difference that it did not make up by doing that, so already we were in a situation where the government was not managing money well. It was not managing the funds from Canadians' money well in the way it was providing its programs.

That was all pre-COVID, when it signalled to the world that Canada was not going to be open for business anymore. All kinds of small businesses and medium-sized businesses that were involved in our oil and gas industry left this country in an instant. I am sure the members on the other side of the floor must understand that when one does that and all of a sudden creates chaos in the source of funding for our economy, it is not a good thing. Canadians were left in very dire straights.

We were no longer open for business. We lost the confidence of investors in this nation. As a matter of fact, the government had to buy a pipeline, or maybe chose to buy a pipeline, because it wanted to control the future of our oil and gas industry in a way that was not beneficial toward a green economy in the future, because we were hampering our own country at a time when the world, and it knows this as well, will continue to need oil for a long time.

● (1950)

Therefore, we are saying to a world that needs our products, which are clean and ethical and enable our people to earn a living and to pay taxes so that current and future governments can provide for the true needs of Canadians, that all of a sudden those products are not there. These measures that we are looking at today are temporary measures. They are like putting one's finger in a dike.

I know Canadians are desperate enough to say that they want this and need this and that it is better than nothing, but the frustrating thing is that we never should have gotten here in the first place. The government promised a \$10-billion over-expenditure on an annual basis. It has never met that promise, and we are facing almost a trillion and a half dollars in debt as a nation, larger than all the debt combined throughout the history of our country. That is where we are today.

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Of course, Canadians are in a circumstance that is very difficult. I grew up in Saskatchewan. As I was growing up, we had an NDP government. I grew up during that time when things were really tough. My husband has four siblings and I have five. Out of 11 of us, everybody but two left our province. There was no work. There was no income for our government to do the things it needed to do. We were in a situation where government knew best and wanted to provide for everybody, and it shut down productivity in our province. People left because there was no work. There was no encouragement for people to become small business men or women and make a difference for their own family by becoming productive on their own.

With respect to these measures that I am seeing here now, they are trying to put a stopgap in a situation that is really bad. That is what happened during COVID as well, because people were not allowed to work. Small business owners in my communities could have maintained their ability to be active in their communities. They could have continued to pay their employees and produce their products in a way that worked within that environment, but the government shut everything down. Yes, it provided in that circumstance, but it created the problem as well.

I experienced having a small business in the early 1980s. It says here that this is the worst inflation in 40 years. Do members know what was happening about 40 years ago? I experienced losing our business, as did many business owners, because interest rates rose to 22% overnight because of the fiscal approach of Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Here we are today. The apple does not fall far from the tree.

I just want to put a shout-out for the fact that yes, as the NDP members are saying, large corporations should not be receiving benefits from the government. The Liberal government handed out incredible amounts of money for fridges for a large corporation that these people spoke against, yet here it is now, supporting them.

I want to speak for corporations that put incredible amounts of tax dollars into our provincial and federal governments and provide amazing community resources. I know, because I live where there is one. They provide benefits to their employees that are unmatched. We have a lot for which to thank those corporations that do good work and are fiscally and environmentally responsible. We should not be painting them all with the same brush.

● (1955)

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the hon. member that if there were restrictions in Saskatchewan or Alberta, most of those were provincial. The provincial government stepped forward and it did things to protect the citizens from catching COVID and overwhelming our already overwhelmed medical system.

I would like the member to reflect on the dolphin effect that Alberta and Saskatchewan and, perhaps, to a certain degree, Newfoundland and Labrador have gone through by depending so much on oil. There are times that are really good, and other times that are just absolutely atrocious for those provinces. We are seeing today that OPEC and Russia are getting together to cut the amount of oil they are producing to keep the prices high. It seems that we are un-

der the thumb of some gangsters here by depending a lot on oil and oil revenues.

What would the hon. member propose to whatever government we end up with in Alberta and the Government of Saskatchewan to protect themselves and harden themselves from the variations in revenues they have seen from the oil patch?

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to the first part of what was said, that it was the provinces that brought in the mandates that made it difficult for businesses and whatnot. I am sorry, but I hold the Prime Minister and the Liberal government fully responsible for everything that has happened in this country, because when it first hit and we did not know what we were dealing with, our borders were not shut down to China and thousands of people from Wuhan, and China in general, came into this country.

That is absolutely true. You are welcome at any point to share with the House, the way you were supposed to, what helped you make the decisions that you made and every province responded to the—

**The Speaker:** I just want to remind the hon. member that I did not make any decisions. I am sure she meant the hon. members over there, if she could just speak through the Speaker.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, you did make a couple of good decisions that I really appreciated, even as far as bringing the member to the bar and facing what you faced.

Anytime the government is ready to share the information that this House called for so that we are aware of what was done to make the decisions that were made is fine with me. I am open to that and I would appreciate hearing what should have been shared with the House in the first place.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are debating Bill C-31. What is Bill C-31? We are talking about providing families whose incomes are less than \$90,000 the ability to access dental supports for children 12 and under as its first initiative. For those who do not have access to this, it is absolutely critical. We are also talking about providing low-income individuals and families a housing benefit of \$500, although it is a one-time payment. The Conservatives are against these measures. They are against families who need dental support accessing this dental care plan.

In the member's constituency, has she talked to any of the families who are in need of dental services? Has she told them that the Conservatives intend to say no to their access to dental care supports?

● (2000)

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that this is definitely something that we have discussed in my riding. Truth be told, the majority of people in my riding have dental care programs. I have experienced this as well because, when the previous prime minister was in place, we went through a very hard time. We lost our business. We had \$500 to our name, three small children and had to totally retool for our future. There were programs available for us. There are programs available for seniors who are within the province to assist them as well.

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It is not that I do not believe that these children should have the support that they need. I just believe that we should be focused, as a government, on those who truly need assistance and not thinking of the larger-scale programs where everybody falls under the same umbrella and no one is left to put the taxes in the place—

**The Speaker:** Resuming debate, the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you, the support staff and all the members in here for burning the midnight oil with me. I appreciate it. I will try to keep you informed, if not entertained.

Thanks again to the people of Northumberland—Peterborough South for sending me here. It is an honour every day.

Today, I rise to talk about Bill C-31, which is an act respecting the cost of living relief measures related to dental care and rental housing, otherwise dubbed the so-called affordability bill.

Before I start talking about the substance of the bill, and I will get there, I promise, I think it is important to outline some of the context in which this legislation comes to the House.

