



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

House of Commons Debates

Official Report
(Hansard)

Volume 151 No. 199
Wednesday, May 17, 2023

Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



CONTENTS

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[*English*]

The Speaker: I understand the hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands will lead us in the singing of the national anthem.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

WEST ISLAND COMMUNITIES

Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and welcome two groups to Parliament Hill today, the Pierrefonds—Dollard youth council and a mixed group of youth and seniors from the West Island Black Community Association, WIBCA.

[*Translation*]

The Pierrefonds—Dollard youth council meets every month to discuss issues of importance to the riding. The council is a regular contributor to community activities.

[*English*]

The presence of young people in our political system is crucial. It is these very people who will, before we know it, lead our country.

A second group, WIBCA, is also here today. For over 40 years, WIBCA has contributed to promoting an accurate understanding of who Black Montrealers are. It also regularly brings together West Islanders.

[*Translation*]

This is an important intergenerational visit.

[*English*]

Seniors impart wisdom and life experience to youth. Seniors also help guide our future generations. I am eager to continue working with youth, seniors and diverse communities to strengthen the social ties within West Island and beyond.

EDMONTON WEST PASTOR

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this moment to recognize Father Francis Mariappa, a pastor in my riding of Edmonton West. Father Francis moved to Canada in 2007 and served for 11 years in Fort Saskatchewan before moving to the Annunciation Catholic Church in west Edmonton.

Father Francis is a member of an order commonly known as the Pallottine Fathers, and he helped bring 25 of them from the Pallottine community abroad to Canada to serve the faithful here. Father Francis epitomizes St. Pallotti's motto, "The love of Christ compels". In addition to his work at his own thriving church, Father Francis finds time to visit schools, senior homes and hospitals, such as Misericordia, to serve and celebrate mass. During COVID, despite being immunocompromised himself, he still went to the hospitals to serve and help the sick.

We are blessed in Edmonton West with so many wonderful faith leaders, and Father Francis is certainly one of them. I thank Father Francis for everything he does for his community.

* * *

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Paul Chiang (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, May is Asian Heritage Month, and as we celebrate Asian culture and heritage, we also recognize the incredible diversity and contributions of the Asian community to our great nation of Canada. The story of Canada has always been a story of immigration and, thanks to the many immigrants who have contributed to our economy, culture and social fabric, Asian Canadians have always played an important role in shaping Canada's history and identity.

During this month, we celebrate the achievements and contributions of Asian Canadians across all aspects of Canadian life. Let us celebrate the diversity of our country and recognize the part that Asian Canadians play in making our nation the greatest on earth. Let us also continue our commitment to working together toward a brighter future for all Canadians, especially the Asian Canadians in my riding of Markham—Unionville.

Statements by Members

• (1410)

*[Translation]***PANCHEN LAMA**

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on May 17, 1995, a six-year-old Tibetan monk disappeared. He was recognized as the 11th Panchen Lama, one of the most revered leaders in Tibetan Buddhism after the Dalai Lama. The Panchen Lama is a symbol of tremendous importance to the Tibetan community, which is currently being denied its religious and cultural freedom. Most importantly, he was a child. The young Panchen Lama and his family were allegedly abducted 28 years ago by the Chinese government and have not been seen or heard from since.

Six months later, the Chinese authorities selected a replacement, a Tibetan boy whose parents were said to be members of the Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese government's actions in this matter have raised serious concerns about interference in Tibetan traditions, cultural repression and human rights violations.

Quebec's mutual affinity with the Tibetan people is unequivocal. Tibetans are a people who are striving to ensure the survival of their language, culture and traditions. Today, I just wanted to voice a few words of solidarity with the Tibetan people.

* * *

*[English]***BRAIN TUMOUR AWARENESS MONTH**

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand in this House today in recognition of May as Brain Tumour Awareness Month. Every day, 27 Canadians receive life-altering news that they have a brain tumour. Brain tumours impact people of all ages, incomes, social backgrounds and, of course, political affiliation.

Just last year, our Liberal family tragically lost two young people who were in the prime of their lives and who are now survived by their spouses and children. I want to take a moment to recognize the courageous battles fought by both Andrew Boyle and Trevor Harrison, whose memories remain with us now and forever.

This month, as we spend time with our families, friends and constituents, let us work together to raise awareness and break down stigma.

[Translation]

Since we still do not know what causes brain tumours or how to cure them, it is essential that we promote testing and early treatment. Let us continue to work together for the good of those who have been diagnosed with a brain tumour and those who treat them.

I encourage everyone to contribute what they can by visiting braintumour.ca and by participating in the annual walk here in Ottawa in a few weeks.

* * *

BRAIN STEM GLIOMA

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that today will be the last May 17 before

this day officially becomes national diffuse midline glioma awareness day in Canada. Diffuse midline gliomas or brain stem gliomas are aggressive, incurable brain tumours that mainly affect children. There is no chance of survival.

It is impossible to imagine the suffering that these sick children and their parents have to endure. I learned about the existence of this disease when I met Florence Gagné, a little warrior princess from Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier who lost her battle over a year ago. I became involved in this cause to support the families who courageously stand beside their children until the end.

Thanks to the invaluable contribution of Senator Yonah Martin, a bill was introduced to make every May 17 a day to think about these children, a day to raise awareness of brain stem glioma, a national day to advocate for research and development, and a day to hope for a cure.

This is for the little warrior Florence and all the others.

* * *

*[English]***KEIRA'S LAW**

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Keira Kagan was going to change the world, before her life was taken at the age of four.

Her mom Dr. Jennifer Kagan and stepdad Philip Viater have been tireless advocates for Keira's law, which has sparked a national conversation regarding domestic violence, coercive control and the safety of our children.

Bill C-233 will be Keira's legacy of hope, and it is a huge step forward for survivors and victims at the forefront of judges' decisions in court. Keira's law recently received royal assent, and it will provide judicial education about domestic violence and coercive control, thanks to the member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, the member for York Centre, Senator Pierre Dalphond and so many others who ensured Keira will forever be a beacon of protection.

Keira would have been turning eight years old on May 29. Please join me in wishing Keira a happy heavenly birthday later this month.

* * *

• (1415)

UKRAINE

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, along with international allies, Canada stands in solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people as they defend their sovereignty against tyranny. While Ukrainians are paying with their lives, no one can deny that through inflation Canadians are also paying for the illegal, genocidal war Putin has waged on Ukraine. I have no doubt that everyone in this House agrees that for justice to prevail, Putin and his regime must be stopped and must pay reparations to Ukraine for the crimes committed.

The Peace Coalition Ukraine, in collaboration with the social innovation caucus, is proposing an innovative social finance tool called the peace bond, which uses the value of seized Russian assets to draw in private investment and ratchet up the sanctions regime to hold Russia accountable while financing the reconstruction efforts now.

Today I want to ask all members of this House to join me in recognizing a remarkable Ukrainian Canadian by the name of Michael Cholod, founder of The Peace Coalition Ukraine. Michael is an inspiration, and Canadians and Ukrainians everywhere are grateful for his relentless pursuit to ensure Ukraine can realize a vision for its renewal.

Slava Ukraini.

* * *

PASSPORTS

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are once again shocked and disappointed by the Liberals. Nova Scotia's only minister in the Liberal cabinet, the MP for Central Nova, stood by silently as the Liberals erased the fishing schooner *Bluenose* from our passport. He sat idly by as Nova Scotia's sailing ambassador was erased, our iconic fishing schooner that never lost a race, until now. Only two years ago, Canada celebrated the 100th birthday of the *Bluenose*. Now Liberals are erasing it.

He sat silently by as the Liberals removed the national immigration museum in Halifax from the passport, where over one million immigrants arrived to begin a new life in Canada. What is next? Will the MP for Central Nova remove the *Bluenose* from Canada's dime and replace it with a blade of grass? It is time for the Liberal government to stop erasing Nova Scotia's history in favour of acorns.

A common-sense Conservative government will bring back common-sense policies for the common people. We will bring home the *Bluenose* and Canada's heroes and history.

* * *

WOMEN'S NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last weekend, in front of a sold-out crowd of over 19,000 in Toronto, women MPs from our Liberal caucus and I attended the historic first WNBA pre-season game ever played in Canada.

On Saturday, Canada welcomed the Chicago Sky and the Minnesota Lynx, in what was a proud moment for Canadians and, particularly, women in sport. These talented professional athletes, including Canadian athlete Bridget Carleton of the Minnesota Lynx, are an inspiration to us all. This weekend was not only a milestone for the expansion of basketball but also a show of strength of the Canadian sport market for women.

Our government strongly supports women in sport, which is why we have renewed funding of over \$25 million over the next two years, to support gender equity in sport. When we break down barriers for women to participate in sport, while giving them strong role models to look up to, we are all the better for it.

Statements by Members

CRIMEA

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, on the 79th commemoration of Sürgünlik, the genocide of Crimean Tatars, we look back with horror and sadness as we remember how Joseph Stalin and his Communist thugs forcibly deported over 200,000 Tatar men, women and children by packing them into cattle cars and shipping them off to the gulag.

Nearly 10,000 people died during this brutal journey, and many more died under inhumane conditions when they were relocated. This genocide stands out among the many atrocities carried out by Stalin and his henchmen, and we remember all the victims.

Although the Crimean Tatars heroically returned to their homeland by the thousands during the 1980s and 1990s, Vladimir Putin, just like dictator Joseph Stalin, is again waging a genocidal war against Ukraine and the Crimean Tatars. Since his illegal invasion in 2014, Putin has targeted the Tatars and shut down their mosques, their independent press and their legislative assembly, the Mejlis. Moreover, he is carrying out a slew of horrific human rights abuses against them.

Putin and his barbarians must get out of Ukraine. Crimea is and will always be Ukraine, homeland of the Tatars.

* * *

● (1420)

VYSHYVANKA DAY

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every third Thursday in May, we celebrate Vyshyvanka Day, a day to honour Ukraine's rich culture and heritage. This year, with the unprovoked Russian war, the holiday plays a critical role as Ukrainians defend their independence and identity.

For centuries, Moscow has consistently banned the Ukrainian language and made efforts to appropriate Ukraine's history. Generation after generation, Russian imperialists persecuted and executed Ukrainian cultural figures. Since the beginning of its most recent aggression, the Kremlin has committed over 1,200 crimes against Ukraine's cultural heritage. Hundreds of cultural sites have been destroyed by missile strikes. The Putin regime has persecuted Ukrainian creators and educators and recruited hundreds of Russian teachers to implement their curriculum in temporarily occupied territories. It is now deadly dangerous to speak Ukrainian or wear *vyshyvankas* there.

On behalf of Canada's Conservatives, I wish to reinforce our pledge to stand with Ukraine until its victory. Let us all in the House, by wearing *vyshyvankas* and Ukrainian ribbons, show the world that Ukrainian culture is celebrated in Canada and can withstand any attacks.

Slava Ukraini.

Statements by Members

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Hochelaga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, May 17 is the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

In 2003, Fondation Émergence, a non-profit organization in Hochelaga, created the first-ever national day to fight homophobia. Today, it is celebrated in over 100 countries.

I am pleased and proud to welcome a delegation to Ottawa today to highlight the theme of this year's campaign, "LGBTQphobias are Irrational Fears".

As Patrick Desmarais, president of Fondation Émergence, put it so well, "LGBTQphobias have a serious impact on the people who experience them. We erase them, we assault them, and we try to correct them. A quarter of the world's population believes that being LGBTQ+ should be a crime, which is a troubling reality."

That is why recognizing May 17, both here and elsewhere, is still so important and relevant. We must continue to educate the public, inform them and raise awareness about the realities of those who identify as sexually and gender diverse in order to defuse these irrational fears.

* * *

[English]

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA AND BIPHOBIA

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. It is a day that recognizes the tremendous contributions of the 2SLGBTQII+ community to freedom, equality and justice.

However, thousands of gender-diverse Canadians are still denied access to the gender-affirming health care they deserve. They are denied access to the public spaces that make a community; many times, they are denied their very right to exist. Even worse, this is happening in broad daylight. Far-right extremism is organizing and propping up hatred. We are witnessing horrific levels of scapegoating, threats and violence targeting the queer community, particularly the trans community. This antifreedom hatred amounts to nothing less than a plan to eliminate the rights and freedoms of others.

However, my friends, I know we can build a better and freer Canada, where no matter who someone is, where they live, how much they make or who they love, Canada is their home. We will not stop until everyone is free.

* * *

[Translation]

FRÉDÉRIC BASTIEN

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I learned, that we learned of the passing of historian Frédéric Bastien yesterday. He was just 53.

An outspoken historian, a debunker of reheated myths that do not stand up to scrutiny, cool yet merciless before adversaries of the Quebec nation, Frédéric was keen to ask uncomfortable questions even at the risk of being the target of those who feared him for his reading of history.

A harsh critic of hypocrisy, Frédéric ferreted out groups funded by Ottawa to denigrate Quebec, create and spread a false narrative to put us down. He shed light on the wavering impartiality of judges on Bill 21. He stood up against Toronto when it attempted to fund the legal challenge against Bill 21 before the Supreme Court.

Frédéric Bastien also published works such as *La bataille de Londres*, in 2013, on the coup by the Supreme Court against Quebec during the patriation of the Constitution. The impact of that book earned him the title of patriot of the year from the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste. In other circles people came to fear his truths and demonize him.

His kindness will be missed by all those who knew him, and his intelligence, sternness and courage will be missed by all of us Quebecers. His passing leaves a cruel void in the heart of his family. His discipline and powers of reflection now extinguished, it will be up to us to pull together and carry on his work.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I offer my condolences to all those who loved and respected him.

* * *

● (1425)

[English]

TRANSPORT

Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, six times this year, the Prime Minister has been away on planes, trains and automobiles, while Canadians' actual planes, trains and automobiles are not working.

To fix this problem, Picton Terminals, which would be the first Great Lakes shipping container entry, could be approved. This would alleviate supply chain shortages and drop inflation. This requires no money, just CBSA approval, but it has been sitting on the minister's desk for three years. VIA Rail train 651, which takes workers making powerful paycheques from Kingston, Belleville, Trenton, Napanee and Cobourg to Toronto each morning, could be reinstated. It has not been working for three years because the trains are broken. The carbon tax could be axed, which would add 41¢ a litre of fuel to Canadians who only want to get to work or, God forbid, take a vacation. We do not have to go as far as South Korea to fix these problems. We can find a way to fix them right here at home.

A Conservative government would bring common sense to the common people, to my home, to everyone's home and to our home. Let us bring it home.

CRIMEA

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Crimean Tatars are the indigenous people of Crimea. On May 18, 1944, the Soviet Union began the “Sürgünlik”, which was the mass deportation of the Crimean Tatars. This was meant to destroy the Crimean Tatar people.

The Sürgünlik led to hundreds of thousands of Crimean Tatars being deported and tens of thousands dying en route and afterward. It was a genocide.

On May 18 last year, here in this House, I had the honour to introduce a motion that received unanimous consent to declare May 18 as a day of commemoration and to recognize that the Sürgünlik was a genocide. Today, on Parliament Hill, with leaders of the Crimean Tatar community, we commemorated this genocide.

Unfortunately, as we speak, history is repeating itself. Russia invaded Crimea in 2014. Since then, Crimean Tatars have once again faced human rights abuses at the hands of the Russian regime, just as they did during the deportation and genocide.

Today, let us honour the victims by ensuring that Crimea is liberated from Russia's oppression and becomes part of Ukraine again, so that Crimean Tatars and all Ukrainian people can live in freedom in their homeland once again.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

FINANCE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said that doubling our national debt would not be a problem because interest rates were low, but his spending has increased inflation and interest rates.

Yesterday, at the finance committee, the minister was unable to say how much interest we are paying on her national debt. If a mortgage broker could not tell someone the interest payment on a loan, they would be fired.

Should we not fire the finance minister?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the person unable to answer a simple question is the leader of the Conservatives.

My question is the following: What is his economic plan? Where will he make cuts? Will it be in health transfers? Will it be in the \$200 billion that our government will invest in health care? Perhaps it will be in the \$30 billion that we will be investing in a national day care system.

[Disturbance in the gallery]

● (1430)

[English]

The Speaker: We will allow people to do their job and then we will proceed.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said there was no problem doubling our national debt, adding more debt than all previous prime ministers combined, because interest rates, he claimed, were low.

His same spending has actually increased inflation and interest rates. Yesterday, the finance minister was unable to answer how much Canadians are paying for interest on the debt that she has racked up. If a mortgage broker could not tell someone the interest payment on a loan, he would be fired.

Why is the finance minister not fired for her inability to answer that basic question?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is someone whom we do not intend to have fired after the 2025 election, someone who I actually think should keep his job as leader of the Conservative opposition. One of the reasons he is going to keep his job is that he cannot answer a simple question for Canadians, and that is, what is his positive plan? What does he actually propose to do for the Canadian economy?

The only thing we know is that he is going to cut. He is going to cut the \$200 billion we are investing in our health care system. He is going to cut the \$300 billion we are investing in—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one thing we are going to cut is the carbon tax.

Speaking of that tax, we know that the Prime Minister plans to raise it to 41¢ per litre or \$1,500 net, after rebates, per family. What most people do not know is that there is a second carbon tax he plans to stack on top of the first one, a sneaky tax he calls a “fuel standard”, which would hit home heating, gas and our factories, and create countless other higher costs.

How much will Canadians pay in higher gas and diesel prices because of the second Liberal carbon tax?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the Conservative leader actually talking about climate, because the reality is that the biggest challenge our planet faces and the biggest challenge our economy faces is building a clean economy.

That is where the jobs are. That is where the jobs will be. We have invested \$120 billion in our green industrial plan. It is creating jobs today. It will create jobs in the future. The Conservatives would wreck all of that.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the question was about carbon tax 2. We already know about carbon tax 1. The Prime Minister has put in place a 14¢-per-litre tax that will rise to 41¢ per litre. This raises gas, heat and grocery bills. Now the Liberals are sneaking in a second carbon tax called the “fuel standard”. It has no rebate whatsoever, but will apply in every province and territory across the country.

If the minister is so proud of her second tax, why will she not tell us exactly how much it will cost in higher diesel, gas and household costs per family?

• (1435)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader obviously does not understand that what every industrial economy needs is a plan to build the clean economy of the future. However, I will tell members who does understand that: an electrician named Jeff, whom I met in Mississauga in March. I was there to talk with him about the investments we were going to make in electrifying the Canadian economy. He knows that means, for him, jobs. He told me, “I have the skills to pay the bills.” Thanks to our plan, those skills will be put to work, and the Jeffs across the country will pay their bills.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the minister wants is for Jeff to pay her bills. With a higher carbon tax, Jeff will have to pay more tax on his vehicle, more tax on his home heating and more tax on the food that the farmers and truckers, who are taxed by this scheme the Liberals are putting forward, bring to him. I have already said that the first carbon tax is 41¢ per litre and \$1,500 net per family. Now the Liberals promise a second tax.

Therefore, I will ask the question again. How much will carbon tax 2 add in extra diesel, gas and household costs per family?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I want is for people like Jeff in Mississauga, people who have the skills, to be able to pay their bills today, tomorrow and 10 years from now. Jeff's wife, by the way, is an emergency room nurse, and our investments in health care are helping her pay the bills too. That means investing in a green industrial plan. Our focus is relentlessly on Canadians and jobs, and we have added 900,000 more jobs than we had before the pandemic.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the residents of Kanata and Oka and people living on the shores of Lac des Deux Montagnes are experiencing a major ecological crisis. Lac des Deux Montagnes, the water table and the soil are probably all contaminated.

These are indigenous lands, but they belong to the federal government. My colleague from Mirabel has been sounding the alarm since he was elected in 2021. Nothing has been done.

What is the government doing?

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

This is a very serious and difficult issue. As my colleague said yesterday in response to the same question, she is working closely with indigenous leaders.

We know that we need to work with indigenous leaders to resolve this issue, which is very serious and critical.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is an ecological crisis as well as a safety crisis.

The government is the only one that is unaware of the crime, the threats and the violence that prevented a legal solution. More than 2,000 indigenous people are living in fear, as are the non-indigenous people in the surrounding area.