We are in an affordability crisis. There can be no doubt about that. I think all 338 members would share my opinion on that. We have inflation that has hit over 7%. We are facing an environment that has been created, and this is where some of my Liberal colleagues may disagree with me, by the Liberals' tax-and-spend agenda. The government's profligate spending has led to more printing of money.

What happens, in broad terms, is that the government spends and spends, but it does not have the money to back that up. It does not have the tax dollars to back up its spending. What it does is print money. The fancy term is quantitative easing, which involves the buying and selling of bonds by the government basically to itself, but the reality is that it is printing money.

What happens when inflation increases is that it hurts Canadians of course because everything becomes increasingly more expensive, which creates increased pain for Canadians. The truth of the matter is that we will certainly hear the members of the NDP talk about the price gouging and the profit-taking. There is one organization that has taken more profits than all corporations combined. That is the federal government. If we want to talk about profiteering, that starts and begins with the federal government. The revenues overfloweth because of the inflation tax. Every week the current government hits new revenue highs and new revenue increases. This is coming off the backs of Canadians.

If we look at people who are making \$50,000 a year, those individuals have seen their purchasing power decrease by thousands of dollars. They have seen a pay decrease of thousands of dollars. I can tell members that this story is hundreds of years old, even thousands of years old. Every time the government goes about this, right back to the Roman government, when it starts printing money, or at that point reducing the amount of valuable material in coins, when it starts increasing that, what always happens is that the people get hurt.

With that more spending, the rules of supply and demand kick in. Money is worth less and it is harder for everyone, but who it hurts the most is not the wealthy. The wealthy are doing quite well. They have seen their million-dollar houses become \$2-million houses. They have seen their businesses and stock portfolios potentially increase in value. Even that is being hit now with the current Liberal government's poor economic stewardship, but it is the most vulnerable. If people are earning \$20,000 or \$30,000 a year, with food prices going up by 10%, it is a much bigger deal for them than if they are earning \$100,000 and they just have to reduce their Netflix subscription. That is the difference between a single mom being able to feed her family or not.

I will tell members that if they want a true rental and dental bill, it is called eliminating the carbon tax. That will provide Canadians with a lot more tax relief, which will provide a lot more dollars, and to the most vulnerable, than this rental-dental bill ever would.

We have to understand the very basics of this. Food inflation has increased the cost of food by \$1,300. The rental bill will provide \$500 for rent. The math is simple. The reality is monetary. Continuing to spend money, which is funded by the Bank of Canada, will create a disillusionment.

● (2005)

What happens when the government spends money is that there is an initial excitement and exuberance. When that money hits the bank accounts of Canadians, they are excited, which has happened many times throughout history, but that exuberance quickly turns into a deep sense of disillusionment as they realize that it is just a nasty trick because the cost of everything has increased. Once again, the main beneficiary of this is the government. Its revenues continue to increase while Canadians continue to suffer.

The only true path to addressing this affordability crisis and to really increasing the prosperity of our country is by increasing productivity, because it is voodoo to say that if we print money, we are worth more. That is not how this works. How a country actually increases its value is by producing more goods and services efficiently, because that increases real wages, real prosperity and, dare I say, real profits. We see that impact on Canadian wage earners because Canada's wages are lower, on average, than the United States, Switzerland and Ireland. What else is lower than in those countries? Our productivity is lower. Productivity per hour in Switzerland is \$60 and ours is \$50. In the U.S. it is \$65 and ours is \$50. In Ireland, it is \$84. It is no surprise because that has a real impact. We need to make Canadians more productive.

Do members know that we are last in the OECD, the very bottom, of capital investments? It is because the private sector is getting pushed out by the Liberal government. The private sector simply does not have the funds to invest and that has very real consequences. Canada is investing 43¢ on every dollar the U.S. is investing in capital investments. That makes every worker less efficient, less effective and makes our country less productive.

Through the private sector, we create opportunities for people. We create great jobs. We allow people to spend their money as they best see fit, and 100 times out of 100 times, I will put more faith in Canadians to make decisions about their own lives than any bureaucrat in Ottawa, because Canadians know how to control their own money. Farmers know how to be stewards of their farms, which is exactly the opposite of what the Prime Minister said, and I can say that my farmers are not happy about that comment.

Let us get back to everyday Canadians. We are coming up on Thanksgiving. Do members want to know what the impact of the Liberals' tax-and-spend agenda is? The cost of a turkey is up 15% to 16% per kilogram. Potatoes are up 22%. Butter has increased 13%. Cranberries are up 12%. Bacon is 12% more expensive. Chicken is up 10%, and corn is up 6%. For a wealthy family, this will not have a significant impact, but for a family just trying to get by, trying to have a nice Thanksgiving after the two years of suffering we have all been through with COVID and trying to put food on the table, this will have a real impact. We have seen that.

There were 20% more Canadians going to food banks from 2019 to 2021, a full 20%. Over 20% of Canadians are changing their diet because they cannot afford to eat the way they used to, and 8% of people are skipping meals. They avoid eating because they cannot afford food in this Liberal economy.

We in the Conservative Party want every child to have dental care and we want every person to be housed, but we believe that comes from the workers and businesses of this country. The higher the inflation, the more it will impoverish Canadians. That is what history says. We have true compassion for people. We want to make sure that businesses are successful, that workers are effective, that families can have a great Thanksgiving and that Canada remains affordable and becomes the freest country in the world.

• (2010)

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am curious about the way the member opposite ended his speech. He suggested that the Conservatives support dental care, but dental care comes from the workers of this country. Is he suggesting that families that make under \$90,000 are not working hard and, therefore, do not deserve dental care?

In addition to that, how can he look Canadians in the face and tell them they do not deserve access to dental care for their children, but he can receive taxpayer-funded dental care for himself and his family? How can he say that people making under \$90,000 do not deserve dental care while he receives taxpayer-funded dental care himself?

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy the member's passion, but I would ask her how she can sit at her Thanksgiving

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dinner, eating comfortably on public dollars, while many of my constituents will not be able to afford to eat this Thanksgiving.

Her facts are just wrong. In Ontario, kids 17 and over in low-income families have publicly funded dental care. That already exists, and that is her province.

If we want Canadians to have true prosperity, true prosperity comes from Canadians. It does not come from the federal government.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a curious thing. The member actually says he wants to see families who need dental care have access to dental care. There is a simple solution to that. All he has to do is vote for the bill.

It is not rocket science to figure it out, because this bill would ensure that families with incomes of less than \$90,000, and that do not have access to a dental care plan, would get it, starting with children under 12 this year. Next year it would be for seniors, people with disabilities and people 18 and under, and full realization would follow the year after that. It is not that difficult to figure out how to realize what the member wants. Why does he not just vote for the bill?

On the question of affordability, the NDP has been advancing to actually tax wealthy CEOs and big corporations, which have been getting a giant windfall in profitability. Why do we not do what the UN Secretary General suggested, and put in place a windfall tax, as the NDP is suggesting? If that happened, we could ensure those individuals, who are not able to put food on the table, would get the support they need.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, I enjoy the member's passion, but the reality is this: The more we tax, the more we spend, the more money we print, the tougher it gets for Canadians. The 10% food inflation will mean that children will go hungry tonight. That is what those policies lead to. They lead to the impoverishment of Canadians.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for highlighting some of the economic problems Canada faces, including our lack of productivity when compared to our G7 neighbours and trading partners. It made me think of a speech given by the former minister of finance for the government, Bill Morneau. In it, he said that the fundamental problem of the government is its focus on wealth redistribution rather than wealth creation.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on that.

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**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that, when we increase the size of the pie, everyone benefits. The reality is that when the pie shrinks, it is the most vulnerable who suffer. Like I said, 10% food inflation and 7% inflation in general are hurting people on fixed incomes the most, those folks who are wage earners and those who are trying to climb up the opportunity staircase. They are being brought down by the corrosive impacts of inflation. That is why we need to get this tax-and-spend NDP-Liberal government under financial control.

• (2015)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to once again rise in the House of Commons. It is great to see many members of Parliament returning to be in person in the House of Commons once again. It is great to see. It is great for camaraderie in the House to be able to connect with other members, not only within our own party but also with the parties across the way.

Throughout the summer, I did hear from many people who are worried about the cost of living, which is what brings us to the bill we have here today. Many people are doing their very best to survive. I am sure that all members should be aware by now that this is not only a regional problem. It is not only affecting my riding. It is affecting people all across the country. As a result, Canadians are worried about what is happening right now with our economy and where it is headed.

It has been a really difficult year for a growing number of people. We have seen our inflation rate reach levels not seen in almost 40 years, which would be before I was even born.

Back in the early to mid-eighties, my parents had to deal with buying their farm with interest rates at around 18%. We are already hearing some rumblings of a recession, which should take us back to that time once again. I know that many people are not too excited about the prospect of interest rates of even 8%, let alone 18%.

For a lot of younger Canadians today and, in particular, a lot of young farmers and ranchers in my riding, it is already hard to imagine ever getting ahead, finding opportunity or even achieving a dream as simple as owning a home. Now they have to deal with everyday essentials that are basically unaffordable, never mind trying to think about the future for themselves or their families, if they can start a family in the first place.

In response to this situation, we have Bill C-31 in front of us today. Sadly, there is no sign that the Liberal government will acknowledge the full scale of the problem.

They also do not want to talk about where the problems are coming from or admit that reversing their failed policies is part of the solution. Since taking power over seven years ago, the Liberal government has been short-sighted with promoting and developing our industries. Strengthening our economy simply has not been a priority, and some of our strongest assets, such as the energy sector, have consistently been punished instead of supported.

This left us in a vulnerable position, where we were unprepared for whenever a new crisis would eventually come along. As a result, Canadians continue to suffer the consequences of these bad

decisions. At first, the Liberals were simply ignoring the issue for a while, but they cannot say that we didn't warn them.

Once it was clear that our national economy was getting into trouble, the Liberals went right ahead with their same old approach. As much as they try to pretend otherwise, big spending is not going to make our troubles disappear. It actually adds fuel to the fire at a time when the flames are out of control. That is what Canadians are seeing and living right now with their cost of living.

Last year saw inflation rise quickly and stay high above the target of 2%. After the Liberals could not ignore it anymore, they decided to downplay it. They would say, "Do not worry. It is just temporary."

That is basically what the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance said back in January when I asked about their projections at the time. She said:

Inflation is currently higher than what we were accustomed to over the last decade. This is true in Canada and in many other countries around the globe. This is a matter of concern to the Bank of Canada and the government. However, most market observers around the world view the factors keeping inflation elevated to be temporary. As a result, the Bank of Canada expects inflation to ease back and to reach its 2% target by late 2022.

That was their prediction, on the record, and they have not really reconsidered it since then. Even though that clearly did not turn out to be the case, we will not hear the Liberal government take any responsibility for what Canadians are going through today. To this day, they will never dare admit that they have contributed to it. Anything or anyone else is to blame except for themselves.

After the budget, I asked again if the government had any plans to control inflation, just in case they were wrong in saying that it might not actually be that big of a deal. Once again, there was not much of an answer. Besides mentioning the Bank of Canada hiking interest rates, they pointed to the type of proposal we find in Bill C-31, along with national child care.

Over the summer, while Canadians faced worsening challenges, the government finally realized that it might start to affect them, after seeing some signs that it is losing public support over its approach. It tried to generate some new excitement in the media about how it was putting together a plan to help with the cost of living but, so far, the Liberal plan appears to be changing nothing from what they were doing before. There is no readjustment in sight.

That means that it is attempting to help with affordability in limited ways without fighting inflation, which should be a non-starter. If we look at Bill C-31, we will find that the Liberals propose to handle inflation with new programs that require a lot more inflationary spending. By definition, that will not make things better overall.

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• (2020)

It might be a political price for a coalition with the NDP, but paying it will end up costing Canadians, who will continue to struggle with affordability. That is because none of this amounts to a full-scale plan or a serious effort to fix the root cause of something that is impacting all Canadians.

If that continues unchecked, it is easy for the problem to stay with us and get worse. After spending billions of taxpayer dollars, it could help the effects of inflation persist and cancel any net benefits to affordable living. If that happens, what will the government tell Canadians then? Even with affordability, the Liberals are missing the mark. They are well aware that food and fuel are two of the biggest things driving inflation, and they want to make things worse in both of these areas.

When Canadians started to see the highest gas prices ever at the pumps, Conservatives voted for a temporary suspension of the carbon tax, but the Liberal government refused to do it. We are dealing with food prices rising at the fastest pace in 40 years. At a time like this, I have to remind the government that it is our farmers who grow and raise it in the first place. The same carbon tax is hitting them year after year, and the Liberals, the NDP and the Bloc are all comfortable with tripling it going forward.