After years of turning a blind eye to the situation, when will the government act with the resolve this situation warrants?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with the leader of the Bloc Québécois that this is a serious situation. It is a serious and difficult situation in terms of the environment and safety.

I want to assure the House and all Canadians that my colleague, the minister responsible, and I are working closely with indigenous leaders to resolve the situation.

* * *

[English]

HOUSING

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is acting like the skyrocketing cost of rent is not a crisis, when it is one of the biggest challenges faced by Canadians right now. For example, in London, Ontario, we have an increase, for a two-bedroom apartment, of 23%. For a single mom, that means an increase of \$394 a month. Over a year, that is almost \$5,000.

How does the minister think a single mom will be able to afford that increase of \$5,000 a year on her expenses?

• (1440)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a very important issue, and one way that single mother will be able to afford the cost of living more easily is through our investments in early learning and child care. Her fees across Canada have been reduced by 50% this year. So many moms across the country have told me that child care costs are like a second mortgage. We are bringing those costs down. That is real help for real people, and we are glad to be working with provinces and territories to deliver it.

* * *

FINANCE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that does not address the problem of high rent. We need action clearly on that, and we need it now.

[Translation]

It is also clear that inflation is affecting more than just rent. It is also hitting families by increasing the cost of groceries. In April, grocery prices increased by 9%. That is a huge increase for families.

At the same time, CEOs are earning huge salaries and the big grocery stores are raking in massive profits.

When is this government finally going to fight inflation and tax these companies' excess profits?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we agree with the NDP leader that we must help the less well off and do more to make sure that the wealthy pay their fair share. This is exactly what our government is doing.

We invested \$2 billion in the one-time grocery rebate that is going to help 11 million Canadians by paying for their groceries, and we introduced a tax on certain luxury goods.

[English]

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister has misled Canadians like Jeff for years. The latest time was when she gave false hope, saying she would show fiscal responsibility and balance the budget by 2028. It took her only 144 days after that statement until she did a massive flip-flop and proved her budget will never be balanced and will run massive deficits forever. It is these massive deficits that gave Canadians the highest inflation and bank interest rate hikes in a century. Even random Liberals like Mark Carney and John Manley agree with us.

When will the finance minister stop misleading Canadians, get off Jeff's back and stop her inflationary spending?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Jeff is a real person, and he told me how glad he is that the government is investing in a green industrial policy and how glad his wife, Cheryl, is that we are investing in supporting our health care system.

We are making those essential investments while maintaining the strongest fiscal position in the G7. Our AAA rating has been reiter-

Oral Questions

ated, and we have the lowest deficit in the G7. That is compassion and responsibility at the same time.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the minister did not tell Jeff that the solution was to cancel Disney+. Because of her high-tax-and-spend government, Canadians like Jeff cannot even afford Disney+, and are skipping meals. She is going to give Canadians like Jeff higher gas, grocery and home heating bills with her second carbon tax.

Can she tell Jeff how much more it is going to cost him to heat his home and fill his tank?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind our hon. colleagues on the other side of the room that in their platform in 2021, the Conservative Party of Canada campaigned to put in place carbon pricing that would go up to \$170 a tonne. That is exactly what our government is doing while investing in Canadians and building the economy of the future.

Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before tabling the budget, the finance minister said that “by exercising fiscal restraint” and by not pouring fuel on the inflationary fire, the Liberals would ensure they could responsibly invest in Canadians. However, we need to pay attention to what the government does and not what it says, and what the government did was increase spending by \$60 billion, or \$4,300 for every family in Canada.

When will the government take its own advice and realize its spending is making life more unaffordable for Canadians?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, instead of believing partisan hacks reading their talking points, I think Canadians should listen to the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

When the—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1445)

The Speaker: I am going to interrupt the hon. Deputy Prime Minister. I am tired of getting too much noise from this side, so I am going to ask her to start from the top. I will also ask for the heckling to not happen.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, instead of listening to partisan hacks reciting their canned talking points, I think Canadians tend to trust the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Oral Questions

In testimony before the finance committee, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said, “When looking at G7 countries, Canada compares very favourably on net debt-to-GDP.” He also said that, having spoken—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The noise is starting to rise again. I do not want the hon. member for Simcoe North to end up at the end of the list, so I am going to ask everyone to stop. Members know that the process is to take whatever side is causing the problem, and we switch those members with the ones at the end. Then hopefully—

An hon. member: Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker: I am talking.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Does the hon. member for Banff—Airdrie want to say something to me? No? Now keep it quiet or else you will suffer the consequences.

I will ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to please continue.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to share with the House that, further on in his testimony before the finance committee, the Parliamentary Budget Officer described a conversation he had had with an individual from the credit rating agency Moody's, who had said that Canada's deficit should make us “quite happy because by European standards that's very low.”

Canada's economy is strong, and our fiscal position is strong. No one should believe the Conservatives when they say otherwise.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it takes a hack to know a hack.

Last fall, the finance minister said that new spending needed to be matched with government savings. She said that the government needed to exercise restraint to not pour fuel on the fire. She also said that the debt-to-GDP ratio was the red line. That seems all pretty clear to me, except the government did not take the finance minister's advice.

Only one thing can be true. Either the finance minister is being overruled by the Prime Minister or another leadership contestant, or Canadians cannot take the promises she makes seriously. Which one is it?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to rise because I think it is important to add some context here.

We know the party opposite was in power for 10 years, and during that period of time, it was the worst growth record we had seen since R.B. Bennett. Do members know what is different—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am sorry, I am having a hard time hearing the answer because of the shouting. I am going to ask everyone, includ-

ing the opposition leader, to keep it down. Maybe to lead by example would be a very good thing.

I will ask the hon. government House leader to please proceed, but not from the top.

Hon. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, I will tell members what is different: 2.7 million people who were in poverty when the Conservatives were in power are not in poverty today. There are two million more jobs since that party was in power.

Yes, these times are difficult across the world right now, but we are leading, and we will continue to do so.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think it is a real shame that the government House leader will not let the Minister of Finance answer a very simple question. My colleague from Simcoe North asked a very simple question yesterday. It is very simple. Anyone who is carrying debt knows what the interest on that debt is, and how much it is costing them. Unfortunately, the Minister of Finance, the Deputy Prime Minister, did not have the answer.

I am offering the Deputy Prime Minister a chance to redeem herself. How much interest on the debt will Canadians have to pay every year?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the Conservatives seem to believe that Canadians are devoid of intelligence. Canadians know that we have a strong economy.

I would like to quote another expert, the former parliamentary budget officer, Kevin Page. He said that the 2023 budget has a credible fiscal strategy and that the government's fiscal anchor, the declining ratio, will be maintained.

We are not the ones saying it.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the Deputy Prime Minister refuses to answer a very simple question. Every Canadian with a mortgage has to know how much interest they are paying on their debt.

Let us now consider how realistic her budget is, because it included \$60 billion in new spending. That is a recipe for creating and fuelling inflation. However, just a few months ago, she said that we must not pour fuel on the fire of inflation.

Does the Deputy Prime Minister agree with what she said last November, or, once again, does she not know the answer?

● (1450)

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am obviously interested in my colleagues' financial arguments.

I find it astounding that they are blaming inflation on Canada's low- and middle-income taxpayers. The Canadian government is helping them, but blaming them for today's inflation is rather cruel.

I would ask my colleague to tell us what he would say to the 400 children in his riding who received the dental benefit in recent months. Does he believe we should take it away from them?

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety has issued a new directive to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, or CSIS, a directive that was so important that it had to be made public. It says, and I quote: “CSIS will seek, wherever possible...to ensure that parliamentarians are informed of threats...directed at them”.

What does that mean? Should the directive not be telling CSIS that it always has to inform parliamentarians of any threat?

What does “wherever possible” mean? Whose discretion is it up to? Are we talking about CSIS, the minister, or maybe my brother-in-law Luc? Who?

Quite frankly, this directive is causing more confusion and concern than it is providing reassurance. Will the minister explain it clearly?

[English]

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's question because it is important that all MPs are aware of any threats that are made against any of us because a threat against one is a threat against us all.

We know that the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills was subjected to threats, and he was not aware of them. That is why the minister did give a directive to CSIS to ensure that all parliamentarians of the House are informed of any threats whatsoever.

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we have been calling for an independent commission of public inquiry for months. From threats against MPs to funding for the Trudeau Foundation, everything we are hearing justifies a serious inquiry. The government is telling us that it is taking action. How?

With these new directives, CSIS will seek, whenever possible, to ensure, in a timely manner, that parliamentarians are perhaps informed of any threats, if necessary. Wow. I feel so reassured.

Does the minister honestly believe that these directives are going to solve the problem of foreign interference?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows full well that these directives are part of our government's ongoing efforts to counter foreign interference. We have said so publicly. The Prime Minister said so last week, and the Minister of Public Safety said it again this week. Threats or interference involving members or parliamentarians are completely unacceptable.

We have taken the necessary measures to ensure that the professional intelligence agencies take the matter in hand, work with members and resolve the situation appropriately.

Oral Questions

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives warned that the costly coalition's carbon tax would make everything more expensive, and today, Canadians cannot afford the basics. They have to choose between heating, eating and housing. Glen from Athabasca says that his heating bill was double what it was last year, and a quarter of it was carbon tax.

The Liberal's April carbon tax hike has already added 14¢ a litre to gas and spiked inflation. After eight years, the truth is that the Liberals are out of touch and Canadians are out of money. Why will the costly coalition not axe the costly carbon tax?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are in mid-May and already we are seeing record forest fires in northern Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. I have talked to people in Calgary who say that they cannot breathe because of the forest fires in northern Alberta.

Our plan to fight climate change is working. We have reduced carbon pollution by 50 million tonnes. What is the answer of the Conservative Party? It is to make pollution free again, making climate change and forest fires worse. That is not how we will do it on this side of the House.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course the carbon tax has not reduced emissions, and 80% of Canadians pay more than they will ever get back. However, the Liberals did admit that their carbon tax is meant to make driving more expensive. They plan to triple those costs. What are they going to do? They are going to kick Canadians while they are down and add a second carbon tax. Together, those taxes will cost struggling Canadians 60¢ a litre more at the pumps.

Do the costly coalition partisan hacks even know or care how much more gas, groceries and home heating are going to cost struggling Canadians under their carbon tax? Do they really think Canadians can afford thousands more?

• (1455)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow me to read from the Conservative platform in the last election.

On page 79, in the section called “Low Carbon Fuel Standard”, it states, “We'll finalize and improve the Clean Fuel Regulations to reduce carbon emissions from every litre of gasoline (and other liquid fuels) we burn, turning them into a true Low Carbon Fuel Standard.”

Oral Questions

The difference between the Conservative Party and us is that they are all talk and we are all about action.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal-NDP carbon tax coalition is making life unaffordable for Canadians. What the Liberals do not understand is that there are very real and painful consequences when they hike the carbon tax. When they triple the carbon tax, the price of fuel per litre goes up 41¢, the cost of food goes up 34%, and the average a Canadian farm family pays in carbon taxes is \$150,000 a year.

If that sounds bad, we have not seen anything yet. The Prime Minister is going to add a second carbon tax on Canadians, this time with no rebate. How much is this new carbon tax scam going to cost Canadians?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Foothills surely knows, Albertans are getting back more than \$1,000. That goes directly into the pockets of Alberta families.

I was in Edmonton and Calgary recently and met a great, young woman whose name is Kayla. She teaches people how to weld. She told me that we need a plan, an economic plan, for the green economy. She understands that is where her job is going to be and where the jobs of the apprentices she is training are going to be. Albertans get that. It is only the Conservatives who do not.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal carbon tax coalition is forcing Canadians to make a choice between food on the table or a roof over their head. The carbon tax punishes families, farmers and small businesses who are all struggling to make ends meet, and for what?

The Liberals have not met a single emissions target they have set. Instead of admitting their carbon tax scam is a failure, they are doubling down with a second carbon tax, this time with no rebates. How much are gas and groceries going to cost Canadian families when they implement their new carbon tax scam?

[Translation]

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our farmers are the first to be affected by climate change. They are heavily involved in the fight against climate change and in reducing emissions.

Our programs for helping them apply best practices and learn new technologies, and for investing in research and innovation, are oversubscribed. We are being flooded with applications. This demonstrates the level of interest.

We will continue working hard to reduce our emissions and fight climate change.

* * *

[English]

HOUSING

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the federal watchdog for housing rights has called for an investigation into the government's failure to prevent and eliminate homelessness among women and gender-diverse people across Canada. Those who are especially at risk are indigenous women and two-spirit

people. Instead of addressing it, the Liberals refuse to reverse their cut of \$150 million to women's shelters, while barely releasing any of the funds they first announced in 2020 for shelters and transitional housing.

When will the government stop with the empty promises and deal with this housing crisis with the urgency it requires?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the hon. member. We have gone from just over \$2 billion in funding for Reaching Home, Canada's homelessness strategy, to almost \$4 billion. That is a doubling of the funding going to over 5,000 different projects to help divert tens of thousands of Canadians from homelessness to permanent housing solutions, as well as transitional homes.

We have also introduced the rapid housing initiative, which is having tremendous success on the ground.

* * *

● (1500)

LABOUR

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, WestJet pilots could be on strike as soon as this Friday if they do not reach a deal with the airline. They are seeking fair pay, better conditions and more job security.

In 2012, when Air Canada pilots voted to strike, the Conservative government of the day was quick to force them back to work. Will the minister stand today to commit to respecting the collective bargaining rights of these pilots, or does he intend to follow the example set by the Conservatives?

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, right now the Minister of Labour is on the ground in Toronto to make sure the parties reach a fair agreement, one that works for everyone. Our federal mediators are very good at what they do. Last year, they resolved 93% of federal disputes without any work stoppages. We are focused on the bargaining table because that is where the best deals are always reached.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the rising cost of food affects Canadians, small businesses and families who are trying to put a nutritious meal on the table in my riding and across the country.

Last week, with the passage of Bill C-46, came the creation of the new one-time grocery rebate that will deliver targeted inflation relief for over 11 million low- and moderate-income Canadians and families who need it most.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance tell this House when Canadians can expect this timely grocery rebate?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to do so, and I would like to start by thanking the hon. member for Guelph for his advocacy on behalf of his constituents and all Canadians.

The one-time grocery rebate will deliver targeted inflation relief to 11 million low- and medium-income Canadians and families who need it most. That is going to be up to an extra \$467 for eligible couples with two children, and people will get that support on July 5 of this year.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been a good start to seeding for the farmers in south-west Saskatchewan, and what do they get as a thanks from the Prime Minister this year for being the most sustainable and innovative farmers in the world? Carbon tax 2.0. The Liberals are bringing in fuel regulations that are going to gouge producers and consumers above and beyond the first carbon tax, which they are still going to triple.

We already know the first carbon tax has caused the price of food to go up, so how much more are Canadians going to have to pay after the Prime Minister puts in the second carbon tax?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have cleared up the fact that the Conservative Party of Canada had committed to put in place a low-carbon fuel standard during the last election campaign, but let us talk about what the farmers are saying.

The Dairy Farmers of Canada has committed the dairy farms sector to reaching net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Egg Farmers of Canada has announced a commitment to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The farming sector knows very well how climate change is impacting them. It seems the only one who does not know about this is the Conservative Party of Canada.

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is incredible, he actually does not know how food ends up on his plate. The farmer pays a carbon tax, the truck that picks up the farmer's food pays a carbon tax to take it to the processor, the processor pays a carbon tax, the truck that picks it up from the processor to take it to the grocery store pays a carbon tax, the grocery store pays a carbon tax and then Canadians cannot pay for food.

When will the partisan hack finance minister finally understand that the carbon tax causes inflation?

Hon. Bill Blair (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity, if I may, to answer this question by giving members an update on the situation that is

going on across western Canada. There are currently 209 wildfires burning in Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, 75 of which are out of control. Mostly hot, dry and windy conditions in the next week will continue to exacerbate things for those communities. There are close to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am going to interrupt for a second; it is getting rowdy and noisy again. I have the impression I am at a frat house party or something. Please keep it down, on both sides. Please.

The hon. minister, from the top, please.

Hon. Bill Blair: Mr. Speaker, I want to take the opportunity to speak about the situation Canadians are facing particularly across western Canada, where there are 209 wildfires burning, 75 of which are burning out of control. Unfortunately, mostly hot, dry and windy conditions over the next week will exacerbate the situation, and shifting winds have pushed smoke across the country, impacting a number of urban communities, Calgary and Winnipeg in particular. Close to 30,000 Canadians have been evacuated from their communities.

The Government of Canada is there for those Canadians. We have deployed Canadian Armed Forces resources, the Canadian Red Cross and additional police resources. Together we will be there for the people of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan through this very difficult time.

• (1505)

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is incredibly disappointing to see the minister politicizing these disasters for his own gain. The fact of the matter is after eight years of the Prime Minister Canadians are struggling like never before as the cost of government is driving up the cost of living and people are struggling to afford gas, groceries and home heating. Now they are planning a 41¢-a-litre tax on gas as well as a second carbon tax, which people in northern Ontario cannot afford, though they have little choice but to pay.

When will the finance minister finally scrap the failed carbon tax scam?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is unfortunate is that the Conservative Party fails to see a link between climate change and the impact on the economy; that the Conservatives fail to see extreme weather events as being an existential threat to this planet; that they think they can bury their head in the sand and forget that climate change exists and think that there will be an economy for anybody. If we want to have a planet, we must take action on climate, and we are doing that while making sure that life is more affordable for Canadians and we will continue to do that.

Oral Questions

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these Liberals have missed every single environmental target that they have created; let alone these Liberals have increased the carbon tax. We know there is carbon tax 2.0. How high does the carbon tax have to go so that the current government can stop blaming—

An hon. member: Triple it.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, they want to triple the carbon tax to prevent forest fires and hurricanes. How much does this carbon tax 2.0 have to go up?

[Translation]

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our farmers are the first to realize the price we are paying for climate change, whether it is because of a drought like the one in the west two years ago, a flood like the one in British Columbia two years ago or a hurricane like the one in the Atlantic provinces just over a year ago.

They really are the first ones, and that is why we have created risk management programs to help them. There is the sustainable Canadian agricultural partnership. There are agri-environmental programs to help them be more resilient and deal with the situation they are facing.

* * *

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to research and science, Canada has been racing to the bottom for the past 20 years. It is the only G7 country that has lost researchers since 2016 and the only one that has reduced its investments in R and D over the past 20 years. It has not indexed its graduate scholarships since 2003.

While the minimum wage has doubled, our students' wages have not gone up one red cent. What message does this send to the next generation?

All the students and their associations are watching us right now. When is this government going to wake up and increase the value of graduate scholarships?

[English]

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has been steadfast in its support of science, scientists and scientific research in Canada. That is why budget 2022 proposed \$38.3 million over four years for the federal granting councils to add new and internationally recruited Canada excellence research chairs in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. We will continue to support a robust science and research ecosystem that reflects Canada's strengths and that advances Canadian interests.

[Translation]

FINANCE

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when someone regularly attends the court of King Charles III, they could feel underdressed. That is surely why our last two governors general billed taxpayers—wait for it—more than \$100,000 for clothing. That is \$100,000 in clothing and shoes. It might be more because they have a clothing allowance of \$130,000 per term.

Governors general have the right to dress as they wish, but given how much money they make, could they not pay for their own clothing?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know very well that many Canadians are having trouble making ends meet at this time.

People expect us to manage their money with transparency. That obviously includes members and senators, the government and the Governor General.

* * *

• (1510)

JUSTICE

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when he starts talking about his interest in improving public safety, the Prime Minister will say anything. His actions tell a different story, though.

To start with, he passed Bill C-75, which makes it easier for violent criminals to obtain bail. After that, he passed Bill C-5 to get rid of mandatory jail sentences for serious crimes. Now he has a bail reform bill, which was tabled yesterday, that is so weak that even the person charged with murdering police officer Greg Pierzchala would still have gotten bail.

Can the Prime Minister admit to his mistakes and simply repeal the law arising from Bill C-75?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have tabled a bill in the House yesterday to strengthen our bail system. It targets repeat violent offenders and offences involving weapons. This is exactly what the provinces and police associations asked for.