Instead of changing direction, they are doubling down, even tripling down. The Liberals deny that it is doing any damage because the rebates are giving people more money back than they pay, at least that is the government's idea of affordability. Many Canadians know that is not happening for them, especially in small towns, particularly in rural Saskatchewan and especially for our farmers.

I have seen a bill from a farmer that shows the added cost of \$1,100 in one month, just in carbon tax. It definitely does not match the annual rebate given for my province.

The Liberals are also bringing another attack on agriculture through an unrealistic target for fertilizer emissions. After being asked multiple times, they have not ruled out a restriction or a ban as seen in other countries. That type of policy would be disastrous for producing food, and it should be unthinkable when the world is already trying to avoid catastrophic shortages.

It should come as no surprise that the Liberals are not interested in prioritizing people's needs over their political projects. The real concern for achieving affordability has been noticeably lacking. How can Canadians believe the same government's claim that their new programs are supposed to be the answer? It all sounds more like an excuse. The government's past record speaks for itself.

Even with child care, as another recent example, the government's plan is designed for specific circumstances involving day care. What is it doing for any families who want to live on a single income and take care of their own children in their own home? The Liberals are the ones who removed income splitting, which helped these families afford whichever decisions were right for them. With the way it has been handling everything, the government's failed priorities have added extra pressure in the lives of these families and excluded different options for them.

Meanwhile, they are not addressing the larger problem behind the costs that all families have to deal with. That can only be done by actually fighting inflation and strengthening our economy as a whole. We are demanding something better for Canadians.

We cannot pretend the Liberals are offering any lasting solutions by simply repackaging their platform, a platform that has consistently been proven not to work.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, for weeks we have been hearing the Conservatives talking about “triple, triple, triple” when it comes to the carbon tax.

In my province of British Columbia, the price of gas has gone up about a dollar a litre this year. The whole carbon tax, even if we got rid of the carbon tax, is just 10¢ or 11¢ of that. It is 1% of the greedflation we have seen from the oil and gas companies.

The increase that is going to happen this year is 2¢ a litre. Again, that is 1% of the price we are paying for fuel across much of the country. Today the price of gas was supposed to go up 10¢. If we got rid of the carbon tax, we would be back to where we were yesterday. This would not solve the problem of inflation for Canadians.

Could the member comment on that? All this talk about the carbon tax will do absolutely nothing for most Canadians. They need real help, and that is what the NDP is delivering tonight with Bill C-31.

• (2025)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, I would submit that going back to yesterday where there is no carbon tax would mean that groceries, food, heating, energy and gas would all be cheaper. It would mean things would be more affordable for Canadians. That is the crisis that we are going through right now, an affordability crisis.

Over the next number of years the carbon tax will go up, and the clean fuel standard will kick in, which is also going to add another couple cents per litre, and going forward that will also increase, putting another burden on Canadians, consumers and how we transport our goods across this country.

Those are things we cannot afford that are pricing Canadians out of the grocery store, out of their homes and into a situation where they have to choose between heating or eating.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple question. The member spoke quite a bit about inflation being caused by government spending. Can he explain to the House why he is voting in favour of Bill C-30, which is for spending money to give people more in GST rebates?

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**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, it is quite simple. It is a tax rebate. When I first entered the workforce, I received GST cheques. I remember what that was like, but that was for taxes I had paid to the government that were coming directly back to me. It is just like a tax return. When we all file our taxes, the money coming back to us is what we paid to the government. Leaving more money in people's pockets would be better, but in lieu of the government actually cutting and reducing taxes, we will support a rebate on the taxes that Canadians have paid.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to build on that. I find this confusing, because ultimately when a government pools its money equally and equitably and all people pay their fair share, including billionaires like a Weston, who is worth \$10 billion U.S. in personal value and worth, it creates public services and social services that ultimately extend equality and create more of it. That is money back in people's pockets. They do not have to spend it on going to the doctor. They do not have to spend it on going to the dentist. They do not have to worry about their pension and saving for it in a private way. I do not understand why the member opposite is not talking about what those public services provide to people's pockets.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, the \$12-million handout the government gave to Loblaws, for example, was something that never should have happened. As far as I know, the NDP supported that measure. We do not want to see big handouts to big corporations like that.

What is most important is that oil companies in small-town Saskatchewan, for example, are passing along their profits. They are investing in the communities where they operate, but also beyond them. Hospitals, care homes and schools are paid for by revenue dollars that are brought in by oil companies. The government is making record profits right now on the backs of oil revenues that have been sky high over the summer.

We need to remember where that money comes from. It comes from the people who are providing jobs and providing energy to this country. As the government and the NDP want to phase out and eliminate that, they are eliminating billions of dollars in revenue for the provinces and the federal government. These programs would not exist or even be an option if these companies were to disappear.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as usual, it is an honour to rise to speak. Tonight it is especially an honour because rarely do we actually debate life-changing bills here in this Parliament. We talk about a lot of important things, but we do not often talk about bills that will literally change the lives of not a few Canadians but millions of Canadians.

Bill C-31 is one of them because the main part of the bill is an interim measure to provide dental care to millions of Canadian children. It is a down payment on the full dental care program that the NDP has put forward to provide dental coverage, like two-thirds of Canadians have and one-third do not. Those people making under \$90,000 a year, by the end of the three-year program, will have dental coverage just like most Canadians. This is a down payment on that. It is truly life changing.

I want to tell the story of my friend, Joan. I talk to Joan every month or so. She heard about the agreement between the NDP and the Liberals. Part of that agreement was that the Liberal government agreed to implement the NDP's dental care plan. When I phoned her just to catch up, she just said, "I have to talk about dental care." I was a bit taken aback. Usually we do not talk about political stuff. She said, "I grew up in rural Alberta. We were a poor family when I was a kid. We couldn't afford to go to a dentist."

Like most kids in those days, especially, she got cavities. Her friends who had parents who were more well off got to go to the dentist and have those cavities filled. Joan's parents could not afford that so they did not go to the dentist. Eventually, her teeth were in such bad shape that she had to have many of them taken out and replaced with ill-fitting dentures. She was a kid getting dentures. As a result, she was painfully shy about how her mouth looked and how her teeth looked. That shyness has followed her the rest of her life. She is still very uncomfortable in social situations.

She was very emotional when she was telling me this story. She said, "Not having dental care when I was a kid changed my life for the worse. It made me shy. I wish I wasn't, and if only I could have had that dental care when I was a kid it would have changed my life."