Police associations across Canada have publicly endorsed the steps we took yesterday. Several provinces will do likewise.

[English]

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the only bail reform in Bill C-48 is in its name. Violent repeat offenders could still count on the Liberal government for its catch-and-release system to get them back out on the street, sometimes within hours of their arrest.

This bill does not substantially improve public safety. In fact, the man who killed Constable Pierzchala would still have been out on release even if this legislation had been in place.

When will the Liberals finally do what they have been asked and end catch-and-release?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow me to quote the Canadian Police Association.

...we appreciate that [ministers] have worked collaboratively with stakeholders and introduced this common-sense legislation that responds to the concerns that our members have raised.

Police, provinces and territories seem to agree about the common-sense nature of our approach. We have the support of police associations, we have the support of provinces. This would go a long way towards making our bail system not only stronger but fairer.

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, doing the bare minimum, tokenism is not enough.

It is not enough in light of the challenges that our police face. It is not enough when 13 premiers unanimously call for fundamental change to Canada's broken bail system. Under this legislation, repeat violent criminals charged with weapons trafficking, attempted murder and robbery are all still eligible for bail under this Liberal catch-and-release program.

When will the Liberal government do what has been asked of it, protect Canadians, make our streets safer, and end catch-and-release?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this bill did exactly what the premiers asked for in their letter to the Prime Minister and more. We went further by working with the provincial justice ministers and ministers of public safety.

Here is what the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police have said:

We are convinced that the legislative changes put forth in Bill C-48 will go a long way to help eliminate the preventable harm and senseless tragedies attributable to violent and repeat offenders across Canada.

* * *

[Translation]

FIREARMS

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the people in my riding of Châteauguay—Lacolle are concerned. Gun violence is a scourge that continues to raise concerns for people. Firearms are used in far too many violent crimes. They make our communities less safe.

I know that, like me, the Minister of Canadian Heritage shares these concerns. Can he tell us what message the Government of Canada has for Canadians who are worried about this situation?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question and for all of the work that she does in her community. Like the residents of Châteauguay—Lacolle, the people in my riding of Honoré-Mercier are too often faced with gun violence.

I am proud to be able to tell them that we are taking action with Bill C-21. It is no secret that we would have liked to go even further, but even the strictest bill is no good if we cannot pass it.

Oral Questions

Bill C-21 may not be perfect, but it will make our communities a lot safer. What is clear is that the only way to keep assault weapons out of our communities is to have a Liberal government.

* * *

● (1515)

[English]

HOUSING

Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the same day we learned that the price of the average home shot up again, the Minister of Housing would not answer simple questions about the housing crisis.

We asked why rent had doubled over the last eight years. We asked why home prices have doubled over the last eight years. We asked him why his own officials have said that they could see a 32% decline in housing starts this year. He told us we were playing games.

How can the minister stand in this House and, continually, in the midst of a housing crisis, tell Canadians they have never had it so good?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. speaker, it is really hard to take the party opposite seriously on housing. In their previous election platform, Conservatives did not even have the words “affordable housing” in their platform.

Now they have released a so-called plan that does not have the word “homelessness”. There is no plan for women's housing. There is no plan for northern housing. There is no plan for rapid housing. There is no plan for co-op housing. There is no plan for helping first-time homebuyers. There is no plan for helping renters. There is no plan for seniors' housing. There is no plan for accessible housing. There is absolutely no plan on that side of the house.

* * *

[Translation]

CARBON PRICING

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with this Prime Minister everything already costs more and now inflation is taking off again. Some experts are even saying that the Bank of Canada might increase interest rates yet again. It was in all the media. That is not reassuring for Canadians. This Prime Minister is at it again. He is proposing other inflationary policies like his carbon tax.

When will he abandon his disastrous plans for Canadians?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have already pointed out several times in the House, Quebec has a carbon pricing system called cap and trade and it is different than Canada's system.

I would be pleased to explain to my colleague opposite how the Quebec system works. My office would gladly arrange a briefing on this issue.

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has driven up the cost of food production by charging our farmers the carbon tax and the 35% tariff on fertilizer.

Our family farms are stretched thin. The minister continues to suggest to farmers that they go further in debt and says that the carbon tax does not affect Quebec. I can also show the Minister of Environment and Climate Change bills that clearly show that is not true, not to mention the shipping of goods between the provinces. The government needs to understand the harm it is causing to farmers and Canadian families.

When will it finally cut the carbon tax?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague the Minister of Environment and Climate Change said, Quebec has its own system. The price on pollution imposed by the federal government does not apply to Quebec.

Unlike the Conservatives, who cut risk management and research and innovation programs when they were in power, we are making investments. We are supporting our farmers so that they can adopt good environmental practices and have access to new technologies. We have increased the sustainable Canadian agricultural partnership by 25%.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Charles Sousa (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians across the country deserve to feel safe from gun violence and crime. In my riding of Mississauga—Lakeshore, I have heard from constituents who do worry about the safety of their loved ones. They worry about gang violence, carjacking and organized crime.

Can the minister please update this House on the action this government is taking to make our neighbourhood safer for everyone?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Mississauga—Lakeshore for his hard work.

We have promised Canadians we would crack down on gun violence. Assault-style firearms have no place in our communities. That is why we are pushing forward with smart policy to get these weapons off our streets, investing in our borders to stop illegal smuggling and investing nearly \$400 million to support law enforcement and address guns and gangs.

Yesterday, I introduced a bill that would make it harder to get bail after committing a crime involving a firearm.

What do the Conservatives do? They vote against these measures and they filibuster. We have a plan. They have a record of slashing police budgets and stalling.

* * *

WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, a day when we commit to fighting discrimination in all its forms.

Sadly, queer communities across Turtle Island and the world are increasingly under threat. Lives are at stake here. The #Act4Queer-Safety campaign and others have put forward concrete proposals for more funding to combat hate. Additionally, the Dignity Network has long called for a special rapporteur to ensure that 2SLGBTQ rights at home and abroad are protected.

When will the government go beyond words, start acting and implement the calls to action?

● (1520)

Ms. Jenna Sudds (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every Canadian deserves to feel safe and supported, no matter where they are or whom they love. Homophobia, transphobia, transmisogyny, biphobia and all forms of violence and racism have no place in Canada or in the world. We know that a disproportionate amount of hate is directed at 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and that is why 75% of the 2SLGBTQI+ action plan investments go directly to the critical lifelines supporting these communities. Our government will continue to support them and reaffirm their right to be true and—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Spadina—Fort York.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, the public safety minister has reached the startling conclusion that there may be more Chinese police stations operating in Canada, not that he would inform the House, having decided to share this stunning revelation of the obvious with CTV last weekend.

Does the government have a particular number of stations in mind before it takes the matter seriously? How much longer does the RCMP now need to complete an investigation into what is already known? In case they missed it on TV, do they even know about the other stations? Is there a threshold for the number of Chinese Canadians who must be intimidated before the government acts?

Government Orders

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take all threats from Russia, China and other foreign actors very seriously. As the hon. member knows, the investigation of these Chinese police stations is being conducted by the RCMP, and the RCMP will continue to conduct investigations as information comes forward.

Canadians can be assured not only that we are taking this seriously, but that they are safe here in Canada.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of a parliamentary delegation from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, led by Lord Purvis of Tweed.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during question period, the hon. member for Fundy Royal was asking a question of the justice minister, and the member for York South—Weston said that is a lie. This, of course, is unacceptable and unparliamentary.

I believe if you consult Hansard, you will find that they did in fact capture it being said and that if you give the member for York South—Weston the opportunity now, he will, of course, rise and apologize for this unacceptable and unparliamentary comment made to the hon. member for Fundy Royal.

The Speaker: We will consult Hansard and come back to the House tomorrow.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1525)
[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from May 16 consideration of Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

The Speaker: It being 3:24 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions on the motions at report stage of Bill C-21.

[Translation]

Call in the members.

The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2 to 6, 9 and 12.

• (1535)
[English]

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 327)

YEAS

Members

- Aitchison
- Allison
- Baldinelli
- Barrett
- Bezan
- Bragdon
- Brock
- Caputo
- Chambers
- Cooper
- Dancho
- Deltell
- Doherty
- Dreeshen
- Ellis
- Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
- Fast
- Findlay
- Genuis
- Goodridge
- Gray
- Jeneroux
- Kitchen
- Kram
- Kurek
- Lake
- Lawrence
- Lewis (Essex)
- Liepert
- Lobb
- Martel
- McCauley (Edmonton West)
- Melillo
- Morantz
- Motz
- Nater
- Patzner
- Perkins
- Redekopp
- Rempel Garner
- Roberts
- Ruff
- Schmale
- Shields
- Small
- Steinley
- Strahl
- Thomas
- Tolmie
- Van Popta
- Vidal
- Viersen
- Vuong
- Warkentin
- Webber

- Albas
- Arnold
- Barlow
- Berthold
- Block
- Brassard
- Calkins
- Carrie
- Chong
- Dalton
- Davidson
- d'Entremont
- Dowdall
- Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
- Epp
- Falk (Provencher)
- Ferreri
- Gallant
- Godin
- Gourde
- Hallan
- Kelly
- Kmiec
- Kramp-Neuman
- Kusie
- Lantsman
- Lehoux
- Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
- Lloyd
- Maguire
- Mazier
- McLean
- Moore
- Morrison
- Muys
- O'Toole
- Paul-Hus
- Poilievre
- Reid
- Richards
- Rood
- Scheer
- Seeback
- Shipley
- Soroka
- Stewart
- Stubbs
- Tochor
- Uppal
- Vecchio
- Vien
- Vis
- Wagantall
- Waugh
- Williamson— 110

NAYS

Members

- Aldag
- Ali
- Anandasangaree

- Alghabra
- Anand
- Angus

Government Orders

Arseneault	Arya	Perron	Petipas Taylor
Ashton	Atwin	Plamondon	Powlowski
Bachrach	Badawey	Qualtrough	Rayes
Bains	Baker	Robillard	Rodriguez
Barron	Barsalou-Duval	Rogers	Romanado
Battiste	Beaulieu	Sahota	Sajjan
Beech	Bendayan	Saks	Samson
Bennett	Bergeron	Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Bérubé	Bibeau	Schiefke	Serré
Bittle	Blaikie	Sgro	Shanahan
Blair	Blanchet	Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Blois	Boissonnault	Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Boulerice	Bradford	Sorbara	Sousa
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe	Ste-Marie	St-Onge
Cannings	Casey	Sudds	Tassi
Chabot	Chagger	Taylor Roy	Thériault
Chahal	Champoux	Therrien	Thompson
Chatel	Chen	Trudel	Turnbull
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Valdez	Van Bynen
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier	van Koeverden	Vandenbeld
Coteau	Dabrusin	Vignola	Villemure
Damoff	Davies	Virani	Weiler
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens	Wilkinson	Yip
Desilets	Desjarlais	Zahid	Zarrillo
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Zuberi — 203	
Diab	Dong		
Dubourg	Duclos		
Duguid	Dzerowicz		
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith		
Fergus	Fillmore	Aboultaif	Drouin
Fisher	Fonseca	Ehsassi	Généreux
Fortier	Fortin	Gladu	Joly
Fragiskatos	Fraser	Jones	Savard-Tremblay — 8
Freeland	Fry		
Gaheer	Garon		
Garrison	Gaudreau		
Gazan	Gerretsen		
Gill	Gould		
Green	Guilbeault		
Hardie	Hepfner		
Holland	Housefather		
Hughes	Hussen		
Iacono	Idlout		
Ien	Jaczek		
Johns	Jowhari		
Julian	Kayabaga		
Kelloway	Khalid		
Khera	Koutrakis		
Kusmierczyk	Kwan		
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Aldag	Alghabra
Lametti	Lamoureux	Ali	Anand
Lapointe	Larouche	Anandasangaree	Angus
Lattanzio	Lauzon	Arseneault	Arya
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Ashton	Atwin
Lemire	Lightbound	Bachrach	Badawey
Long	Longfield	Bains	Baker
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)	Barron	Barsalou-Duval
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor	Battiste	Beaulieu
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Beech	Bendayan
Martinez Ferrada	Masse	Bennett	Bergeron
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)	Bérubé	Bibeau
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)	Bittle	Blaikie
McGuinty	McKay	Blair	Blanchet
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McPherson	Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Mendès	Mendicino	Blois	Boissonnault
Miao	Michaud	Boulerice	Bradford
Miller	Morrice	Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Morrissey	Murray	Cannings	Casey
Naqvi	Ng	Chabot	Chagger
Noormohamed	Normandin	Chahal	Champoux
O'Connell	Oliphant	Chatel	Chen
O'Regan	Pauzé	Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif	Drouin
Ehsassi	Généreux
Gladu	Joly
Jones	Savard-Tremblay — 8

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 2 to 6, 9 and 12 defeated as well.

The question is on Motion No. 10. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 11.

● (1545)

(The House divided on Motion No. 10, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 328)***YEAS**

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)

Government Orders

Collins (Victoria)	Cormier	Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Coteau	Dabrusin	Vandenbeld	Vignola
Damoff	Davies	Villemure	Virani
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens	Weiler	Wilkinson
Desilets	Desjarlais	Yip	Zahid
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Zarrillo— 203	
Diab	Dong		
Dubourg	Duclos		NAYS
Duguid	Dzerowicz		Members
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith	Aitchison	Albas
Fergus	Fillmore	Allison	Arnold
Fisher	Fonseca	Baldinelli	Barlow
Fortier	Fortin	Barrett	Berthold
Fragiskatos	Fraser	Bezan	Block
Freeland	Fry	Bragdon	Brassard
Gaheer	Garon	Brock	Calkins
Garrison	Gaudreau	Caputo	Carrie
Gazan	Gerretsen	Chambers	Chong
Gill	Gould	Cooper	Dalton
Green	Hajdu	Dancho	Davidson
Hardie	Hepfner	Deltell	d'Entremont
Holland	Housefather	Doherty	Dowdall
Hughes	Hussen	Dreeschen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Hutchings	Iacono	Ellis	Epp
Idlout	Ien	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Jaczek	Johns	Fast	Ferri
Jowhari	Julian	Findlay	Gallant
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Genuis	Godin
Khalid	Khera	Goodridge	Gourde
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk	Gray	Hallan
Kwan	Lalonde	Jeneroux	Kelly
Lambropoulos	Lametti	Kitchen	Kmieć
Lamoureux	Lapointe	Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Larouche	Lattanzio	Kurek	Kusie
Lauzon	LeBlanc	Lake	Lantsman
Lebouthillier	Lemire	Lawrence	Lehoux
Lightbound	Long	Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	Liepert	Lloyd
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)	Lobb	Maguire
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Martel	Mazier
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada	McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Masse	Mathysen	Melillo	Moore
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Morantz	Morrison
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty	Motz	Muys
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	Nater	O'Toole
McPherson	Mendès	Patzner	Paul-Hus
Mendicino	Miao	Perkins	Poilievre
Michaud	Miller	Redekopp	Reid
Morrice	Morrissey	Rempel Garner	Richards
Murray	Naqvi	Roberts	Rood
Ng	Noormohamed	Ruff	Scheer
Normandin	O'Connell	Schmale	Seeback
Oliphant	O'Regan	Shields	Shiple
Pauzé	Perron	Small	Soroka
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon	Steinley	Stewart
Powlowski	Qualtrough	Strahl	Stubbs
Rayes	Robillard	Thomas	Tochor
Rodriguez	Rogers	Tolmie	Uppal
Romanado	Sahota	Van Popta	Vecchio
Sajjan	Saks	Vidal	Vien
Samson	Sarai	Viersen	Vis
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke	Vuong	Wagantall
Serré	Sgro	Warkentin	Waugh
Shanahan	Sheehan	Webber	Williams
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Williamson— 111	
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné		
Singh	Sorbara		
Sousa	Ste-Marie		
St-Onge	Sudds		PAIRED
Tassi	Taylor Roy		Members
Thériault	Therrien	Aboultaif	Drouin
Thompson	Trudel	Ehsassi	Généreux
Turnbull	Valdez	Gladu	Joly

Government Orders

Jones

Savard-Tremblay— 8

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 10 carried. I therefore declare Motion No. 11 carried.

The question is on Motion No. 13.

• (1600)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 13, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 329*)

YEAS

Members

Aitchison	Albas	Gallant	Garon
Aldag	Alghabra	Garrison	Gaudreau
Ali	Allison	Gazan	Genuis
Anand	Anandasangaree	Gerretsen	Gill
Angus	Arnold	Godin	Goodridge
Arseneault	Arya	Gould	Gourde
Ashton	Atwin	Gray	Green
Bachrach	Badawey	Guilbeault	Hajdu
Bains	Baker	Hallan	Hardie
Baldinelli	Barlow	Hepfner	Holland
Barrett	Barron	Housefather	Hughes
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste	Hussen	Hutchings
Beaulieu	Beech	Iacono	Idlout
Bendayan	Bennett	Jen	Jaczek
Bergeron	Berthold	Jeneroux	Johns
Bérubé	Bezan	Jowhari	Julian
Bibeau	Bittle	Kayabaga	Kelloway
Blaikie	Blair	Kelly	Khalid
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas	Khera	Kitchen
Blaney	Block	Kmiec	Koutrakis
Blois	Boissonnault	Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Boulerice	Bradford	Kurek	Kusie
Bragdon	Brassard	Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Brière	Brock	Lake	Lalonde
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins	Lambropoulos	Lametti
Cannings	Caputo	Lamoureux	Lantsman
Carrie	Casey	Lapointe	Larouche
Chabot	Chagger	Lattanzio	Lauzon
Chahal	Chambers	Lawrence	LeBlanc
Champoux	Chatel	Lebouthillier	Lehoux
Chen	Chiang	Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper	Lightbound	Lloyd
Cormier	Coteau	Lobb	Long
Dabrusin	Dalton	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Damoff	Dancho	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Davidson	Davies	MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
DeBellefeuille	Deltell	Maguire	Maloney
d'Entremont	Desbiens	Martel	Martinez Ferrada
Desilets	Desjarlais	Masse	Mathysen
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	May (Cambridge)	May (Saaneich—Gulf Islands)
Diab	Doherty	Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
Dong	Dowdall	McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
Dreeshen	Dubourg	McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Duclos	Duguid	McLean	McPherson
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz	Melillo	Mendès
El-Khoury	Ellis	Mendicino	Miao
Epp	Erskine-Smith	Michaud	Miller
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)	Moore	Morantz
Fast	Fergus	Morrice	Morrison
Ferreri	Fillmore	Morrissey	Motz
Findlay	Fisher	Murray	Muys
Fonseca	Fortier	Naqvi	Nater
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Ng	Noormohamed
Fraser	Freeland	Normandin	O'Connell
Fry	Gaheer	Oliphant	O'Regan
		O'Toole	Patzner
		Paul-Hus	Pauzé
		Perkins	Perron
		Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
		Poilievre	Powlowski
		Qualtrough	Rayes
		Redekopp	Reid
		Rempel Garner	Richards
		Roberts	Robillard
		Rodriguez	Rogers
		Romanado	Rood
		Ruff	Sahota
		Sajjan	Saks
		Samson	Sarai
		Scarpaleggia	Scheer
		Schiefke	Schmale
		Seeback	Serré

Government Orders

Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
Shiple	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Small	Sorbara
Soroka	Sousa
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	St-Onge
Strahl	Stubbs
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Thompson	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weiler	Wilkinson
Williams	Williamson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi— 316

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Abouttaif	Drouin
Ehsassi	Généreux
Gladu	Joly
Jones	Savard-Tremblay— 8

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 13 carried.

[*English*]

Hon. Kamal Khera (for the Minister of Public Safety) moved that Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), as amended, be concurred in at report stage with further amendments.

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

Hon. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded division.

• (1610)

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

(*Division No. 330*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand

Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badaway
Bains	Baker
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joneas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cornier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Fergus	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	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 (Saarnich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Morrice
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	Normandin

Private Members' Business

O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Pauzé
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Plamondon	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Sousa
Ste-Marie	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thompson
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandenbeld
Vignola	Villemure
Virani	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zuberi— 205	

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— 111	

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif	Drouin
Ehsassi	Généreux
Gladu	Joly
Jones	Savard-Tremblay— 8

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1615)

[*Translation*]

FINANCIAL PROTECTION FOR FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE FARMERS ACT

The House resumed from May 16 consideration of the motion that Bill C-280, An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (deemed trust – perishable fruits and vegetables), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-280, under Private Members' Business.

● (1625)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 331*)

YEAS

Members

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Bezan
Bragdon
Brock
Caputo
Chambers
Cooper
Dancho
Deltell
Doherty
Dreeschen
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Genius
Goodridge
Gray
Jeneroux
Kitchen
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Lawrence
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lobb
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Patzer
Perkins
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts

NAYS

Members

Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong
Dalton
Davidson
d'Entremont
Dowdall
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Ferri
Gallant
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Kelly
Kmiec
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Maguire
Mazier
McLean
Moore
Morrison
Muys
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Poillievre
Reid
Richards
Rood

Aitchison
Aldag
Ali
Anand
Angus
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Baldinelli
Barrett
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bendayan

Albas
Alghabra
Allison
Anandasangaree
Arnold
Arya
Atwin
Badaway
Baker
Barlow
Barron
Battiste
Beech
Bennett

Private Members' Business

Bergeron	Berthold	Liepert	Lightbound
Bérubé	Bezan	Lloyd	Lobb
Bibeau	Bittle	Long	Longfield
Blaikie	Blair	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas	MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
Blaney	Block	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire
Blois	Boissonnault	Maloney	Martel
Boulerice	Bradford	Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Bragdon	Brassard	Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
Brière	Brock	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins	McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)
Cannings	Caputo	McGuinty	McKay
Carrie	Casey	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean
Chabot	Chagger	McLeod	McPherson
Chahal	Chambers	Melillo	Mendès
Champoux	Chatel	Mendicino	Miao
Chen	Chiang	Michaud	Miller
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Moore	Morantz
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper	Morrice	Morrison
Cormier	Coteau	Morrissey	Motz
Dabrusin	Dalton	Murray	Muys
Dancho	Davidson	Naqvi	Nater
Davies	DeBellefeuille	Ng	Noormohamed
Deltell	d'Entremont	Normandin	O'Connell
Desbiens	Desilets	Oliphant	O'Regan
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal	O'Toole	Patzer
Dhillon	Diab	Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Doherty	Dong	Perkins	Perron
Dowdall	Dreeshen	Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Dubourg	Duclos	Poilievre	Powlowski
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Qualtrough	Rayes
El-Khoury	Ellis	Redekopp	Reid
Epp	Erskine-Smith	Rempel Garner	Richards
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)	Roberts	Robillard
Fast	Fergus	Rodriguez	Rogers
Ferreri	Fillmore	Romanado	Rood
Findlay	Fisher	Ruff	Sahota
Fonseca	Fortier	Sajjan	Saks
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Samson	Sarai
Fraser	Freeland	Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Fry	Gaheer	Schiefke	Schmale
Gallant	Garon	Seeback	Serré
Garrison	Gaudreau	Sgro	Shanahan
Gazan	Genuis	Sheehan	Shields
Gerretsen	Gill	ShIPLEY	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Godin	Goodridge	ShIPLEY	Simard
Gould	Gourde	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh
Gray	Green	Sinclair-Desgagné	Sorbara
Guilbeault	Hajdu	Small	Sousa
Hallan	Hanley	Soroka	Ste-Marie
Hardie	Hepfner	Steinley	St-Onge
Holland	Housefather	Stewart	Stubbs
Hughes	Hussen	Strahl	Tassi
Hutchings	Iacono	Sudds	Thériault
Idlout	Ien	Taylor Roy	Thomas
Jaczek	Jeneroux	Therrien	Tochor
Johns	Jowhari	Thompson	Trudel
Julian	Kayabaga	Tolmie	Uppal
Kelloway	Kelly	Turnbull	Van Bynen
Khalid	Khera	Valdez	Vandenbeld
Kitchen	Kmiec	Van Popta	Vidal
Koutrakis	Kram	Vecchio	Viensen
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek	Vien	Villemure
Kusie	Kusmierczyk	Vignola	Vis
Kwan	Lake	Virani	Wagantall
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Vuong	Waugh
Lametti	Lamoureux	Warkentin	Weiler
Lantsman	Lapointe	Webber	Williams
Larouche	Lattanzio	Wilkinson	Yip
Lauzon	Lawrence	Williamson	Zarrillo
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Zahid	
Lehoux	Lemire	Zuberi— 315	
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)		

Routine Proceedings

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Aboultatif	Drouin
Ehsassi	Généreux
Gladu	Joly
Jones	Savard-Tremblay— 8

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

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

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after five weeks here in Ottawa, I am excited that next week we will be back in our ridings. I am excited to get to the riding of Waterloo, and I know constituents have been waiting for these two reports.

I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following two reports of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs: the 39th report, entitled “Report on the Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Quebec, 2022”, and the 40th report, entitled “Report on the Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Alberta, 2022”.

[Translation]

I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 41st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The committee advises that, pursuant to Standing Order 91.1(2), the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business met to consider orders for the second reading of private members' public bills originating in the Senate, and recommended that the items listed in the report, which it has determined should not be designated non-votable, be considered by the House.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 91.1(2), the 41st report is deemed adopted.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1630)

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: As for the other PROC reports, there is a dissenting opinion from the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Conservative members of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to table two dissenting reports in response to the main reports of the committee in

respect of the reports of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the provinces of Quebec and Alberta.

The Conservative members support the work of the commissions and appreciate their efforts to engage in significant consultations in reaching their final reports. However, we respectfully request that the committees respectively and favourably view the objections of the members for Yellowhead, Grande Prairie—Mackenzie and Peace River—Westlock, as well as the objections of the members for Mégantic—L'Érable and Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup.

CANADA—PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA RELATIONSHIP

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third interim report of the Special Committee on the Canada-People's Republic of China Relationship, entitled “A Threat to Canadian Sovereignty: National Security Dimensions of the Canada-People's Republic of China Relationship”.

This reflects work that the committee has undertaken since 2020, and it strongly distinguishes between the Chinese Communist government and the Chinese people on the mainland, the diaspora here in Canada and ethnic Chinese residents in Canada. Our 34 recommendations should inform ongoing discussions on foreign interference.

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

The Deputy Speaker: There is a dissenting opinion from the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we support the report of the committee. We have submitted a supplementary report, along with the main report, that makes three supplementary additions that buttress and support the report. The three recommendations are in respect of Confucius Institutes, the critical election incident public protocol and the new federal beneficial ownership registry.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, entitled “Main Estimates 2023-24”.

* * *

PROTECTING YOUNG PERSONS FROM EXPOSURE TO PORNOGRAPHY ACT

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC) moved that Bill S-210, An Act to restrict young persons' online access to sexually explicit material, be read the first time.

She said: I am here with my colleague from Peace River—Westlock putting forward this very important piece of legislation that focuses on protecting children and restricting them from access to pornography, recognizing the impact on women and other persons of exposing youth to sexually explicit material and violence and deterring the organizations that make this type of material available on the Internet.

We must all work together to ensure that our children are safe. This is just one option for doing so.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

* * *

PETITIONS

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present two petitions today.

The first is on behalf of Canadian chicken farmers who have been affected by the Ukraine goods remission order that was implemented last June. When these farmers visited Parliament Hill last week, their request was that this order not be extended past its June 9, 2023, expiration date.

While eliminating all tariffs on supply-managed goods coming from Ukraine was done in good faith, it has created major uncertainties for the poultry industry. Canadian chicken farmers are asking the government to allow the Ukraine goods remission order to expire on June 9, 2023, and not extend it.

• (1635)

TAXATION

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I would like to present is on behalf of home builders across Canada.

When the GST was first introduced in 1991, the GST new housing rebate was introduced alongside it. This rebate ensured that new home building would not be discouraged by the GST, and the Government of Canada committed to adjusting the qualification thresholds every two years to reflect changes in housing prices. Thirty-two years later, the thresholds have never been adjusted.

Canadian home builders are calling on the government to finally adjust the GST new housing rebate thresholds to reflect the dramatic increase in the price of new homes. It is for the Speaker's home, my home and all our homes. Let us bring it home.

FIREARMS

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these petitioners are asking that Bill C-21 die on the Order Paper. It is an affront to private property rights. All it does is confiscate legal firearms from lawful citizens and does nothing to get illegal guns out of the hands of criminals.

FALUN GONG

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am once again rising to table a petition regarding the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China. The petitioners indicate that Falun Gong practitioners in China are be-

Routine Proceedings

ing targeted, adding that victims face various forms of persecution, including forced organ harvesting and trafficking.

The petitioners call on this Parliament to pass a resolution to establish measures to stop the Chinese Communist regime's crime of systematically murdering Falun Gong practitioners for their organs; to amend Canadian legislation to combat forced organ harvesting; and to publicly call for an end to the persecution of Falun Gong in China.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this place to present a petition. The focus is on the health threats of the climate crisis. The petitioners point out that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report on 1.5°C points to the reality that we are unlikely to be able to stay below 1.5°C without rapid and immediate reductions of emissions, that we are on a path to significantly overshoot our 2030 commitments under the Paris Agreement, and that oil and gas and transportation emissions continue to rise in Canada.

The petitioners, who are physicians, point to the World Health Organization's reporting that "Climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century".

The petition is lengthy, so I will summarize that the conclusions and petition of the undersigned physicians and mothers of Canada call on the Government of Canada to outline measures that actually reach, not net-zero, but zero emissions and to prioritize the elimination of emissions and preservation of a healthy environment as part of every portfolio and every decision within the Government of Canada and of the provinces. They call on the governments of Canada to commit to the rapid elimination of fossil fuels from our economy, in addition to eliminating single-use plastics, among other measures.

JUSTICE

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition and bring it to the attention of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. In its decision on *R. v. Bissonnette*, the Supreme Court struck down section 745.51 of the Criminal Code, which allowed parole ineligibility periods to be applied consecutively for mass murderers.

Government Orders

What this ruling would actually do now is revictimize those family members who thought that people who are guilty of committing multiple mass murders would never get an opportunity for parole. The petitioners urge the government to reconsider, even to the point of using the notwithstanding clause, to protect victims and their families from having to go through the trauma of a parole hearing for a mass murderer.

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition here signed by some fantastic Canadians. They are concerned that the Supreme Court of Canada struck down section 745.51 of the Criminal Code, which allowed parole ineligibility periods to be applied consecutively for mass murderers. As a result, some of Canada's most heinous mass murderers will have their parole ineligibility period reduced. They will now be eligible to apply for parole after only 25 years.

Therefore, the signatories of the petition are looking for the government to use the notwithstanding clause to uphold the previous law that was in place and that the Supreme Court struck down.

• (1640)

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as always, it is an honour to be able to rise in this House to present the issues that are so pressing to Canadians.

Today, I have a petition signed by many Canadians. They hope to draw it to the attention of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, so that the minister can take action related to the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling in *R. v. Bissonnette*. This ruling struck down section 745.51 of the Criminal Code, which allowed for parole ineligibility periods to be applied consecutively for mass murderers. As a result, some of Canada's most notorious and heinous mass murderers are able to apply for parole after serving only 25 years. It is an unjust decision, and it revictimizes the families of the victims of these terrible killers.

The petitioners are asking the Minister of Justice to take action, including not ruling out the use of the notwithstanding clause to ensure that these heinous mass killers face justice.

* * *

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 Deputy 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 also be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

Hon. Kamal Khera (for the Minister of Public Safety) moved that Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), be read the third time and passed.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people. I also want to acknowledge the impact colonial practices have had on indigenous peoples, from overincarceration to overrepresentation in foster care and missing and murdered indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people.

Today, we begin third reading on Bill C-21, a bill that has been greatly improved through consultation with Canadians and indigenous peoples and in co-operation with the Bloc Québécois and the New Democratic Party. I wish more Canadians watched what happens at committee. It has been my experience throughout my time in this place that legislation has been improved at committee, and Bill C-21 is no exception. The bill we have before us today reflects that work.

Before talking about the bill itself, I would like to talk about some of those changes. The member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia is an exceptional parliamentarian, and I have had the pleasure of working with her for three and a half years now. She introduced important amendments, including the requirement for a possession and acquisition licence, or PAL, to purchase, transport and export or import cartridge magazines. This was an ask made by a number of stakeholders, but none more loudly or more courageously than the Danforth Families for Safe Communities.

Their story is tragic and well known, but we all know that the gun used that night on Danforth Avenue was a legally imported handgun that had later been stolen from a gun shop in Saskatchewan. The Danforth shooter then walked into a sporting goods store and legally bought seven magazines for his gun, with no questions asked, simply because a PAL was not required for him to buy them. That will no longer be possible now that these amendments have been adopted and once the bill becomes law. Let us think about that. Prior to these amendments, people did not have to prove that they had licences to purchase and own firearms in order to buy the thing that literally holds the bullets. That changes now.

This major amendment was passed unanimously. To be clear, it will not affect those licensed to carry a firearm. It will ensure that those who are not licensed to possess a firearm cannot legally buy cartridge magazines. Requiring gun owners to show their licences to purchase magazines just makes sense. People do not need magazines if they do not have licences to own a gun.

We also heard from the airsoft industry that the bill went too far and that the industry was willing to work with the government to regulate its sport. An amendment initiated by the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford passed, so the clause deeming airsoft guns to be prohibited devices was removed from the bill. Thanks go to the airsoft community for working productively with our government to find a compromise that would ensure public safety is upheld while allowing the sport to be regulated.

Gun control is a women's issue. The Canadian Women's Foundation notes that the presence of firearms in Canadian households is the single greatest risk factor for the lethality of intimate partner violence. Access to a firearm increases the likelihood of femicide by 500%. The Ontario coroner's death review panel said that 26% of women who were killed by their partner were killed using a firearm.

I have heard from such groups as the Lethbridge YWCA, which told me that every single woman who came to its shelter had been threatened by a partner with a firearm. They are among the nearly 2,500 women victimized in this way over the last five years. Intimate partner violence accounts for nearly 30% of all police-reported violent crime in Canada, and that number rose during the pandemic. In my riding and across the country, such local organizations as Halton Women's Place are helping to shine a brighter light on the dangers of gun violence.

Over the last eight years, as a country, we have also become more aware of the role that coercive control plays in abusive relationships. When firearms are added to the mix, it is a recipe for continued physical, emotional and psychological abuse. In coercive control, a man might use a gun to control a woman without ever pulling the trigger. Such control is real, and it happens every day. An Oakville resident sent me a note that stated, "Let me just say that you can endure the physical and emotional abuse, but when he pulls out a double-barrelled shotgun, loads it and tells you he is going to kill you, then you know true terror. Thank you for looking out for the victims before they become statistics."

● (1645)

Our government has been advocating for women and will continue to do so. Through Bill C-21, we are taking additional steps to support survivors of intimate partner violence who have been threatened with or who have been on the receiving end of violence with a firearm.

The Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party and Green Party all put forward amendments to strengthen the intimate partner violence provisions of Bill C-21. The National Association for Women and the Law tweeted on Monday that they were "pleased that virtually all the amendments [they] proposed were adopted, some unanimously!" These amendments will make women safer.

Government Orders

During the clause-by-clause process, we included an amendment to further define a protection order. A protection order:

...is intended to include any binding order made by a court or other competent authority in the interest of the safety or security of a person; this includes but is not limited to orders that prohibit a person from:

- (a) being in physical proximity to an identified person or following an identified person from place to place;
- (b) communicating with an identified person, either directly or indirectly;
- (c) being at a specified place or within a specified distance of that place;
- (d) engaging in harassing or threatening conduct directed at an identified person;
- (e) occupying a family home or a residence; or
- (f) engaging in family violence.

Protection orders are imperative to keep women safe. By setting minimum standards in the bill, people who have been subject to a protection order will now be ineligible to hold a firearms licence. We know that when a woman leaves an abusive partner, the first day is the most dangerous and violent. That is why there is an amendment to ensure that firearms are removed within 24 hours.

I thank the National Association of Women and the Law for their leadership on these amendments. Because of these changes in the bill, we will save women's lives.

I am particularly pleased that the red-flag provision of the bill remains, ensuring that those concerned about a firearms owner being a danger to themselves or others can now apply to a judge for an order to immediately remove firearms from an individual who may present such a danger. Dr. Najma Ahmed from Canadian Doctors for Protection from Guns stated this:

We support the proposed "red flag" law. Family members, physicians and concerned individuals must have access to an efficient process to quickly have firearms removed from someone who may be at risk to themselves or others.

In Canada, suicide accounts for about 75% of gun deaths. A gun in the home increases adolescent suicide rates by threefold to fourfold. Evidence from other jurisdictions shows that "red flag" laws are effective in reducing firearm suicides.

Most people who survive a suicide attempt do not go on to die by suicide. This is why restricting access to lethal means saves lives. Suicide attempts with a gun are almost uniformly fatal.

Government Orders

The provision will also ensure that women who cannot go to the police have another tool to remove the firearm from their home. To support these new red-flag provisions, Public Safety Canada will establish a program to help raise awareness among victims about how to use the new protections. A guide about how to submit an application to the courts and the protections available could be developed, and the program would fund services to support individuals' applications throughout the court process. It would support the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women, people with mental health issues, indigenous groups and other racialized communities, to help make certain that the red-flag laws are accessible to all, particularly those who may need it most. The government would also make available \$5 million through a contribution program to ensure support and equitable access.

It is also important to state unequivocally that the fiduciary duty of peace officers under common law continues in force, notwithstanding the ability for any person to make an application for an emergency prohibition order. Simply put, police will still be required to do their job of removing guns from dangerous individuals. As I said, it just provides one additional tool for people to use, especially if calling the police is not an option.

In addition, an important amendment introduced by the government is a non-derogation clause. It states Parliament's intent that:

The provisions enacted by the Act [following Bill C-21] are to be construed as upholding the [aboriginal and treaty] rights of Indigenous peoples recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, and not as abrogating or derogating from them.

Nothing in Bill C-21 would take away from section 35 rights; the Constitution still remains the law of the land.

• (1650)

While I know that he opposes the bill itself, I appreciate the way the member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound worked with all parties to include an amendment that further spells out what has already been allowed in practice. Namely, ensuring that anyone with a handgun is able to temporarily store their firearm with a business or individual who also possesses an RPAL for any reason. This includes if an individual recognizes that they are experiencing a mental health crisis and do not want to have access to their firearm.

This example was one that was particularly important to the member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound and to many of whom he spoke, including some veterans. I commend him for the way he conducted himself and the important addition he made to clarify the provisions related to the authorizations to transport in the Firearms Act. It is unfortunate that all members of the Conservative Party were not as constructive.

In particular, the member for Red Deer—Lacombe chose to politicize the requirement for a PAL to buy a magazine and attacked me while I shared the Danforth Families for Safe Communities' story. The member proceeded to post our exchange on social media saying that I had compared every hunter in Canada to the Danforth shooter, and that every single hunter should take note of what I think about them.

That is not what I said, but thanks to this member's misrepresentation, my direct messages have been filled with threats and misogynistic comments that use language I cannot repeat in the House.

This kind of disinformation is typical of the Conservative Party throughout the debate.

The Conservative public safety critic and others continue to spread the false claim that Bill C-21 is targeting hunters. This is fearmongering. I have noticed that the Conservative Party prefers this approach of spreading fear to make Canadians fearful of leaving their homes, using our parks or taking public transit, and fearful of each other.

We are focusing on protecting Canadians and doing the hard work it takes to keep them safe. Conservative politicians prefer to fearmonger and speak in catchy slogans, rather than taking action to prevent crime, keep women safe and remove weapons designed for the battlefield from our streets.

I would now like to turn to other provisions found in Bill C-21. Canadians have been calling upon successive governments for reform and stronger gun control, and in May 2020 we took additional action through an order in council to ban over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms, including the AR-15.