This is life-changing legislation. Every child in this country should have access to dental care. Many of us here just take dental care for granted. We all, as MPs, have a dental plan. Many of us had jobs before we went into politics that had dental plans. We have had dental coverage for some time. However, a third of Canadians, 35% actually, do not have access to dental care.

There are seven million Canadians who avoid going to the dentist every year because they cannot afford to. We are not talking about one or two people here and there. This is thousands and thousands of people in the ridings of every one of the people here in this chamber. That proportion rises to 50% of low-income Canadians who do not have dental coverage and a majority of seniors. This not only changes people's lives but it costs our health care system a lot of money.

In British Columbia, alone, it is estimated that visits to emergency rooms by people needing emergency dental care who cannot afford to go to a dentist costs the province about \$155 million per year. That is in British Columbia, so we could multiply that by 10, or \$1.5 billion, a year across Canada, as a rough estimate.

*Government Orders*

● (2030)

The NDP are very proud of the fact that Tommy Douglas brought in our universal health care system in Canada. When he did, he fully imagined that it would cover all forms of health care, including dental care and pharmacare for that matter, but that did not happen.

When the NDP proposed to fix that in the previous Parliament, we brought in this dental care bill, and both the Liberals and Conservatives voted against it. However, now in this minority Parliament, the NDP has used its power here to make this happen. We will finally have dental coverage for all Canadians.

This dental care plan will not be a universal plan. Not every Canadian would get it. It would be only for those who need it, for those who do not have dental care now and who make less than \$90,000 per year, but it would give everybody who cannot afford to go to the dentist the ability to go to the dentist and have their teeth cared for like most of us do.

Why is this important? As I said, dental care is essential to overall health. I am going to go through some of the details of it. It is estimated that 500,000 Canadian children would benefit from this bill. It would provide payments of up to \$650 per child per year for families with a net income under \$90,000. That will be pro-rated. If someone makes under \$70,000, they would get the full amount, and someone would get something else up to \$90,000.

I would like to give some quotes from experts in the field as to how they see this plan and what they think about it.

The first is from Lynn Tomkins who is the president of the Canadian Dental Association. I talked to Dr. Tomkins back in August. She says:

[The Canadian Dental Association] welcomed the federal government's commitment...of a multi-billion-dollar, ongoing investment in enhancing Canadians' access to oral health. It comes after years of CDA encouraging federal investments in dental care. All those who have advocated on this issue in the past, whether on behalf of CDA, provincial or territorial dental associations...should be proud that their hard work has led to this once-in-a-generation opportunity.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. We cannot miss it and cannot let it go by us.

The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association said:

After months of hard work, meetings with parliamentarians...the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA), representing the sixth-largest regulated health profession in Canada, was excited at yesterday's announcement about the Government of Canada's proposed new legislation (Bill C-31) to deliver targeted supports to Canadians as part of its affordability plan.

Brandon Doucet, who is the founder of the Coalition for Dental care, is a dentist from Nova Scotia. He said, "by the end of this year, we could have one of the most important additions to public health care since medicare's founding if the federal government delivers on its promise to create a public dental program for low-income Canadians."

I do not want to sound too much like K-tel, but there is more. This is just one part of Bill C-31. The other part is another important pillar in affordability and that is the rental benefit. That would be a \$500 top-up, a one-time payment, that would go to individuals with net incomes of up to \$20,000, so these are low-income Cana-

dians, or household net incomes of up to \$35,000. This would help 1.8 million families across Canada.

There are two parts to this bill. The dental care, I think, is the most important, but also, people are struggling with their rents. People are struggling to find places to live. This would help them as well.

● (2035)

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy that my hon. colleague from British Columbia talked about the rental aspect of this legislation. I was talking with a constituent of mine, and we were trying to understand how significant the one-time \$500 payment is. This family purchased a new home but was budgeting at a lower interest rate. In the meantime, interest rates have gone up 2.5% to 3%, which made a difference of \$700 in their monthly payments. That is an inflationary cost.

I wonder if the member could comment on the importance of managing inflation and getting it under control, and how beneficial that would be for working-class people and poorer families that need dental care.

● (2040)

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Mr. Speaker, I agree that inflation is hurting Canadians. There are all these aspects to inflation. We have heard a lot about the price of gas. We have heard a tremendous amount about the price of housing and the impossibility of owning a home for new homebuyers in Canada. With the skyrocketing cost of rent in my riding, it is almost impossible to find rental accommodation of any sort, let alone afford it.

I agree that the top-up we are talking about helps people who are really in need of that help. These are people who are spending more than 30% of their income on their accommodation, on their rent. If someone were to tell them that \$500 is not enough, they would say that it would be a big help.

We need to tackle the housing situation. The NDP wants the government to build 500,000 units of affordable housing to catch up to where we should have been had the federal government not gotten out of the affordable housing game back in the nineties. Yes, there is a lot for us to do to tackle housing and inflation, but Bill C-31 is an essential and very impactful, beneficial bill that would help the millions of Canadians who are struggling with their costs today.

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**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the member can weigh in with his thoughts on what is causing inflation. The Conservatives are railing on about inflation being caused by government spending. Ironically, this is government spending they voted in favour of, but I will park that for a second.

**An hon. member:** No, they didn't.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, they did. It was 400 billion dollars' worth.

Can this member give us his insight into what he thinks is causing inflation? Does he agree with the Conservatives' principal argument that we should not be spending money on this very important piece of legislation because it is just going to add to inflation, despite the fact that economists resoundingly say it will not?

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Mr. Speaker, I will not go into the whole spiel on inflation; I do not have that much time here tonight. However, when we look at the extraordinary profits of oil and gas companies and the extraordinary profits of the big box grocery retailers, it is clear that they have taken advantage of this situation. Because of factors coming out of the pandemic and because of the war in Ukraine, prices have started to rise, and they have taken advantage of that and added their own excess profits on top of it. That is one of the biggest factors in inflation.

Perhaps some of the government spending did cause inflation. If we look around the world, Canada is in the middle of the pack when it comes to how bad inflation is. However, what economists have been saying about the measures we are talking about here tonight, such as dental care for people who need it, a housing top-up for low-income families struggling to pay their rents and the GST rebate that has been doubled, is that those kinds of targeted programs do not cause inflation. If the Conservatives are concerned about inflation rising because of this, the experts will say they are wrong.

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise again today on Bill C-31. From the outset, let me make it clear that I will be voting against this bill, because the NDP-Liberal government is driving up the cost of living. The more it spends, the more things will cost.