As U.S. Major General Paul Eaton, retired, has said, "For all intents and purposes, the AR-15 and rifles like it are weapons of war." These weapons, designed for the battlefield, have no place on Canadian streets. I have a question for the Conservative Party: Would it make the AR-15 legal again?

Through Bill C-21, we are building on the work done in 2020 to offer a prospective technical definition to ensure that, in addition to the weapons banned in 2020, no future similar weapons will ever be able to enter the Canadian market. Furthermore, the Minister of Public Safety has committed to taking action through regulation to take the burden away from firearms owners to make manufacturers responsible for classifying firearms. This responds to recommendations of the Mass Casualty Commission. Doctors for Protection from Guns called the definition "A victory for science, public health, and Canadian values...to permanently ban future models of assault weapons."

In addition, we are implementing a national freeze on handguns to prevent individuals from bringing newly acquired handguns into Canada, and from buying, selling and transferring handguns within the country, a freeze which, through regulations, has been in effect since October 2022.

It was actually Ken Price of the Danforth Families for Safe Communities who was one of the first proponents of implementing a national freeze on handguns. When Ken testified at committee he stated:

In summary, there's clear evidence on the association between access to handguns and endemic gun violence, and access to semi-automatic weapons and large-capacity magazines and multiple mass shooting events. There is good evidence that the restriction of access to these weapons reduces endemic gun violence and reduces the number of victims of multiple mass shooting events.

Ultimately, it's a choice society has to make. What guns are permissible? What should we allow access to? What level of gun violence are we willing to accept in our community?

Our government is making that choice with Bill C-21. We cannot and will not tolerate gun violence in our communities, while we continue to respect those who hunt for sustenance, sport or tradition.

• (1655)

Bill C-21 would also address illegal smuggling and trafficking at the border by increasing criminal penalties, providing more tools for law enforcement to investigate firearms crimes and strengthening border security measures. Chief Evan Bray of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police testified at committee in support of these provisions, saying:

“With regard to firearms smuggling and trafficking, we support the implementation of new firearms-related offences, intensified border controls and strengthened penalties to help deter criminal activities and to combat firearms smuggling and trafficking, thereby reducing the risk that illegal firearms find their way into Canadian communities and are used to commit criminal offences. The CACP welcomes changes that provide new police authorizations and tools to access information about licence-holders in the investigation of individuals who are suspected of conducting criminal activities, such as straw purchasing and weapons trafficking.”

We need to remember that Bill C-21 would take a multipronged approach that addresses gun violence. This would include increasing penalties for illegal gun smugglers, freezing the sale of handguns, taking action to address the proliferation of ghost guns and introducing measures that make it safer for women to leave abusive relationships.

I am very proud to be part of a government that has passed Bill C-71, and that now, hopefully, will pass Bill C-21. I have heard from Canadians who applaud what we are doing with this bill. They have thanked us for our work on this, saying that guns and ease of access will never be more important than human lives and public safety, and that the bill would protect thousands of people's lives.

Wendy Cukier of the Coalition for Gun Control, who has been working on this issue for over 30 years, said:

No law is ever perfect but Bill C-21 is a game changer for Canada and should be implemented as soon as possible. The law responds to most of the recommendations of the Mass Casualty Commission and the demands of the Coalition for Gun Control...which, with more than 200 supporting organizations, has fought for stronger firearm laws for more than thirty years.

I would be remiss if I did not also acknowledge the work that PolySeSouvient has done for over 30 years to make our country safer. Its advocacy work grew from the misogynistic slaughter of women at Polytechnique in 1989, and I have the utmost respect for their dedication to gun control.

I want to close by giving special thanks to the Liberal, Bloc and NDP members of the public safety committee, who worked togeth-

Government Orders

er, at times into the wee hours of the night, to ensure that the bill we have before us is better than when it started. I thank the New Democratic Party and the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, and the Bloc Québécois and the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia. I also have to give a special shout-out to Sarah Thomas, Conor Lewis and all the staff, without whom we as members could not do our jobs. I thank the minister and his team for their herculean efforts on this bill, and the Prime Minister, for making gun control a central policy of our government.

We will vote on this bill tomorrow. It will be a legacy for this government, one that I am incredibly proud of.

• (1700)

Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will say that, growing up, hunting was essential for our family. I am from a military home. My dad is Métis, and I know that the indigenous people do not just want amendments. They want the bill removed.

I will quote Chief Jessica Lazare from the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake. She says, “the lack of in-depth and comprehensive consultation with indigenous communities is demonstrated in the incoherence and inconsistency of this bill”.

I know that, of my constituents, there are many who are firearms owners. They know they are careful. They are law-abiding, and they feel they are personally being attacked because the Liberals want to point and show they are being really strong on crime, when it is a disaster. They have a terrible record, and it is going up.

Will the Liberal member not recognize how this is essentially virtue signalling and how it would not make our streets safer?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, there is so much to unpack in that. Perhaps the member needs to read the amendments that were done at committee, which include a clause that would ensure that indigenous people's section 35 rights are still in place. There is nothing virtue signalling in this bill, and I am sure the hon. member does not want to forget about the 75% of Canadian suicide victims who died by firearms.

This bill would tackle suicides, intimate partner violence and gun crime. There are many aspects to firearms deaths in this country, and that is why I am proud of the work we are doing in this bill, which would actually save lives.

Government Orders

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her cooperation throughout the study of this bill. I really appreciated working with her and her team. I know that she has been working for better gun control in this country for a number of years.

It was clearly the government's intention to ban assault weapons. The government's first attempt failed. The second attempt was somewhat watered down compared to the first. As we have discussed at length, the proposed definition is prospective, meaning that hundreds of assault-style weapons remain in circulation in the country.

In response to that, the minister told us that he was going to re-establish the Canadian firearms advisory committee and ask for a recommendation on how it could classify firearms. Handing this over to experts is not a bad idea. However, of the 482 firearms, the government itself identified those that could potentially be used for hunting. It identified a dozen.

Why not immediately ban the other 470 using an order in council? That is the proposal I made to the minister. I would like to know what she thinks.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague. I wish I could answer her question in French.

[English]

However, with regard to the firearms in question, as the hon. member knows, a number of those were included in the order in council, which was done in May 2020, and we know that the technical definition in the bill will ensure that future firearms are caught. For the 482, there would be the reconstituted firearms advisory council that would look at those to provide advice to the government, moving forward, to determine which of those should be included.

● (1705)

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I represent an urban riding in a major municipality, and I think that there is a pretty broad consensus in my constituency that people are in favour of strong, fair and rational gun legislation and restrictions. I think they understand the connection between the proliferation of guns and associated violence that comes from it, but at the same time, we do have a healthy number of people in my riding who engage in sport shooting or hunting, even though they live in an urban setting.

I wonder if my hon. colleague can tell us, as the first iteration of the bill did not draw a very good line in that regard, what improvements she would point to in the bill that would give assurance to people who do use firearms responsibly for hunting or sport purposes that they will be able to access the equipment they need to carry on with their legitimate activities.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentioned that a number of Canadians feel that we are taking strong action on guns. How many are in support? It is 84% of Canadians who are saying that we are on the right track, including a majority of rural Canadians.

With regards to sport shooting, there is an exemption in the bill for those who participate in or are on a pathway to Olympic sports. As the hon. member likely knows, there will be regulations that will be developed around that, but the pathway is only for those who are on track to participate in the Olympics or the Paralympics. Nothing in the bill would impact those who are in the biathlon sport. That is what is in the bill, and that is what the member can tell his constituents.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary for all of her work on this.

The member mentioned how difficult these discussions have been to get to the real crux of the matter. I am looking at a discussion I had with one of my constituents on December 2 of last year. He was talking about paintball cases, that 2,000 paintballs were \$150 versus magfed at \$30, and that the airsoft community had not been consulted at that time. He had served in the military. He knows that AR-15s should not be available anywhere in Canada, so he was approaching it from the recreational community saying that, at the time, we had not consulted them.

Could the hon. member comment on how much work there has been to get to the right level of consultation with the right people?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, airsoft industry representatives were extremely productive in their discussions with the government and with the committee. They were willing to work with the government to see their sport regulated. I had a number of conversations, as I know a number of members in this House did, with representatives of the airsoft industry. We will work with them. They are supportive of having a minimum age to purchase airsoft, and around transportation and storage.

I commend the airsoft industry for the way it worked with the government. As members know, the bill before us removed the prohibition for airsoft guns thanks to the NDP members, who put forward an amendment that was passed at committee.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I had the displeasure of sitting through the public safety committee and listening to a lot of the rhetoric that came from the other side, both NDP and Liberal, on this bill. Contrary to public opinion, it does not improve public safety. Contrary to the rhetoric coming from the parliamentary secretary, it does not improve public safety.

We did not hear from one group of individuals who supported red flag laws. In fact, PolySeSouvient, who were big fans of the Liberals up until the Liberals refused to listen to them, and 20 other national women's groups have asked to please not invoke red flag laws in Bill C-21, because they do not work. They put women victims at risk. I stood up and said that, from my experience, the current law works and it works well. Why are the Liberals so dogmatic and not listening to the Canadian public? We know the answer, because that is what they always do.

Government Orders

What is the explanation for why the Liberals will not listen to Canadians? Women's groups that used to support the government are saying to please remove red flag laws from this bill. Why have the Liberals not done that?

• (1710)

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, I will correct the hon. member. We did hear, at committee, from Doctors for Protection from Guns, which did support red flag laws.

I would also remind the hon. member, when we are discussing red flags and other things to protect women, that he seems to ignore the fact that, in my riding of Oakville North—Burlington, at Halton Women's Place, the only women who go to the shelter when firearms are involved are married to police officers. The hon. member has claimed that individuals who were coming forward were actually making false claims with no evidence. He said his changes would have lowered the chance of those coming forward for nefarious reasons to make claims that are false.

Women who come forward with claims of violence in the home because of firearms are not making malicious claims. To try to belittle them is offensive.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I cannot say that I am happy to be rising today to discuss this piece of legislation, but I am happy to be rising as a law-abiding firearms owner to defend my fellow law-abiding firearms owners.

How did we get here? I will put things in context so the people who might be watching at home know whom they are listening to. I am a member of Parliament for an urban-rural split riding in central Alberta. Half of my constituents live in Red Deer, the third-largest city in Alberta, and the other half live on a first nation reserve, or in a rural setting in Red Deer County, Lacombe County or Ponoka County, or in a small town, city or village therein.

I would consider the people I represent to be honest, hard-working, law-abiding folks who want their tax dollars spent wisely and want the freedom to pursue whatever they want to pursue in life. Many of them pursue various things that involve firearms, including hunting, farming on farms like the one I grew up on, where firearms are just a tool and an everyday part of life, or sport shooting. This is very popular in my constituency. There are numerous stores and vendors in central Alberta that supply firearms, ammunition and parts because of the demand that is there.

I can tell members that we do not have the problems that my colleague who just spoke talked about in her large urban centre, because we respect the law. We put policies in place at the provincial level, and when we are the governing party, we put laws in place that actually crack down on criminals. That is where the actual issues lie.

I can assure Canadians who might be watching at home that the firearms I own are doing nothing right now. They do not do anything until someone picks them up. The issue at hand is violent crime and who has access to firearms. There are numerous provisions in this bill, Bill C-21, that do not address, penalize or in any way affect the outcome of dealing with the wrong people getting a hold of firearms.

How did we get here? Over the course of the preceding decades, Canada was a country that was a rugged place to settle, and it is still a rugged place for some who live in rural areas or adjacent to wild areas or who are farming, involved in forestry, or doing something as seemingly innocuous as keeping beehives. Anybody watching at home who grew up with cartoon books would know that Winnie-the-Pooh was addicted to honey. This is not by chance. Bears often frequent these places, and good, honest people have bought firearms to protect themselves, many of whom were caught up in the order in council that came out a number of years ago.

It all started in the 1930s. If we go back that far, every single firearm and handgun in this country has been put in a registry, but that does not stop criminals from obtaining guns illegally. The government of the day, whenever it is Liberal or Liberal-leaning, seems to want to blame the law-abiding citizen, so, for decades, we have had a firearms registry and the government knows where all the lawfully owned handguns in this country are. Changes were brought in back when Jean Chrétien was the prime minister, including a long-gun registry, which was wasteful and ineffective. The government of the day said it would cost only \$2 million, but it was actually closer to \$2 billion. Of course, it did not do anything to address violent crime.

We have seen the current government, in its first mandate, put in place Bill C-75, which basically codified in law bail provisions that would let people out in the shortest amount of time with the smallest number of restrictions, and now we see what has happened with that.

What did Bill C-21 originally do? When the members of this House were invited to speak to the bill, it was simply the codification in law of an order in council to ban the transfer of handguns. Then, sneakily, the government decided to table-drop, back in November, a huge stack of amendments that had absolutely nothing to do with handguns. They were all about long guns, and of course the government bit off far more than it could chew.

• (1715)

The government managed to alienate almost all of its voting base when it comes to indigenous Canadians, who were offended by the fact that the firearms used by indigenous people were largely going to be caught up in amendment G-46, taking away their ability to use that firearm.

Government Orders

There was also an evergreen clause in G-4, and I am sorry to report that there is a new evergreen clause put in place that does virtually the same thing, with a minor exception, which I will explain in a few minutes, when I get back to what the problem actually is with the government's notions going forward on its new evergreen clause.

We all remember what happened. It was pretty obvious, because we heard the recordings from the Mass Casualty Commission. The government actually interfered. It took this mass casualty event in Nova Scotia and interfered in the investigation by demanding that the officers who were investigating at the time turn over information to advance a political agenda of the government of the day.

We know it is not about evidence. It is not evidence-based policy-making; it is policy-based evidence-making and evidence-finding, even if it interferes with a police investigation. That is why there is very little trust by law-abiding firearms owners in the intentions of the Liberal government, which is supported by the NDP, and what it is doing.

What is the problem? The problem is violent crime. In the last eight years, violent crime has risen because of the provisions that have been passed by the government when it had a majority and with the support of other left-leaning parties in this place. They passed numerous pieces of legislation, such as Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, that have basically eliminated any consequences whatsoever for people who commit crimes, so much so that violent crime in the last eight years is up 32% over what it was when the Prime Minister and his government inherited the government offices of this place.

More astonishing is this number: 94% increase in gang-related homicides. One would think that an almost doubling of the number of homicides by gang members would trigger a response from the government to crack down on organized crime, but it actually has done the opposite. The passages and clauses in the Criminal Code that would deal with people who are repeat violent offenders have largely been removed, as well as any semblance of a minimum sentence. I am not even talking about mandatory minimum sentences put in place by Stephen Harper when he was prime minister, and by the way crime went down over those 10 years, but I am getting to the point of the fact that numerous basic minimum sentences were removed.

These were put in place by people like Pierre Elliott Trudeau and Jean Chrétien. Of the 12 firearms-related clauses in that piece of legislation, 11 were actually put in place by previous Liberal governments, and the current version of the Liberal government has removed even the most basic minimum sentences for violent crime, including smuggling, firing a gun irresponsibly or even holding a gun to somebody's head for the purpose of extortion. It has removed any mandatory jail time whatsoever for those.

That is the tone and the signal Liberals have sent to the country. Why would criminals not want to increase their activity? There are no consequences, and this is the problem.

I will give an example of the illogic of what the government is doing right now. According to the RCMP's website, there are approximately 430 gangs in Canada with 7,000 members in those

gangs. If we look at the average number of homicides committed by people associated with gangs over the last five or six years, it is about 50% of murders. Fifty per cent of murders are committed by gang members, or about 125 a year. There are 2.2 million licensed gun owners in this country. If we look over that same time period, we will see that they are charged for homicide about 12 times a year.

● (1720)

That is 12 out of 2.2 million people versus 125 out of 7,000 people. Who does the government go after? It goes after the 2.2 million. It does not make any sense whatsoever. If we do the math, a gang member is 3,300 times more likely to commit murder with a firearm than a law-abiding firearm owner is, yet the government focuses only on the law-abiding firearm owner.

Gary Mauser, professor emeritus, did an analysis for Statistics Canada that shows that Canadians who are not licensed firearms owners are still three times more likely to commit a homicide than a vetted, licensed gun owner is. For the people who are watching at home, the safest people in Canada for them to be with are legally vetted, law-abiding firearm owners who, at any time, could have their firearms taken away with any complaint lodged against them. That means that every firearm owner meticulously follows the laws of storage, the laws of transportation and the laws of safe discharge. As a matter of fact, we jokingly quip sometimes that gun control meetings are about making sure one's muzzle is always pointed downrange. That is what gun control is to a law-abiding gun owner. We follow all the rules because we do not want to risk losing our privileges, because the fact is that every firearm in Canada is illegal unless it is in the possession of somebody with a licence who is authorized to have that firearm.

We have to go through a renewal process every five years, during which our entire history, including our mental health history, our medical history and anything that might have happened before the courts is reviewed in detail. We wait months to get our licence renewed. Sometimes it is not renewed on time. This puts us in a situation, as law-abiding firearm owners, where we are now in possession of our firearms, which were legal one day, but of which, because of the incompetence of the government to process an application on time, we are now technically, according to the law, illegally in possession. We actually had a clause, when Stephen Harper was the prime minister, where people had a six-month grace period. I am very frustrated by the removal of that grace period, and I will get to that in a minute.

In committee, Dr. Caillin Langmann from McMaster University basically laid it out for everybody to see. His brief states:

The foregoing research papers are peer reviewed and conclude that Canadian legislation to regulate and control firearm possession and acquisition does not have a corresponding effect on homicide and suicide rates.

It also states:

I was asked to produce a review paper for the Journal of Preventive Medicine in 2021. This paper entitled, "Suicide, firearms, and legislation: A review of the Canadian evidence" reviewed 13 studies regarding suicide and legislative efforts and found an associated reduction in suicide by firearm in men aged 45 and older but demonstrated an equivalent increase in suicide by other methods such as hanging. Factors such as unemployment, low income, and indigenous populations were associated with suicide rates...

My conclusions are based on sound statistical analysis and information specifically related to Canada. I am not aware of any other Canadian research which uses reliable statistical models to dispute or disagree with my conclusions.

The brief also states:

Bans of military-appearing firearms, semiautomatic rifles and handguns, short barrel handguns and Saturday night specials in the 1990s has resulted in no associated reduction in homicide rates.

To summarize the results, no statistically significant beneficial associations were found between firearms legislation and homicide by firearm, as well as spousal homicide by firearms, and the criminal charge of "Discharge of a Firearm with Intent"....

Other studies have demonstrated agreement with my studies that laws targeting restricted firearms such as handguns and certain semi-automatic and full automatic firearms in Canada also had no associated effect with homicide rates. Canadian studies by Leenaars and Lester 2001, Mauser and Holmes 1992, and McPhedran and Mauser 2013, are all in general agreement with my study.

• (1725)

The issue is violent crime. It is about controlling violent criminals, controlling those people. One can control inanimate objects all one wants, but it will not change anything. Therefore, the "who" is not the problem. It is not hunters. Over eight million people in this country hunt and fish, contributing \$19 billion annually to the GDP, and the order in council has already banned rifles used for hunting, some that even conservation officers use. I was a conservation officer. I was a national park warden and I was issued firearms for my duties. I was a park ranger in charge of a park in the province of Alberta and I was issued firearms for those duties as well. Every person I dealt with as a conservation officer was at least a camper who had an axe, a fisherman who had a knife or a hunter who had either a rifle or a bow and arrow. I had no trouble with those good people, no trouble whatsoever.

We are going to ban the very guns that conservation officers use, but they do not have those firearms. The Yukon government actually had to go around the order in council to buy firearms for its conservation officers, because those are the best firearms available to protect its officers from bears, mountain lions and all of the other issues that conservation officers face, because that is where the real issue lies.

It is very clear to me as a hunter, that, with the changes the Liberals have made, they are weasel words, especially the evergreen clause that deals with magazines. I laid it out very clearly at committee that anybody who wants to interpret it that way can say that, as long as a firearm can take a magazine that holds more than five rounds, it shall be banned. After this becomes law, we would end up in a situation in which, with guns that are functionally identical, one from 10 years ago and a new firearm, one would be prohibited and the other would still be legal. This is because of the clear lack of knowledge and understanding, when it comes to firearms, of people who do not own guns, making laws that simply do not work. We are going to have that scenario again.