In reference to the commentary I just heard, Derek Holt, vice president and head of capital markets economics at Scotiabank, stated:

[I]t seems sensible to assume that this will add to pressures on measures of core inflation.... Any belief that it relieves inflationary pressures must have studied different economics textbooks.

That is in reference to the government spending we are talking about here tonight.

The senior economist at the Bank of Montreal said, "We're not going to deny that there are households seriously in need of help right now in this inflationary environment, but, from a policy perspective, we all know that sending out money as an inflation-support measure is inherently...inflationary."

Therefore, I would disagree with the previous speakers that the bill before us today will not impact inflation. I believe it will, and that is one of the primary reasons I will be voting against this bill tonight.

On the dental plan, which is the first part of this bill, I looked at it in the context of British Columbia. On page 4 of the legislation, paragraph (d) states:

they make the application in respect of a person who has received or will receive dental care services the costs of which have not been and will not be fully paid or reimbursed under a program or plan established by the government of Canada or of a province;

We have heard a lot tonight about the top-up being \$650, but I am wondering how far that will actually go for children under the age of 12 who could be eligible for the program with parents with an adjusted income of up to \$90,000. In the province of B.C., people can qualify for dental insurance, for example, if they are on income assistance. They get \$2,000 over two calendar years and an additional \$1,000 for anaesthetics, so I really hope that when this bill is studied at committee, the provisions on page 4, under paragraph (d), are looked at very closely in the context of the impact this will have, if any, for the people of British Columbia.

On the second part of the bill, I will acknowledge that \$500 does go a long way for many people. One of the concerns I have is about how it will help people who are homeless and did not file taxes last year. Will they be eligible for this money? I do not know. I was thinking, when preparing for this speech, of a man named Darryl, whom I met at the truth and reconciliation event the other day. It got me thinking that Darryl suffered at St. Mary's Indian Residential School, where we had the event. He is homeless. He does have a community. He is supported by the friendship centre, but he still lives on the streets. Darryl is not going to benefit from the support being talked about here tonight.

I would be remiss as well if I did not mention how it relates to affordability. The average price for a one-bedroom apartment in Vancouver right now is \$2,600 per month. That means the \$500 will not cover a quarter of what someone has to pay to live in the most populous city in the province of British Columbia. That makes me wonder if this will have the economic impact that the government and the New Democratic Party believe it will have. In fact, I do not think it will have much of an economic impact, although I acknowledge it will, for one month, help those making up to \$35,000. However, it will not address the structural challenges impacting the Canadian economy, which allow for prices to rise on a month-to-month basis right now.

I think the Government of Canada could be focusing on some other measures that would actually help address inflation and the cost of living. I mentioned Darryl earlier, from the truth and reconciliation event. What about indigenous solutions? The Auditor General has written many reports about the poor service delivery from Indigenous Services Canada that indigenous people have to deal with on a regular basis.

• (2045)

The other day, I went golfing with my friend Joey from Sq'ewlets First Nation. He talked to me about there being an ever-revolving door of representatives from ISC that his band has to deal with. Why is the government not right now focusing on helping indigenous people build more homes and making it easier to build more homes with Indigenous Services Canada? That could have a really big impact on addressing the affordability challenge and the disproportionate number of indigenous people who lack sufficient housing. That would have a real impact in Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon.

During the last election, the Government of Canada talked a lot about the housing accelerator fund. In fact, it was one of the Liberals' premier promises. They said that by 2024-25, the Government of Canada would build 100,000 new homes by addressing some of the challenges that municipalities face. In other words, that would be red tape.

Here in the House of Commons, the opposition members talk a lot about red tape because it impacts so many of the people we represent. David Eby, who is running for the leadership of the New Democratic Party in B.C., actually agrees with the official opposition and put forward a plan that would cut red tape across municipalities in British Columbia. Even the Government of Canada agrees that cutting red tape would address affordability. Therefore, why are we not talking about something that is going to decrease the biggest expense that people are facing? That is the cost of a home and building homes.

I asked the government the other night how many homes it has built so far under the accelerator fund? They could not say a single one. The government needs to build more homes and work with the provincial governments to cut red tape at the municipal level so we can give people what they want.

The third thing we could do to address inflation relates to agriculture. As members know, Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon has some of the best agricultural soil found anywhere in the world. We grow blueberries. We grow wine. We produce more milk per capita than almost any other riding in the country. We have a thriving poultry sector. We grow a variety of vegetables as well. We are one of the key agricultural areas in all of Canada.

The other day, I was at the Agassiz Fall Fair, which is a celebration of Canadian and especially British Columbian agriculture. Farmer after farmer who spoke with me said that they were scared. Government wants to increase their input costs, which include insurance because that costs them money, but they said that if the government does what it plans to do they are effectively going to be out of business in some cases. Therefore, the government needs to provide business confidence to our agricultural producers to give Canadians what they want, which is locally grown, nutritious food that will reduce the costs that people are seeing at the grocery store right now.

We are so thankful for and so proud of the agricultural produce in the Fraser Valley and Fraser Canyon regions. The government needs to stand behind our farmers, get out of the way and say that it is not going to increase the fertilizer costs that would impact the rate of production we are seeing. Canada has a special role to play

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right now in addressing the global food crisis. Let us stand with our farmers. Let us help the world feed itself with nutritious Canadian food.

The fourth thing we need to look at is supply chains. It was just last year that British Columbia was effectively cut off from the rest of the country. With respect to Highway 3, Highway 1, the Duffey, the CP rail line and the CN rail line, we were cut off. The Port of Vancouver had a huge delay after that. What is the government doing to look at the structural transportation challenges that add additional costs to the movement of goods and people in this country? Every parliamentarian would stand behind faster transportation and the faster movement of goods. Let us work together and address that key problem.

The fifth thing that we need to address is the cost of government spending. It goes up and up and up, and people want some accountability. Under the current government the public service has grown by 24%, yet the service delivery has decreased substantially. All of our offices feel that, including immigration, CRA, CPP or whatever it is. Let us work together. Let us improve accountability and hold our public servants accountable to do the job that they are paid to do. Let us work together to see that happen.

• (2050)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is so much incredible misinformation in that speech that I just do not even know where to begin.

I would point out for the member that at the beginning of his speech he said that spending government money, in particular in this program, would have an inflationary impact. He then later went on to talk about how giving people \$500 would not affect the economy, and he said it twice. Which one is it? Is it going to have an inflationary impact or is it not? That is what he said. He should review the tape. Maybe he misspoke.