Private Members' Business

However, if people think their gun is safe because they have an older gun that is not included in the new evergreen clause, they should think again, because the firearms committee that would be struck would still have the same authority to do a firearms reference table analysis and ban whatever guns it does not like.

I have news for everybody in this room. If we look at all of the hunting regulations in all of the provinces and territories in this country, a hunting rifle is a rifle that is in the hands of a hunter, used for the purposes of the hunt. It does not matter what it looks like; it just matters what the calibre of the bullet is, so the animal can be safely dispatched.

I could go on for literally a couple more hours and talk about the end of cowboy mounted shooting, cowboy action shooting, IPSC, all of these sports for all of these good people. They are mostly Filipinos there, by the way, when I go to an IPSC event. They are people who have moved here from a country that never allowed them to own firearms, but they have come here and taken up this sport and activity. They are frustrated because, when we take away the ability to transfer these handguns between law-abiding citizens, it will be the end of thousands of people's enjoyment of the sports that involve handguns. I look forward to answering some hopefully logical questions from around the room.

Before I conclude, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following: "Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), be not now read a third time, but be referred back to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security for the purpose of reconsidering clauses 0.1, 1.1 and 17, with a view to ensure that the government cannot take away hunting rifles from law-abiding farmers, hunters and Indigenous peoples."

• (1730)

The Deputy Speaker: The amendment is in order.

It being 5:32 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC) moved that Bill C-314, an act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to my private member's bill, Bill C-314, the mental health protection act.

In its very essence, this bill is about reaffirming the dignity and worth of each and every human life. It is about recognizing that it is the most vulnerable among us, the disabled and the mentally ill, to whom we owe the greatest duty: to defend and protect their lives and to provide them with every possible opportunity to live life to the fullest.

Private Members' Business

Medically assisted suicide was legalized in Canada in 2015 by the Supreme Court's Carter decision and later under the Liberal government's Bill C-14. Under this legislation, medical assistance in dying, or MAID, as it is commonly called, was strictly limited to those consenting adults who had an incurable disease that caused enduring, intolerable suffering that could not be alleviated, and where natural death was reasonably foreseeable, which they call the foreseeability test.

At the time, the government and its supportive stakeholders assured Canadians that this was not a slippery slope, where the scope of MAID would continually be expanded to include more and more vulnerable Canadians. However, not surprisingly, in the intervening eight years since the Carter decision, the government has begun to expand Canada's MAID regime to include more and more defenceless Canadians, most particularly those living with disabilities.

In late 2019, a Quebec lower court judge in the Truchon case ruled that the foreseeability test I just mentioned was unconstitutional, requiring Parliament to respond with additional legislation. Sadly, the Liberal government chose not to appeal the Truchon case to the Supreme Court of Canada, presumably because the decision lined up with the Prime Minister's intent to dramatically expand assisted suicide to other vulnerable Canadians. This leaves us with the perverse situation in which the Supreme Court of Canada, the highest court in the country, has never been allowed to opine on whether the reasonable foreseeability test is constitutional.

In any event, the Liberal government responded to Truchon by tabling Bill C-7, which initially eliminated the foreseeability test but expressly excluded mentally ill persons from being caught up in its MAID regime. Here is what the justice minister said at the time:

The fact that there would be risk of ending the life of a person whose symptoms would have improved...is, in part, why we are of the view that it is safest not to permit MAID on the sole basis of mental illness... There is also ongoing uncertainty and disagreement as to the potential impact on suicide prevention if MAID were made available to this group.

He went on to say:

...there is no consensus among experts on whether and how to proceed with MAID on the basis of mental illness alone. On a question of such importance and with so much uncertainty and expert disagreement, it is incumbent upon us to proceed with caution and prudence.

Those were our justice minister's views until the unelected Senate suddenly introduced an amendment that expanded MAID to those Canadians whose sole underlying condition is mental illness. Sadly, the justice minister and the government accepted the amendment without protest and, overnight, became zealous proponents of assisted death for the mentally ill. What happened to the caution and prudence the minister was preaching? What about the impact on suicide prevention the minister was so concerned about? What happened to his view that it was safest not to permit MAID on the sole basis of mental illness?

I agree with the Minister of Justice on one thing, which is that, as he has said, this is indeed a complex issue and is deeply personal. It is deeply personal because it involves life, a precious human life.

● (1735)

I would remind the minister and his government that the issue is also profoundly simple; that is, the principle that all life, all human

life is precious and worthy of defence and protection, especially for those who do not have the ability to speak for themselves and have no one to speak for them.

One of the primary functions of government is to protect its citizens, to protect life. In fact, the right to life is expressly enshrined in section 7 of our Charter of Rights. Sadly, the government's Bill C-7 fails to protect the lives of our most vulnerable. It removes the critical safeguards that the original euthanasia legislation included in response to the Carter decision. Removing those safeguards will have irreversible consequences for those who suffer from mental illnesses like depression.

What is equally disturbing is that the Liberal government has also signalled its intention to extend the so-called "treatment option" to minor children. That would arguably make Canada the most expansive, most liberal, assisted suicide jurisdiction in the world. Clearly we are on the slippery slope many of us warned about. Canadians have a right to conclude that the Liberal government has gone too far and too fast in its zeal to implement and expand the scope of assisted death.

My bill will reverse this momentum and repeal the government's decision to extend MAID to the mentally ill. It will put a full stop to the expansion of assisted suicide to mentally disordered persons. Let me be clear. My bill does not in any way reverse the rest of Canada's MAID regime. Assisted death will remain available for those suffering from irremediable, incurable and intolerable illnesses and diseases. My bill is simply focused on reversing the government's actions in expanding assisted suicide to include the mentally ill. It would arrest Canada's slide into normalizing assisted death as an alternative treatment option, something so many of us had predicted would happen.

The evidence from mental health experts is very clear. Contrary to what our justice minister is now saying, there is absolutely no consensus in Canada that the mentally ill should be covered by Canada's medically assisted death regime. In fact, here is what experts and other stakeholders in the mental health community are saying. John Maher, psychiatrist with Canadian Mental Health Association, states that:

Inducement to suicide while simultaneously denying mental health care to two-thirds of Canadians who urgently need it is an unconscionable failing.

Directly undermining suicide prevention efforts is an insidious and ablest perversion of our mental health care duty.

Drs. Ramona Coelho and Catherine Ferrier, co-founders of Physicians Together with Vulnerable Canadian, penned a statement that was endorsed by over 1,000 physicians. This is part of what it said, “Given that there is no medical evidence to reliably predict which patients with a mental illness will not get better, MAID for mental illness will end the lives of patients who would have recovered... Medicine ... would fail in its mission if it were to deliberately end the lives of patients living with mental illness... Legislators must work towards safeguarding the lives of the most vulnerable including those placed at a greater disadvantage because of mental illness.”

Dr. Sonu Gaind, chief of the Department of Psychiatry at Sunnybrook Hospital, Toronto, stated, “The Ministers have provided false reassurances that we can somehow separate people who are suicidal from those who are seeking psychiatric euthanasia. That is simply not true. In my opinion, that is dangerous misinformation coming from our federal Minister of Justice and our federal Minister of Mental Health and Addictions providing a false sense of safety that does not exist.”

● (1740)

Trudo Lemmens, professor and chair in health law at the University of Toronto, said, “I urge Parliament to take very seriously how offering MAID for mental illness deprives disabled persons, particularly those with mental illness, from equal protection against premature death. Persons experiencing mental illness deserve to be protected against premature death by an unreserved focus on ensuring access to all required health care and social support services. Facilitating their death does exactly the opposite.”

Finally, Sephora Tang, psychiatrist and assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry at University of Ottawa, said, “One cannot prevent suicide while at the same time facilitating it. Placing expectations upon mental health professionals to do both undermines the effective delivery of recovery-oriented mental health care. Canadians deserve to live in a country that is committed to safeguarding the right to life and security of every person. Current MAID legislation fails to achieve this overarching social good.”

Even Canada's justice minister has publicly acknowledged the fact that issues such as irremediability, competency and suicidality are not anywhere close to being resolved to justify such a major policy shift in favour of death. Furthermore, medically assisted death flies in the face of the government's own promotion of suicide prevention programs, including the recent creation of a national 988 suicide hotline.

It cannot be both ways. It cannot claim, as the Liberal government has, that it wants to prevent suicide deaths on the one hand, when it actively promotes assisted suicide for the mentally ill on the other. Over the last eight years, many of us have expressed our concern and expectation that the Carter decision and Bill C-14 would be expanded by future court decisions, and that these decisions would leave more and more vulnerable populations exposed to the reach of medically assisted suicide.

Our concerns were poo-hooed. We were accused of fearmongering and of misrepresenting the intentions of this Liberal government. Yet, today, the Truchon decision and the travesty of Bill C-7 bear out our concerns. That is why more and more disability groups

Private Members' Business

have set the alarm bells ringing and are vehemently opposing this legislation. They argue that this legislation amounts to a deadly form of discrimination, making it easier for persons with disabilities to die than to live.

We are hearing more and more reports of the poor and homeless approaching food banks to ask for assisted death, not because they are suffering from a grievous illness but because they do not want to go hungry and homeless. The headline in the British magazine *The Spectator* asked last year, “Why is Canada euthanising the poor?”

The response from some bioethicists appears to be, “Well, why not?” In fact, a new paper by two bioethicists at the University of Toronto makes the case that euthanizing the poor should be socially acceptable. That is indicative of the path on which our country finds itself. It is terrifying.

We also have verified reports of veterans suffering from PTSD who are being counselled by the Liberal government to consider medical assistance in dying rather than being provided with the treatment and supports they need to recover.

These are the vulnerable that the Liberal government promised to protect. Canadians have the right to ask whether this government is exercising the requisite caution and care to avoid unnecessary overreach and ensure that MAID is not abused or misapplied.

Let me conclude. My private member's bill, Bill C-314 gives all of us parliamentarians an opportunity to take a deep breath and reconsider the perilous road we have embarked upon. As I mentioned, my bill simply reverses the expansion of Canada's assisted death laws to the mentally ill. At the very least, I would ask my colleagues to allow my bill, at second reading, to go to committee where there could be more discussion.

● (1745)

Have we gone too far and too fast with Canada's assisted suicide program? Will we evolve into a culture of death as the preferred option for those who suffer from mental illness or will we choose life?

I implore my colleagues to choose life. I wish them much wisdom as they make that choice.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate what the member is saying. It is a heavy decision that ultimately does need to be made. There is no question about that.

I look at how important it is that we continue to be in touch with the health care professionals, that we continue to be in touch with other jurisdictions and stakeholders, and that we make sure that we continue to move forward.

Private Members' Business

This is very much an emotional issue that people have very strong convictions on. I do not think there is an easy answer to this. From my perspective, I think that we have to continue the dialogue and have more faith in the system.

Can he provide his thoughts with respect to that?

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for acknowledging that there is further discussion required on this. That is one of the things I have lamented. Medical assistance in dying has been pushed so far, so quickly, that there has not been the appropriate national discussion, or even the appropriate debate within this House, as to whether we should extend this life-or-death policy to the mentally ill.

The stakeholders I quoted represent a very thin slice of the many stakeholders who have written to me. They have said, "Ed, we have not had this discussion. The mental health profession and the stakeholders within the mental health community have not had the debate required to go to this length and extend assisted suicide to the mentally ill."

• (1750)

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, as I often say in the House, everyone wants to do the right thing. Everyone has the best of intentions and wants to look out for people's best interests. However, being compassionate does not square with undermining human dignity or a person's capacity for self-determination in a decision as personal as deciding one's death.

In his bill, my colleague is telling us that mental illnesses are not considered to be grievous and irremediable medical conditions. However, according to the DSM-5 definition, a mental disorder is a syndrome characterized by clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behaviour that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or development processes underlying mental functioning.

Can we really say that is not serious?

[English]

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I do not quite understand it. He did say that everyone means well. "Everyone means well" is not the appropriate standard to apply here. We are talking about life and death for the most vulnerable in our society.

We owe it to the mentally ill and those who have mental disorders to act justly and fairly toward them to give them every opportunity to recover. That has been one of the failures of Canada's MAID regime. We have not provided the social supports and mental health supports to help the Canadians who would consider MAID because they are not getting those supports.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Abbotsford for the introduction of his bill.

I was a member of the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying. For me, the struggle I had during all of those hearings was weighing up the respect for an individual's ability to make decisions respecting their autonomy and their capacity, versus

the need for us to protect the vulnerable in our society with the understanding that the vulnerable in our society also have the ability to be autonomous and have the capacity to make decisions. That was the real struggle.

How does my colleague view those two concepts? I would like to hear his views on the ability of an individual to make a decision that is best for themselves. We may not always agree with it, but how do we ultimately respect that?

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, that is a great question.

Autonomy is critically important. The problem when we are dealing with the mentally ill is that autonomy is often much diminished. That is just one of the problems. What we hear back from stakeholders within the mental health profession is that issues of autonomy, capacity and suicidality have not been addressed appropriately through a national debate. We have not had that discussion, so there is no national consensus on this. Before we ever move forward with something as critical as a life-and-death policy decision like this, we should have that debate and have a national consensus.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Abbotsford for bringing forward Bill C-314, an act to amend the Criminal Code regarding medical assistance in dying.

I acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional unceded lands of the Algonquin people.

The bill before us proposes to indefinitely exclude persons whose sole underlying medical condition is a mental disorder from being eligible to receive medical assistance in dying, or MAID. I will be opposing the bill for reasons I will detail in my remarks. I want to start by providing a brief overview of MAID in Canada.

MAID was legalized in 2016 for persons whose natural death is reasonably foreseeable, through former Bill C-14. Four years later, in 2021, former Bill C-7 expanded eligibility for receiving MAID to persons whose natural death is not reasonably foreseeable. Former Bill C-7 also temporarily excluded, until March 2023, eligibility for receiving MAID on the basis of a mental illness alone.

Parliament decided that a temporary exclusion from eligibility for MAID where the sole underlying medical condition is a mental illness was necessary in recognition of the fact that such requests were complex and required additional study. This is why former Bill C-7 also required an independent expert review regarding recommended protocols, guidance and safeguards to apply to such requests. The expert panel on MAID and mental illness was created to undertake this review, and its final report was tabled in Parliament on May 13, 2022.

Former Bill C-7 also required the establishment of a joint parliamentary committee to conduct a comprehensive review of the Criminal Code MAID provisions and other related issues, including MAID and mental illness. The Special Joint Committee on MAID, or AMAD, took this review and tabled its final report in Parliament on February 15, 2023.

Our government extended the temporary exclusion to March 2024 through the enactment and coming into force of former Bill C-39. This was due to concerns about provincial and territorial readiness. It is important that we get this right.

• (1755)

[Translation]

I want to take a moment to point out that the intention has always been for the mental health exclusion to be temporary. This is a complex, sensitive and polarizing issue. Some very legitimate concerns have been raised.

[English]

However, I believe that the health care system will be ready for the safe provision of MAID where the sole underlying medical condition is a mental illness by March 2024. Significant progress has been made by our government, in collaboration with the provinces and territories and other stakeholders and experts, to prepare for this deadline.

We are not ignoring the concerns that have been raised. In fact, many of these concerns led to the one-year extension of the exclusion. We are moving in a prudent, measured way with the ultimate goal of ensuring that our MAID framework supports the autonomy of those who are eligible to receive MAID and protects those who may be vulnerable.

I will now turn to Bill C-314 and outline some of the technical issues.

As I stated previously, the bill proposes to indefinitely exclude eligibility for MAID based on a mental disorder alone. It would do this by replacing “mental illness” with “mental disorder” in subsection 241.2(2.1) of the Criminal Code.

There are two main issues with this approach. First, such a change may result in the unintended exclusion of persons with some medical conditions that are not currently excluded from eligibility for MAID. This is because “mental disorder” is a clinically defined term that practitioners have explained would likely capture all mental disorders included in the American Psychiatric Association's “Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders”, or DSM-5, whereas “mental illness”, as it relates to MAID, is meant to capture mental disorders that are primarily treated within the domain of psychiatry.

“Mental illness” likely captures a smaller set of conditions than what would be captured by “mental disorder”. As such, making the switch in terminology without an accompanying definition may have the unintended consequence of excluding certain medical conditions that are not currently excluded from eligibility for MAID and that do not raise the same concerns as “mental illness” does in relation to MAID.

Private Members' Business

The second issue is that the term “mental disorder” is already defined in section 2 of the Criminal Code as “a disease of the mind”, and there is extensive case law interpreting what this means in the context of the “not criminally responsible” regime. Therefore, a switch in terminology in the Criminal Code MAID provisions without an accompanying definition may unintentionally complicate legislative interpretation and may also result in the existing case law interpretation of “mental disorder” and the “not criminally responsible” regime context being applied to the MAID context.

Although many experts and practitioners have noted a preference for the term “mental disorder” since it is a clinically defined term, this preference has already been expressed in the context of developing protocols, standards or guidance for MAID. It is important to remember that MAID is not just a health care issue. It is also a criminal law issue, and as I have just explained, things can get complicated in the legislative context given existing definitions and legal interpretations.

• (1800)

[Translation]

Finally, I simply want to point out that Bill C-314 also restructures the exclusion set out in the Criminal Code but does not seem to change its application.

[English]

Currently, in order to be eligible for MAID, a person must have “a grievous and irremediable medical condition”, which is present when a person has a serious and incurable disease or disability, is in an advanced state of irreversible decline and is experiencing enduring and intolerable suffering, as per subsection 241.2(2).

[Translation]

Right now, a mental disorder is not considered an illness, disease or disability under the first part of the definition of a grievous and irremediable medical condition.

[English]

As such, a mental illness cannot satisfy the definition and therefore cannot be grounds for a request for MAID.

Under the proposed new exclusion, a mental disorder would not be considered a grievous and irremediable medical condition at all. In other words, it would exclude mental disorders from the whole of the definition, even though some of those aspects may well exist in the case of a mental disorder, namely intolerable suffering and an advanced state of decline. Although this new exclusion would operate slightly differently than the existing exclusion, it seems as though its effects would be the same.

Private Members' Business

I want to reiterate that Parliament considered this two years ago during its consideration of former Bill C-7 and decided that a MAID mental illness exclusion should be temporary. The point was reinforced by Parliament's enactment of former Bill C-39 this past March.

The expert panel on MAID and mental illness has tabled its final report, which notes that the existing MAID eligibility criteria and safeguards, supported by other key resources, provide an adequate framework for the provision of MAID where the sole underlying medical condition is a mental illness. Parliament considered the issues again via the Special Joint Committee on MAID, and the majority of members agreed with the expert panel's findings.

I urge members to join me in opposing the bill and not reverse Parliament's decision by unintentionally complicating legislative interpretation in the criminal law.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, I heard the member for Abbotsford say right out of the gate that his bill seeks to reaffirm the dignity and worth of each and every human life. Who could be against that?

The dignity of every human life, as I was trying to say to him earlier, depends on autonomy and respect for a person's self-determination. We may have good intentions, but if we claim to know what is good for a so-called vulnerable person because we think we know better than they do about what is good for them, because we mistake sympathy for compassion, if we decide through some sort of state or medical paternalism what is supposedly good for them, without considering the person's suffering at all, if we take away a person's self-determination, then we undermine their dignity. That is what I wanted to say, but my colleague did not understand.

That is the very foundation of our position. It is called ethical and political philosophy, not theology or any sort of religious ideology.

The preamble to the bill sets out its intentions: "Whereas Parliament considers it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of Canadians". Who could be against that?

I see no problem with that, but it has nothing to do with the purpose of the bill. This can be done without saying that the mental disorder considered as a serious and irremediable medical condition is excluded. I will come back to that.

The second paragraph of the preamble states, "Whereas Parliament considers that vulnerable Canadians should receive suicide prevention counselling rather than access medical assistance in dying". This really shows a lack of rigour.