More importantly, the member talked about housing and said that the federal government should work with municipalities to cut red tape. I worked at the municipal level. I know the way that it works. He knows the way that it works. Every member in this House knows the way that it works. Municipality planning acts and their ability to change zoning and so on and so forth are 100% under the jurisdiction of provinces. He knows that. Why does he come to this place and say that the federal government should work with municipalities to remove red tape? It makes no sense.

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• (2055)

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, it makes perfect sense, because the federal government holds the spending purse. It is the federal government that plays a large part in funding every single major infrastructure project across this country. The federal government could say to the City of Vancouver or the City of Surrey that if it wants a sky train, it better increase zoning to allow for affordable homes around transportation nodules.

Regarding the \$500 rental subsidy, that would have a big impact on people's month-to-month. I understand that; I have been working since I was 12 years old. However, collectively, would that impact—

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I started at nine.

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, the member from Kingston and the Thousand Islands continues to heckle me.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I only represent two of the Thousand Islands. The other 998 are primarily the responsibility of the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. I do not know why he would say “Kingston and the Thousand Islands”.

**The Speaker:** Just to clarify, I saw the member for Kingston and the Islands and I do not believe he was heckling you. He was talking to another member across.

To remind hon. members, when someone is speaking, please be polite and respectful.

The hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon.

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, to the member for Kingston and the Islands, collectively, the measures before us today, as outlined by two of the big banks in Canada, will have an inflationary impact on the economy of Canada.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, first, on the issue of helping municipalities move forward in getting zoning and rezoning dealt with, the NDP was able to force the government to bring forward the accelerator fund. Part of that funding is, in fact, going to be dedicated to municipalities and local governments to help with that. This work is actually going to be under way, although the program is not fully developed and more work will be done.

That being said, the member talked a lot about housing and addressed the housing crisis. One of the issues impacting the housing affordability issue is the financialization of housing, yet real estate investment trusts are getting preferential tax treatment. In fact, they get government support by way of insurance coverage and mortgage coverage.

Would the member agree that the government should stop preferential tax treatment for these corporate landlords?

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak to the specifics of the financialization and/or corporate preferential tax treatment outlined by the New Democratic member from Vancouver. However, I can say that the rate of home ownership in Canada has decreased to a

level that we have not seen in a generation. All political parties, especially mine, want to restore and maintain the hope of young people to have a reasonable chance of owning a home. We want people to be able to get a university or trades education. I want people to have the dream of being able to save up for a home and have a reasonable chance of getting it. That is being eliminated at a faster rate than we have ever seen in the history of Canada, and it is troublesome for our democracy.

**Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, could the member tell the House how hypocritical it is of the government to, on the one hand, want to spend all this money on rent relief and control, and then, on the other hand, on January 1 add significant payroll taxes, not only to employees but to employers? It is also going to triple the carbon tax on April 1. On the one hand it giveth, and on the other hand it taketh away.

**Mr. Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, one of the things the government could do is stop raising taxes. People cannot afford food. They cannot afford gas. They cannot afford heat.

Why would the government not just change the personal exemption rate of \$13,800, increase it and stop all this wealth redistribution? Let people keep more of their paycheques. That is the best thing we can do to help Canadians who are struggling right now.

• (2100)

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if I may, I just want to give a quick shout-out. I do not often spend holidays away from my family, but I would like to thank the Ottawa Jewish community for the warm welcome and the meaningful prayer and introspective services that I took part in today.

What happens when young people do everything in this country that they were asked to do? What happens when they do everything they are told? What happens when a 35-year-old who did everything they were supposed to do, who earned a degree, got a job and worked hard, lives in mom and dad's basement or in a 400-square-foot apartment because the price of housing has doubled since the Prime Minister came into office?

Young people have done everything they were asked to do, and they end up trying to keep their heads above water in a housing bubble that is the second largest in the world. As for families lucky enough to own a home, they were paying 32% of their income to maintain that home when the Prime Minister took office. Now, those families have to pay 50% of their income to be able to keep it. There are higher costs, higher interest rates and less money for exactly the same thing in this country.

Canadians have done everything they were asked to do. The government told Canadians not to worry. The government told people that interest rates would not rise for a long time. It gave Canadians the confidence to take out those loans. There would not be anything to worry about. That is what it said.

We are seeing interest rates, the ones the government told us would stay low, go up. We have the highest interest rates in the G7, with rises of 3%.

It is worth repeating: Canadians did everything they were asked to do. The percentage of Canadians who own their home or who are about to own a home is at its lowest level in 30 years.

No government has ever spent more on housing than this Liberal one; the government will tell us that, yet it is a failure by every metric. Measuring success by how much the Liberals have spent and not by how many houses were built in Canada is where we are, yet, with all of those dollars and all of those talking points, we have still seen the doubling of housing prices in this country since the Prime Minister took office. That is a fact.

Knowing all this and presenting the House with Bill C-31 as a solution makes it seem as though the government weighed the political benefit of a proposal rather than the economic one. In fact, it entirely forgot about the economics of this one.

The bill is the latest problem child of an NDP-Liberal marriage that shines at raising Canadians' taxes and the prices they pay on everyday goods. It fails at producing an actual outcome to get people into the housing market. It does not allow them to keep their home or the certainty at the end of the month of being able to keep the lights on in that home.

A flashy headline and an expensive tab for taxpayers is what got us into this mess, and surely members in the House know it is the exact opposite of what we need to get out of the mess. Maybe they do not know.

The problem is that it is not just housing any more. It is the cost of everything. It is the cost of gas. It is the cost of groceries. It is the cost of home heating. They have cobbled together a piece of legislation that will only drive up inflation and of which we will see every single dollar evaporate with the rising cost of that gas, of those groceries and of that home heating.

It demonstrates the government's out-of-touch planning for working families, for small businesses, for seniors and for young people who have become victims of its incompetence.

Economists agree. I am not sure what the conversation is in the House during the debate, but the Bank of Montreal's senior economist recently tweeted, "I think we all know that sending out money as an 'inflation-support' measure is inherently...inflationary." Those are his words.

Scotiabank was clear. Its expert said, "Any belief that [the government's proposal] will ease inflationary pressures must have studied different economics textbooks."

The house that no one can afford is on fire, and the minister who introduced this legislation is painting the basement where the 35-year-old lives. Bill C-31 is a political attempt to stay in power, not to help Canadians, and that is a shame.