All the experts spoke about this and we can even read it in the literature. It is a little twisted to associate suicide with medical assistance in dying. I heard the leader of the opposition make that link a few times during oral question period, but conceptually that is false. Medical assistance in dying is initiated when an individual expresses that that is what they want. It is not imposed. Above all, it is for situations where the person's condition is irreversible. As far as I know, no witness at committee told us that a suicidal state is

not reversible. Furthermore, witnesses also told us that we should not conflate the two. This is not getting off to a good start.

When a request for medical assistance in dying cites a mental disorder as the reason, the first step is to establish whether the person suffering has been struggling with the mental disorder for 10, 20 or 30 years of their life. In the experts' report, which I hope my colleague has read, it says that a person exhibiting suicidal ideation would not be eligible. It is one thing to want or to request medical assistance in dying, and another to meet the eligibility criteria. This is essential.

A person who is depressed or in crisis will not necessarily receive medical assistance in dying. Moreover, the experts say that an assessor would never consider a request for medical assistance in dying from a person in a state of crisis. The patient would have to first exhaust all available treatments for alleviating their suffering, without refusing a single treatment capable of restoring their health.

● (1805)

As Dr. Black said, "One study estimated suicidal thinking as an 8% lifetime risk for adults in the Netherlands, yet 65 or 0.0004% of adults in the Netherlands have died of MAID in any given year due to psychiatric reasons."

Now we have members talking about a potential slippery slope, citing Bill C-14 and ignoring the obligation given to us by the courts to proceed with passing Bill C-7. Bill C-14 was a bad bill that confused the public. Is it respectful of human dignity to force people to go on a hunger strike to reach the standard of likely and reasonably foreseeable natural death? I think there is something a bit inhumane about that.

In order to reach a criterion that was unworkable for some, people had to actually go on a hunger strike. Others, like Ms. Gladu and Mr. Truchon, had to assert their rights in court. Members say they want to protect the vulnerable. They should start by not treating these people like children and not exploiting them for any purpose. They should instead think about their well-being.

Who is more vulnerable than someone who is suffering intolerably and is close to their tolerance threshold? Who are we to decide for them what their tolerance threshold should be? That is essentially what this is all about.

People want to live as long as possible. The court determined that these individuals' right to life was being infringed upon. I am sure the Conservatives have a lot to say about the right to life. The court found that by denying these individuals the right to medical assistance in dying, their ability to live as long as possible is being taken away. This prevents them from living until they reach their tolerance threshold. That is when we could provide care to them and proceed.

Without this assurance, what do many of these individuals do? They commit suicide prematurely, and this infringes on their right to life. This is indisputable, and it could not be considered reasonable in a free and democratic society, even if it went to the Supreme Court.

Some people always want to go to court. However, right now, people are suffering. While we are procrastinating, people are suffering. We have to put things into perspective.

The committee that considered the issue of mental illness as the sole underlying medical condition made a recommendation. That is why I think that Bill C-314 is premature, at the very least, if not irrelevant at this time.

I will read the committee's recommendation. It states, and I quote: "That, five months prior to the coming into force of eligibility for MAID where a mental disorder is the sole underlying medical condition, a Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying be re-established by the House of Commons and the Senate in order to verify the degree of preparedness attained for a safe and adequate application of MAID (in MD-SUMC situations). Following this assessment, the Special Joint Committee will make its final recommendation to the House of Commons and the Senate."

At the very least, I would have expected a debate to take place following the work of that committee. That is the least that could have been done. I invite my colleague from Abbotsford to read the report of the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying and especially the expert panel's report. The recommendations set out in the expert panel's report include criteria and guidelines that do not exist for other forms of MAID practice. He should feel reassured after reading those recommendations, and I am sure he will never talk about a slippery slope again.

• (1810)

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, today we are revisiting a subject that never seems to leave me in this place, which is medical assistance in dying. It has come up repeatedly: in the 42nd Parliament, in the 43rd Parliament and again in the 44th Parliament. I think it underlines the gravity of the nature of this subject matter.

I want to thank the member for Abbotsford for bringing forward this bill and for giving us as parliamentarians an opportunity to discuss this incredibly important subject.

What Bill C-314 is essentially going to do, for the constituents of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford who are watching this debate, is amend the Criminal Code to reverse what was done with Bill C-7 and specify that a mental disorder is not a grievous and irremediable medical condition for which a person could receive medical assistance in dying.

It is important to mention Bill C-7, because it is an important part of why we are here today. Bill C-7 was originally introduced in the 43rd Parliament. The government is, of course, required by law to issue a charter statement with its main pieces of legislation. In that charter statement, the Minister of Justice went to lengths to make people understand why the government had specifically excluded in the first draft of the bill why a person with a mental disorder as a sole underlying medical condition could not be eligible to receive medical assistance in dying.

The charter statement did say that the exclusion was not "based on a failure to appreciate the severity of the suffering that mental

Private Members' Business

illness can produce". Rather, as the statement took pains to say, it was "based on the inherent risks and complexity that the availability of MAID would present for individuals who suffer solely from mental illness." It is important to understand we are not using the term "mental illness" anymore. Every text is now recommending that we use the term "mental disorder".

There were three primary reasons given in the charter statement at that time. First, the charter statement said, "evidence suggests that screening for decision-making capacity is particularly difficult, and subject to a high degree of error".

The charter statement went on to say, secondly, "mental illness is generally less predictable than physical illness in terms of the course the illness will take over time." I think a lot of people can understand that. Someone may receive a diagnosis for a physical illness like cancer, which is particularly well known. We know a lot about cancer these days, and based on what part of the body it strikes, we can predict with a fairly certain amount of accuracy what a person's ability to survive it is based on how far it has progressed and so on. It is the same with other physical ailments. With mental disorders, on the other hand, there still are, indeed, a lot of unknowns.

Finally, that same charter statement went on to explain that the recent experience in the few countries that do allow it, and it did mention Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg, "has raised concerns".

That was the charter statement at the time with the first draft of Bill C-7. Of course, when Bill C-7 went to the Senate, the Senate amended that part of the bill to allow a person with a mental disorder as a sole underlying medical condition to access MAID. There was some back-and-forth between the government and the Senate to establish a sunset clause so that it would not come into effect until March 17 of this year.

At the time, the New Democrats decided to vote against the Senate amendment because the requirements of the earlier Bill C-14 had not yet been met. We had not yet had a parliamentary committee to delve into these issues, and we felt that, despite the government having gone to all those lengths through its charter statement to explain its position, accepting an eleventh-hour Senate amendment without having done that important work was very much akin to putting the cart before the horse.

• (1815)

There was also Bill C-39, which was introduced earlier this year because we found that more time was needed. Whatever anyone's feelings are in this House with regard to people with mental disorders being able to access MAID, there was agreement that more time was needed. Therefore, Bill C-39 was passed in very short order in both Houses, and that delayed the implementation of it until March 17, 2024. That is the timeline we are on now.

I am rising to speak to this particular bill because of my experience with this file. Both in the 43rd Parliament and in this Parliament, I was the New Democratic member on the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying.

Private Members' Business

It was not an easy committee to be on. Let me just say that. For me personally, I constantly wrestled with two concepts: How do we as parliamentarians, with the power we have to change Canada's laws, find a way to honour the personal rights, capacity and autonomy of the individual versus the need of society to step up and protect the most vulnerable? Those were two great themes that were constantly a struggle for me personally when listening to all of the witnesses who came before the special joint committee on the five thematic areas we were charged with by this House and the Senate.

I would encourage people, if they have not done so already, to look at the good work done by the special joint committee, both the interim report, which specifically focused on this area, and the final report, which was tabled earlier this year and completed the committee's mandate. I also want to draw people's attention to the executive summary of the final report of the expert panel on medical assistance in dying and mental illness because there was some incredibly good work done in that as well. We did recognize the authors of that report. The report states:

That MAiD requests may mask profound unmet needs or conversely, that such requests may not be received with the seriousness they deserve, has been raised with respect to several historically marginalized populations (e.g., racialized groups, Indigenous peoples, persons living with disabilities, and sexual orientation and gender minorities). In the course of assessing a request for MAiD—regardless of the requester's diagnoses—a clinician must carefully consider whether the person's circumstances are a function of systemic inequality.

That is the warning sign that I think much of the medical community is struggling with.

People with mental disorders qualifying for MAiD will be under track two of the MAiD regime, because death is not a naturally foreseeable outcome. I would remind people that track two has safeguards in place:

request for MAiD must be made in writing...
 two independent doctors or nurse practitioners must provide an assessment and confirm that all of the eligibility requirements are met...
 the person must be informed that they can withdraw their request at any time...
 the person must be informed of available and appropriate means to relieve their suffering, including counselling services, mental health and disability support services, community services, and palliative care...

I want to underline that last point. They have to be informed of the available and appropriate means, but we know that for a lot of marginalized populations, those are not always available.

I want to recognize my colleague from Courtenay—Alberni, who has called on the government to urgently fulfill its promise to establish a Canada mental health transfer. This is a very great need in our country. We can see it from coast to coast to coast. I can see it in my community of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

The question of Bill C-314 and the state of mental health care in Canada are two things weighing on me quite a bit. I am certainly going to take a lot of time to think about which way I want to go with this bill, but I appreciate the member for Abbotsford for bringing it forward and giving parliamentarians an opportunity to read the report and consider what this bill seeks to do.

• (1820)

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Madam Speaker, as always, it is an honour and a great privilege to speak on behalf of my community of Peterborough—Kawartha.

Tonight, I am speaking on my colleague from Abbotsford's private member's bill, Bill C-314. I have explained this before, but I will do so again. A private member's bill is something a member puts forward for the House to decide on. This is an important private member's bill, as they all are, really, because they come from a place of passion, but this is Bill C-314, an act to amend the Criminal Code, medical assistance in dying, which many of us know as MAiD.

The summary states, "This enactment amends the Criminal Code to provide that a mental disorder is not a grievous and irremediable medical condition for which a person could receive medical assistance in dying."

The preamble states:

Whereas Parliament considers it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of Canadians;

Whereas Parliament considers that vulnerable Canadians should receive suicide prevention counselling rather than access medical assistance in dying;

Whereas Parliament considers that Canada's medical assistance in dying regime risks normalizing assisted dying as a solution

The fact that we need a private member's bill to say this feels outrageous. I have listened to other members in the House tonight, and I want to be very mindful of my tone. This is an interesting and emotional debate, but I really urge the members opposite who have said they are not going to support the bill to consider getting it to committee. There is so much more we need to study.

My question is how this is not already in legislation. I will tell members why. In December of 2021, the Senate added an amendment to Bill C-7, without any consultation, study or discussion, to add people with mental illness as eligible for MAiD. This private member's bill is currently the only way we can protect those suffering from mental illness. It is the only way for us as parliamentarians to say to those watching that we believe their lives matter and that it is our job to ensure we fight for them. Today might be awful, but none of us know what tomorrow will bring, as no one knows what is out there for them.

The MAiD committee was created after the amendment was added. How backward is that? It heard testimony from many experts, and I want everyone to listen to the following quote because it is the essence of this discussion.

Private Members' Business

Dr. John Maher, clinical psychiatrist and medical ethicist, stated, “Psychiatrists don't know and can't know who will get better and live decades of good life. Brain diseases are not liver diseases.” Anyone who has dealt with somebody who has a mental illness or disorder knows that we have not even scratched the surface of what we know. We do not know.

I want to read this letter from a constituent who has been following the slippery slope of the Liberal government's extension of MAID into the record. I have her permission.

She writes:

“Dear Michelle...,

“My name is Kayla...I am going to be sending this letter to several MPs, but as you are [my] MP...I thought I should send this to you first. I am very troubled by something that is going to be happening very soon in this country, and I hope you will listen to what I have to say.

“Overall, I am a very healthy individual. I have a mental health condition, but it is my sole medical condition. However, I was mortified to discover last month, that Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD...) will be available to people whose sole health condition is a mental health condition as of March 17, 2023.”

We have since voted in the House and that date has been extended one year to March 17, 2024. However, this is still in place, and this letter is very pertinent. She goes on to say:

“Persons who suffer from mental health conditions suffer horribly. I know that. I have suffered with mine for nearly 12 years. Perhaps the most appalling things of all are that 'The law no longer requires a person's natural death to be reasonably foreseeable as an eligibility criterion for MAID,' (Government of Canada, 2021) and 'There is no obligation for a person or their healthcare practitioners to inform family members if that person has requested or received MAiD.' (CAMH, 2022)...

“I think you see this for what it is...I will be eligible to end my own life on the basis that I have an incurable mental illness.

● (1825)

“Let me give you a bit more background: I have 2 university degrees in Biology and Environmental Science. I have a job that I love and have held since a little while after I graduated. I have NEVER failed to pay taxes, nor have I ever taken extended leave or gone on EI due to my mental illness, no matter how hard it gets. I have a family and friends that I love dearly, and they love me too. And yet now my own government has deemed my life not worth living. This isn't just unfair. This is monstrous.

“But it gets worse. What about those people who are in the same boat that I am medically, but are much, much worse off. They cannot pay their taxes because they cannot work. They have a substance addiction. They are veterans with PTSD. They are homeless because they cannot seem to fight off their demons. These are some of the most vulnerable people in our society. To say nothing of the 'mature minors' (whatever on Earth that means) that will be able to access MAiD in the future if this doesn't stop. Make no mistake. This thing, that we dress up with the nice name MAiD, is euthana-

sia of our most vulnerable people because they cannot 'contribute to society' like others can. The fact that the government would offer to 'get them out of the way'...in this way, just because the systems that the government put in place are failing them is an unspeakable evil.”

She put in brackets, “convince them that they should die”. These are her words.

She continues, “I hope, Michelle, that you will do everything in your power as an MP as I will do everything in my power as a citizen, to abolish this law. I understand the federal government is seeking to push back the timing”, which it did, as I said. She says this is “likely because it has received so much criticism. I understand that it likely wasn't you that made any of the decisions for this law to go ahead. But I also understand that you are in more of a position to do something about it than many people are. I hope you will respond after reading this letter.

“Sincerely,

“Kayla.”

I did respond to Kayla and we had a very powerful conversation. She gave me permission to share this letter.

I think one letter like this is enough reasonable doubt that we need to take this private member's bill very seriously. It is everything we need to know to consider and urge everyone in the House. I have heard people say, on the Bloc side, that people should have the right to choose. The reality is that people who are in such a state of mental disorder do not have that capacity. We have to help them.

I want to leave us with this. This woman's name is Elyse. She is a young university student. She said that she is so worried about this legislation to extend MAID to those with mental illness. She has struggled with mental illness, and she knows with certainty that, if someone had offered that to her during her times of illness, she would not be here today. She would not be getting her university degree. She would not be in a happy, healthy relationship, and she would not know that her life was worth living.

If one is watching at home, if one has a loved one suffering, if one is suffering, one's life matters and it is worth living. It is our job to study this to the depths to determine whether we can do this. This private member's bill is the only thing that would protect those with mental illness and mental disorder from accessing MAID. I urge every member in the House to at least pass it to committee.

Government Orders

• (1830)

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

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

AMENDMENT TO BILL C-281 AT COMMITTEE STAGE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order with respect to an amendment made in committee on Bill C-281, standing in the name of the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South. Without commenting on the merits of the amendment in question, I submit that it proposes a new concept that exceeds the scope of the bill as adopted at second reading.

Specifically, the amendment to clause 2 of the bill would add a new obligation to the minister to “develop and maintain a government-wide international human rights strategy.” When the amendment was proposed, the chair of the committee ruled it as inadmissible. However, a majority of the members on the committee voted to overturn the ruling of the chair and then proceeded to adopt the amendment, which is now found in the bill as reprinted by the House on May 4.

I submit that the ruling of the chair of the foreign affairs committee was correct and that our procedures must be respected. As a result, the proper course of action to address this matter is to order a reprint of the bill without the offending amendment.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), be read a third time and passed, and of the amendment.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, we are finally at third reading stage of this bill that we have put so much work into. It may not seem like it, but we have been working on this for a year already. I have spoken to this bill in the House before, including last week, during consideration of Government Business No. 25, and yesterday, when I rose to give some background on the bill during our study at report stage.

I have often mentioned how the study of this bill unfolded. On the government side, it was all a bit sloppy. For starters, the bill was definitely incomplete when it was introduced. Amendments were made without notice. These amendments were withdrawn while others were reintroduced later. Finally, time allocation was imposed, with two days of intensive study in committee. The bill then returned to the House for consideration at report stage, and here we are now, at third reading.

This has been quite an adventure. I think people are not necessarily aware of all the work that goes into studying a bill. Whether on the government benches or in opposition, everyone has a job to do. Taking a position on a subject as sensitive as firearms gets people worked up, but regardless of the subject, we do not go about this any which way. Obviously, we work it out.

The Bloc Québécois tries to take positions that are as reasonable as possible. We also do our best to know what we are talking about. However, that is one criticism that I have received a lot. I was told that I sounded like I did not know what I was talking about, that I was just a girl who does not know much about guns because I do not own one. That kind of comment came up a lot. People are watching us. They watch when I speak in the House and in committee, when I do an interview on the radio, in the press or on TV, when I post a message on social media. Those comments come up a lot and it is distressing because, at the end of the day, we are trying to do our job and make things better.

This was my first experience studying a bill, and it was great. We get to see what a difference we can really make. My party whip recently reminded me that what I was doing was pretty amazing. She said that when I am old and in my rocking chair, I will be able to tell my grandchildren that I worked on legislation to improve gun control in Canada. The work we did was pretty amazing.

We are not saying everything is perfect, but we have made some gains. I started to list them yesterday in my speech. I talked about the fact that the words “hunting rifle” were removed from the definition of prohibited weapons. I also talked about the list of weapons that the government was trying to add to the Criminal Code, but was removed as a result of conversations we had with the government. These gains are easily attributable to the Bloc Québécois's work.

Sometimes it is easy to give ourselves credit when the government implements a policy or a bill is passed, because we know exactly what we worked on. Other times, we wonder whether our party really did its part. In this case, I am absolutely certain that we did. We worked hard to achieve those gains that I believe improved the bill. When this bill is passed, we will know that we at least tried to improve it.

Yesterday, I ended my speech by talking about airsoft guns, the controversial toy guns that are used for paintball and other recreational activities. In the beginning, in the initial bill, the government wanted to ban them the same as other guns. The Fédération sportive d'airsoft du Québec and other federations from across the country came and testified before the committee. They said that they understood why the government wanted to ban airsoft guns. Many police organizations talked about the confusion that these guns can cause during a hold up, for example. A person may use this kind of fake weapon and put themselves and others in danger because the police think that it is a real gun.

We heard these comments, and so did the people from the federations. They said that they did not want to see people who practise this hobby, this sport, be penalized and that there must be a way to do things differently. They said they had no problem with increased regulations for their sport. They said that regulations around transportation, storage, use and an age requirement, for example, being 18, could be added for someone to acquire an airsoft gun. We really saw that these federations were open to working with us. They did not want them to be banned, but they were prepared to accept increased regulation. Even the government agreed that they were taking a very reasonable approach. That is why we worked to ensure they were not banned, but regulated, as the federations suggested.

• (1835)

We worked hard on this. Usually, something has to be specifically mentioned in a bill for the government to then be able to regulate it. It was therefore difficult to only delete the clause because we would no longer be making reference to airsoft. How, then, would we regulate it?

We agonized over this for days only to realize that it was possible. The officials told us that anything is possible. We realized that the government could regulate airsoft guns without us necessarily making reference to them in Bill C-21. We simply decided to delete the clause of the bill, then the government abstained, which left room for the opposition parties to vote in favour of this. The federations were very pleased with this work. Yes, it is an NDP amendment that was accepted. However, the Bloc Québécois amendment was the same and it would have come next. It could have been the Bloc Québécois amendment. All that to say that we worked hard on this.

Since that clause was adopted I have received email. I wanted to share them with the House today because they offer a nice little pat on the back. I received one from Guillaume Mailloux, who is the owner of SMPR Tactique et Plein-Air, a shop in Quebec City. Here is what Mr. Mailloux said:

Hello

I'm taking the time to write a few lines this morning because I want to thank you. This morning, for the first time in ages, I am sipping my coffee without stressing about my business, my employees and my family. Your collaboration with the airsoft community has been invaluable. You've quite likely saved me from stress-induced prostate cancer. All kidding aside, I've been fortunate enough to work with the FSAQ, and I know that your listening and understanding have been extremely important. It's not easy to navigate the turbulent waters between the waves of hunters, anti-gun lobbyists, sport shooters and people from various industries as you do.