There is an obvious fact that many members opposite may not see as obvious at all. It is about the other back-of-the-napkin math that is in this cobbled-together piece of legislation. In the entire 80-page Liberal platform from just last year, not one of the pages men-

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tioned developing a dental care program like the one the government is proposing today, so we have to ask what reasoning members opposite have for introducing this legislation at this very moment.

● (2105)

Has there been some sort of epiphany among the Liberal caucus? Have they suddenly been convinced that this is the silver bullet for solving the affordability crisis, which they now admit is here? After seven years of Liberal government and three elections, is now the time for a proposal we have never heard of before?

Is there another factor at play? Frankly, I think there is. Perhaps it is the fact that the government now relies on votes from the NDP to ensure its very existence. The NDP curiously made dental care a centrepiece of its election platform just a short year ago. If this is the case, then do the Liberals believe that this is necessary? Is it the right thing to do, or is it a piece of legislation where \$5.3 billion would be prolonging the messy divorce we all know is coming?

We should not only ask how a government has failed to provide the details of this legislation, but we should ask why we would trust a government to create a new program, when it cannot deliver the programs it already has?

The government cannot pay its own public servants. It cannot get clean drinking water onto reserves. It cannot get Canadians passports without giving them an urban camping experience they did not ask for. It cannot ensure Canadian travellers get an app to travel across a border. It cannot assure Canadians that, when they go to the airport, they are actually going to leave on an airplane, and we are supposed to believe that it is going to deliver an efficient, functional, national dental care plan to millions of uninsured Canadians, one that we have never heard of before.

For those following this debate and for those who will vote on this, dental care programs for low-income children exist in all provinces and territories, save for Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, in addition to the 70% of Canadians who are already insured and have coverage.

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This program is a political one, and it is designed to fail by a government that has failed to deliver very basic services for Canadians. There would be up-front, direct payments of \$650 per year to any family they deem eligible, with no questions asked and no strings attached in the legislation. Then, it is up to the CRA to follow up after the fact and verify the money was used correctly. I would like to know how the government thinks the CRA, which will take years to fix a minor tax issue faced by my constituents, would have the capacity to verify the proper use of a grant by hundreds of thousands of Canadians, given there has been much to be desired in its ability to do just that with programs in the last two years. It is the wrong approach. We have seen it before, and we know how it ends.

Economists have been clear about the impact of direct payments on the cost of living, and I know members opposite understand there is a cost of living crisis. They have just recently admitted it. From the other side of the House, Canadians will remember that the Liberals told us interest rates would stay low. They told us the carbon tax would not go up. They told us that the problem was deflation, not inflation.

We have record inflation. We have a plan to triple the carbon tax, and we have the highest interest rates since the 1990s. It is time to end inflationary taxes and deficits, give Canadians control of their own lives and put more money in their pockets. Reducing taxes, capping government spending and removing red tape are the best ways to end the inflation crisis we have watched the government impose on Canadians through its high-spend, high-tax agenda, not with bigger budgets, higher taxes or more government.

This entire bill is an excuse for policy in hopes of being remembered in the next election, when that rolls around, and it is just one more drop of gasoline on the inflationary fire. Canadians deserve a government that will put people back into the plan, and the Liberals have proven that they are not that government. Conservatives will not forget that. Members on this side of the House will not forget that, and neither will Canadians. Putting people at the centre of decisions starts with voting against this bill, and I hope members understand the consequences of another broken promise, failed delivery and worse economic hardship for Canadians.

• (2110)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member talks about the supply and confidence agreement between the NDP and the Liberals as though she just cracked a 30-year-old mystery. I think it is pretty well known that the NDP, in order to come together with the Liberal Party to bring forward legislation on behalf of Canadians and to form some stability, made this as one of their requests in the process, and the government agreed to do that to work with the NDP. That is how parliamentary democracy works when a party does not have a majority.

I am just curious if the member is aware of that, or if the concept of parties working in a minority situation is completely foreign to her. Perhaps the Conservatives are just upset we did not ask them to form that kind of alliance with us. Perhaps she could comment on that.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, I am actually not going to comment on the condescending speech that I just got from the member opposite about how this place works.

What I will comment on is that this plan, or lack of a plan or lack of a dental plan or lack of any details at all, does one thing and one thing only. It drives the cost of everything up in this country and Canadians are suffering. It ought to be clear by now that the Liberals need to do something about it. They need to lower taxes, kill the carbon tax, kill the paycheque tax and stop spending money that we do not have.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I know and all Canadians know that the members across the way do not agree with the way we want to put forward policy, but ultimately, at the end of the day, we are trying to create things that are long-lasting. We are trying to create something bigger than ourselves.

Whether we are talking about health care, dental care or pharmaceutical, which we are going to keep working on, and whether we are talking about long-term, truly affordable housing or child care, which after 28 years of working on it the government finally did, all of these things are long-lasting. Tax credits do not do that. This idea of putting money back into people's pockets through tax credits actually dissolves things, which the Conservatives are trying to do right now. It dissolves the pension plans and dissolves programs like EI, but those are things that workers need. That is what long-term planning is about. We are in a series of crises now because there has not been that long-term planning.

I understand that is a difference we have between our parties. However, I would ask the member across the way if she is here to ultimately create something that will benefit all people equally, which social programs do.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, I realize that it is not the member's position for Canadians to spend more of their money, to have Canadians with more of their money in their own pockets to make the best decisions for themselves, but there is no dental plan here.

Frankly, I would not want the member on my negotiating team, because she did not negotiate a dental plan. There is nothing in the legislation that she is suggesting is in the legislation.

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**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, what we have in Bill C-31 is in fact a path for the dental plan. We are talking about giving families whose incomes are less than \$90,000 and do not have access to a dental care plan, with children under 12, that support. Next year, seniors and people with disabilities will also get it. People 18 and under will also get it until we get the full realization of the plan. I am sorry, but the member who says that this is not a dental care plan is simply wrong.

Why are the Conservatives so against people who need supports getting them? Why would they vote against children getting dental services that they desperately need?

• (2115)

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, the dental care plans for low-income families exist. They exist at 70% across most of the country. If the member opposite read the legislation, she would realize that there are no details in the bill and there is no dental care

plan. I expect her to yell behind me, but that still does not change the fact that it is not there.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I see no one rising to speak.

I want to wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving and a good riding week. Tomorrow I will be attending my son's graduation from Nova Scotia Community College as an LPN, and I want to wish him the best in his future career. I would also like to thank everybody for their interventions this evening.

[*Translation*]

There being no further members rising to speak, pursuant to order made earlier today, the debate is deemed adjourned and the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 9:16 p.m.)

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