Thanks to you and your team, last night I was interviewed about this on the radio, and I asked the host (who plays airsoft) to mention your excellent work on air to make sure that the NDP doesn't get all the accolades.

Thank you so much!

I was very happy to get that email. I received a second one, from François Gauthier, the vice-president of the Fédération sportive d'airsoft du Québec. He said the following:

On behalf of the Fédération Sportive d'airsoft du Québec and the Quebec airsoft community, we would like to thank the Bloc Québécois, especially [the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia] and her team for listening to the issues and problems that Bill C-21 could have caused as it was introduced by the federal government.

We would also like to thank the assistant to [the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia], Ariane Francoeur, for her professionalism and for fol-

Government Orders

lowing up with us on the progress of the work, as well as for taking the time to explain to us the details of the bill's progress in the SECU committee.

We remain open to continue working with the Bloc Québécois in the future if any regulations are being created that would affect our sport.

Personally, and on behalf of the entire Quebec airsoft community, thank you for listening to our concerns.

Cordially.

It was also very nice to get that email. Yesterday, I highlighted the incredible work of my assistant, Ariane Francoeur. I am pleased to be able to recognize her again today, through Mr. Gauthier.

It may not seem like much, but I think that every member of the Bloc Québécois caucus told me that they were getting positive comments about how airsoft guns were taken out of the bill. We will take it while we can. We are very pleased about that. I think it is unfortunate that Bill C-21 got such bad press as a result of the government's controversial amendments because there are some good things about this bill. There was talk about domestic violence and ways of better protecting women who are victims of it. Despite the rhetoric that we have been hearing since yesterday from members of the Conservative Party, who are saying that there is nothing good about this bill, I would remind them that they voted in favour of most of the amendments that were proposed.

The Bloc Québécois tabled a total of 17 amendments, and 16 were adopted. Most of them, such as the ones concerning magazines, were adopted unanimously. I talk about this a lot, and it is difficult to explain in just a few minutes during questions and comments. I will therefore take the time to explain it. Right now, we can go to a store and buy a magazine for a legal firearm without presenting a licence. That is what the Danforth killer did a few years ago. He stole a firearm. He did not have a licence and the firearm was not registered in his name. However, he went to a store and lawfully purchased a magazine. He put the magazine in the firearm and went on to kill two people and injure 13 others in Toronto.

• (1840)

We wondered why there was no requirement for a valid possession and acquisition licence for buying a magazine and ammunition. That is what is happening now with ammunition and firearms. It was Danforth Families for Safe Communities who brought this problem to our attention, saying that this should have been in place long ago and that it will prevent this type of situation from happening again.

I had the opportunity, or took the initiative, to move these amendments. We were talking about roughly six amendments. The first is very important, but the ones that followed are consequential amendments because if something is changed in the legislation, then it needs to be changed several times where it is mentioned.

I moved this amendment and I saw the wonderful unanimity in committee. Even the Conservative Party voted in favour of this. It is very gratifying to see that people want to improve things, that they want to move things forward. I thank the Conservative Party for voting in favour of these amendments, except for one. As I was saying, these are consequential amendments. It would be unreasonable not to adopt them all.

Government Orders

The Conservatives' strategy, since there was a gag order, was to take turns. Every 15 minutes or so, new members would arrive at committee to fill the five minutes allotted to them. Members would repeatedly ask the same questions that had already been asked by a colleague. These were questions for public servants. Someone who had just arrived, a Conservative colleague, said that this amendment on magazines did not make sense, even though the Conservative Party had previously agreed to all the amendments on magazines. He said that it was unreasonable to put hunters in that position. He said that if someone wanted to go hunting for a particular rare bird and ran out of magazines, they were going to miss the hunt as a result, which is unfair. The officials respectfully pointed out to him that if the person could not go out and get the magazine because his licence had not been renewed or was not valid, he would not be able to go hunting or use his firearm either.

His comments were not even relevant to the situation. It just goes to show that even though someone may try to look like they know what they are talking about, that is not always the case. The amendment on magazines was a win for all the groups that had been calling for it, such as PolyRemembers and many other gun control advocacy groups.

We have heard a little bit about the yellow flag measure, which allows chief firearms officers to suspend or revoke a licence in cases of domestic violence. We wanted to improve certain passages where, in the initial bill, chief firearms officers were given a little too much discretion as to when the person had to surrender the licence or the guns and to whom. This was strengthened thanks to amendments from the Bloc Québécois that went on to be adopted. The government, the NDP and even the Green Party, which does not have the right to vote in committee, but had proposed the same amendments, were in favour. As I recall, the Conservatives also voted in favour of these amendments. It was another great example of unanimity to strengthen measures to combat domestic violence. These are the kinds of real gains that can be made in committee.

When we were working on this file, we realized that it was easier to accomplish some things through legislation and others through regulation. I nevertheless consider it a win that the minister has made a public commitment to certain things. That was the case for the pre-authorization of firearms.

As I already explained here in the House, a pharmaceutical company that wants to bring a new drug to market, for example, must have Health Canada's approval before being able to do so. This does not seem to happen with firearms. Sometimes, guns are put on the market and, at some point, the RCMP realizes that they were not classified properly. We wondered if the RCMP could be consulted before guns arrive on the market, and how to do that. We racked our brains. It was quite complicated, but the minister finally agreed to do it when he announced new amendments in early May.

We are pleased about that. Obviously, a promise is a promise. We have seen the Liberal government breaking its promises on many occasions, so we hope that the minister will act quickly on this right after Bill C-21 is passed. There is nothing stopping him from doing that.

• (1845)

We also need to update the regulations on large-capacity magazines. To be honest, it was PolyRemembers that made me aware of that issue.

When I asked the minister or public servants whether I was mistaken or whether large-capacity magazines were still legal in Canada, I was told that they were no longer legal. However, when I visited the RCMP vault, I saw that some magazines can be blocked with the help of a small rivet. For example, a magazine with 30 rounds can be blocked and limited to five rounds. The magazine therefore becomes legal because it is technically considered a five-round magazine. However, it is very easy for a mass murderer to simply remove the rivet to create a high-capacity magazine. That has happened in Canada and it cost the lives of dozens of people. We then said that, since we were considering the matter of magazines, perhaps we could strengthen the regulations in that regard. That is what the minister committed to doing. I am also very pleased about that. Once again, he will have to keep his word on that.

Then, there is the issue of the much-discussed prospective definition, which is something that I would not necessarily consider as a loss, but something we would have liked. It comes up often. It means that it applies only to future firearms. This means that, as we speak and even after Bill C-21 passes, there will still be over 482 models of assault-style firearms in circulation in this country.

We therefore suggested to the minister that they should be banned by decree. Amongst them, a few firearms had been identified as being reasonably used for hunting. Let us set them aside for now and ask the Canadian firearms advisory committee for a recommendation on how to classify them. Let us ban the others that are still in circulation right away.

The minister can put an order into effect immediately, tomorrow morning, today or yesterday. He could have already done that. This easy solution is available to him, and I think it is a reasonable solution. I hope he will do that as well.

I would like to go over a few things that happened in committee. As I mentioned before, this was my first real experience of a clause-by-clause review in committee, and it was extremely interesting. It is worth pointing out that the process happened late at night, when I imagine not too many reporters were watching. Some really interesting things happened that deserve to be highlighted, such as the moment the Bloc Québécois saved the government's handgun freeze.

There was a clause in Bill C-21 that exempted certain persons from the handgun freeze, such as sport shooters in an Olympic discipline. Everyone else was covered by the handgun freeze. The NDP usually supports just about everything the government does, but it disagreed on this specific point. Both the Conservative Party and the NDP proposed amendments that would have made the handgun freeze inoperative and completely irrelevant by including too many people in the exemption.

Interestingly, at that point, just before the vote, the Liberal member for Kings—Hants logged on and spoke. His government tried to prevent him from speaking, but with committee giving unanimous consent, he was able to speak before voting on these amendments. He abstained, which made it a tie. The votes were equal on both sides, for and against. In a very rare occurrence, the committee chair himself had to cast a vote, and he voted with the government.

It is fair to say that if the Bloc Québécois had also abstained or voted against these amendments, the government's handgun freeze would have simply fallen by the wayside. When we say that we want better gun control in this country, that is part of it. This is a measure that the government has proposed. The Bloc Québécois is true to its values on this issue, and it has remained true to its values on the handgun freeze as well.

I see that my time is running out. I still have a lot to say, but what I want to discuss the most is ghost guns. When we went to visit the RCMP vault, we saw how easy it is to assemble an illegal weapon from gun parts ordered over the Internet. The police officers made us aware of it too. Organized crime and illegal firearms trafficking are all part of it.

• (1850)

The measure included in Bill C-21 is a good one, and we are proud of it.

I would be pleased to take questions from my colleagues.

[*English*]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, although I was not at committee, I have heard that the hon. member's interventions were well received and discussed in committee.

She ended her speech tonight speaking about ghost guns, and that is something I have been discussing with our local chief of police. We have had a few walks to talk about this and the guns that look like they are real but are really just toy guns and how that really makes policing a lot more difficult in our communities when guns pop out of nowhere, such as ghost guns.

Therefore, the impact on our police services could be very positive. They could then do a better job of helping with safety within our communities. Could the hon. member talk about how the police forces in her local community are receiving this legislation?

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, that is a great question. I have been in contact with a number of police services in the course of studying this bill, and I can say that this is being very well received.

I mentioned earlier about how people can order parts on the Internet. I think we also need to improve what happens at the border. I am not saying that the people working there are not doing a good job. They are doing a great job. Unfortunately, they are under-resourced.

Bill C-21 is good. We looked closely at ghost guns, which will certainly improve police work. However, one more thing also needs to be done. We need to intercept trains and firearms passing

Government Orders

through the Port of Montreal along with stolen cars. We need to inspect more packages that come through the mail. This is also part of the fight against firearms trafficking. I think more needs to be done.

It is great that the measure on ghost guns was included in the bill. That said, the guns most commonly found on the streets of Montreal and in the hands of street gangs are those from the illegal firearms trade, so I think a lot of work needs to be done in that regard as well.

[*English*]

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned the airsoft industry. There are about 320 businesses and 1,350 staff and employees in that industry. These rules that are coming could negate any of that sort of industry and business. I wonder if the member could just elaborate on her thoughts. I know she mentioned that this was a big concern. There is a lot of activity in that area and a lot of these are owned by visible minorities and immigrants, in the testimony that we heard. I wonder if the member could expand on that.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I referred to a specific company in Quebec City that sells airsoft guns. This will certainly help save many jobs in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada. That is a good thing.

I would even go so far as to say that firearms vendors in general have nothing to fear. As I mentioned, Bill C-21 will prohibit firearms that do not yet exist. It is not true that hunting rifles will be prohibited the instant Bill C-21 is passed. People will be able to continue buying and using them. I believe that it is important to include that in the messaging, because that is how Bill C-21 will be passed.

I am not saying that it is great to still have so many firearms that are considered assault weapons in circulation. As I was saying, the minister could take action by introducing an order in council for these firearms. However, for firearms that are reasonably used for hunting, everyone can rest assured. People can continue to use these firearms.

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I enjoyed working with my colleague when I was on the public safety committee and I absolutely share her joy in the victory that we were able to achieve for the airsoft community. I too have received many thanks from communities in my own riding and across British Columbia. That indeed is a good thing that the committee was able to achieve.

Government Orders

The member was there on the committee with me back in November of last year when those 11th-hour, ill-advised amendments dropped in the committee's lap and caused all of this uproar. If she will remember correctly, in December, one of the leading voices against those amendments came from indigenous communities. It culminated when the Assembly of First Nations came out with a very rare unanimous emergency resolution that its members were against the amendments. I have heard from many people in indigenous communities who have explained why they have depended on semi-automatic rifles to protect themselves when they were out hunting wildlife.

Can the member explain this for colleagues in the House? Is it her understanding that current makes and models of rifles and shotguns are not affected by Bill C-21? Can she also elaborate as to why it was important to insert an amendment in this bill that would recognize the rights that are upheld under section 35 of the Constitution Act?

• (1900)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, my colleague raises a very good point. I enjoyed working with him in committee and I hope he will come back after the study of Bill C-21.

The government's mistake in this whole story was to move these famous amendments without doing the necessary consultations ahead of time. Hunters and first nations communities apparently were not consulted before these amendments were tabled. I think that was the first mistake.

Then, the Bloc Québécois proposed pressing pause on the study and inviting witnesses to committee who did not have the chance to be heard. That is when we heard from first nations communities, who told us exactly what the member just said.

I think it was important to reiterate in the bill the fact that these rights are being respected. We do need to reassure people, because there are still all sorts of rumours circulating about Bill C-21 that are not entirely true.

One thing that is entirely true is that first nations communities are going to continue using firearms for hunting, for their subsistence. Bill C-21, in its current form and as it will be passed, will have no impact on that. I think that it is important to reiterate that for the first nations communities. There are two in my riding, and I am sure they will be pleased with how things unfolded for Bill C-21.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am feeling emotional as I rise today to thank and congratulate my colleague, the Bloc Québécois public safety critic.

As she said herself, it was her first time taking part in the clause-by-clause consideration of such an important bill. One day, when she is a grandmother, she will look back and see that she built a better bill because she was able to make suggestions throughout the process, instead of simply criticizing and being partisan. It is a reflection of how the Bloc Québécois works. She was able to propose improvements for the common good.

Tonight, I am proud to be seated beside her, and I am proud of her work. I am old. I have white hair. However, my colleague is quite young and has a great career ahead of her. This evening, I am proud to congratulate her on behalf of the Bloc Québécois for all the excellent work she has done.

Now that we are nearing the end of the process, I would like to ask her a question. If she had one thing to say to the rookies who are going to join us, what would she say? She can speak from the heart. Where do we start with a clause-by-clause analysis?

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I thank my whip for her kind words. I am a bit emotional.

Where do we start? That is a good question. I think that it is important to be well prepared, to know one's file, even if it is not easy. When I was first given the public safety file, I did not know what it was all about. Today, I am very comfortable with my files and talking about an issue as sensitive as firearms.

Collaboration with other parties, with the government especially, and with groups that work on these issues is important. We talked about PolyRemembers, the National Association of Women and Law, and many women's groups and associations that reached out to us. We need to work with these people, trust them and trust ourselves when it comes time to propose amendments. I think that that would be a good place to start.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the following. Should the government have started by dealing with the illegal weapons that are coming across Canada's borders? That is a public safety issue that has become a political issue. Would it have been easier to do things differently?

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I do not think that problems necessarily need to be ranked in order of priority.

The one does not exclude the other. We worked on a bill to strengthen gun control in this country and, as I said, some of its measures will strengthen measures we can take to counter family violence. That is very good. At the same time, we can change things.

The Minister of Public Safety can develop regulations, invest more at the borders and work to improve coordination among police forces. Work can also be done at the Canada Border Services Agency. All of this can occur while Bill C-21 is being reviewed. These things are not mutually exclusive.

I think that a lot remains to be accomplished, but this is definitely a positive step forward. Naturally, firearms trafficking needs to be addressed. I think that the government is beginning to understand that.

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to rise and offer my thoughts on Bill C-21 at third reading.

Government Orders

I say that with a bit of amazement because I cannot believe we have actually made it to third reading. This bill received first reading in this House on May 30 of last year. We got through second reading in fairly short order, but at committee stage, things really got lost and all hell broke loose, so to speak.

I remember participating as the NDP's public safety critic. We had scheduled eight witness meetings to look at the first version of this bill. Things were going along quite well. There were some disagreements around the table, but there was not any of the friction that suggested there would be a major catastrophe in the making.

That all changed in November when we arrived at the clause-by-clause portion of the bill. Before that meeting started, every party was responsible for reviewing the witness testimony, reviewing the briefs that had been submitted, and working with legislative drafters to put together our amendments. Once those were submitted to the clerk, as is the normal course of things, the clerk then distributed them to all committee members.

It was quite a surprise when we saw just how big the amendment package was and just how expanded the scope of the bill was going to be. Most of the amendments came from the government. There were a couple in particular that completely sent the committee off its rails.

The amendments landed on our laps at the 11th hour. It was obvious that there had been no warning to committee members. The Liberal members of the committee were introducing those amendments on behalf of the government. They read them into the record, but I do not think they actually had a clue as to the monumental nature of the amendments.

It was clear that the amendments were not backed by any witness testimony because of the significant nature of how they were changing the bill. We, as committee members, never had the opportunity to question witnesses on the bill taking shape.

That completely derailed things. That started in November 2022, and it is only just recently that the committee stage of the bill was finally able to complete its job. That is an incredible amount of time for one committee to be occupied with a single bill.

If we look at the mandate of the public safety and national security committee, it is one of the most important committees. It is responsible for reviewing the policies and legislation of multiple agencies, whether it is the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the Officer of the Correctional Investigator or the RCMP.

There are two other bills. Bill C-20 is going to provide an important oversight body for the RCMP and the CBSA. Bill C-26 is going to seek to upgrade our cybersecurity infrastructure. Both of those bills have been held up because of the shenanigans going on with Bill C-21.

I listened to the debate all day yesterday when this bill was going through report stage, and today when it was going through third reading. Unfortunately, because of some of the speeches in this House, there is a lot of misinformation out there and a lot of people have the wrong idea of what is included in this bill.

My Conservative colleagues do make a big deal in their speeches about standing up for hunters, farmers and indigenous communi-

ties, and I take no fault with that. I proudly stand here and say the same thing. It is troubling because it is alluding to something that is actually not in the bill. That illusion for hunters, farmers and indigenous communities is that their rifle or shotgun, if it is semi-automatic, is going to be prohibited by this bill.

Let me clearly say this for the record: That is not the case. Bill C-21 is not going to do that. If someone has a current make or model of a rifle or shotgun, they are licensed and legally own that firearm, after this bill receives royal assent, they will continue to be able to use it.

- (1905)

That is a fact. So far, when I have brought it up in questions, my Conservative colleagues have been unable to refute that. I have challenged multiple Conservative MPs to name one rifle or shotgun that is going to be prohibited by Bill C-21. In every single instance, they have deflected and swerved away to go back to comfortable talking points, because they cannot do it. I will tell colleagues why. It is because I am not reading Conservative talking points. I am going to actually read from the text of the bill.

In the new section that is going to add to the definition of a prohibited firearm, it mentions that it is:

...a firearm that is not a handgun and that

- (i) discharges centre-fire ammunition in a semi-automatic manner,
- (ii) was originally designed with a detachable cartridge magazine with a capacity of six cartridges or more, and
- (iii) is designed and manufactured on or after the day on which this paragraph comes into force...

The last point is one that everyone seems to skip over, but it is the key part.

Current makes and models are not going to be affected by Bill C-21. Future makes and models that come into the market after this bill receives royal assent will be affected. However, current owners will not be affected by Bill C-21.

Conservatives will then seek to muddy the waters even further. I have heard a lot of reference to the firearms advisory committee. They say that the minister is going to bring this back and staff it with Liberal appointees, who are going to make suggestions about what firearms should be prohibited and then act on the suggestions. I have a news flash for my Conservative colleagues. This is a power that the government already has. It does not need a firearms advisory committee.

I would direct my Conservative colleagues to the existing section 84(1) of the Criminal Code. It says right there that the government can change the definition of what a prohibited firearm is when it mentions "any firearm that is prescribed to be a prohibited firearm". "Prescribed" is the key word there, because that means it can be done by cabinet decree. If they do not believe me, how did the government get the authority in May 2020 to issue an order in council? Here, 1,500 makes and models were done through the Canada Gazette under existing powers.

Government Orders

All this ballyhoo over a firearms advisory council, as well as all the hoopla that we have heard in this House about the dangers of that council coming into being, is a complete red herring. It is smoke and mirrors. This is a power the government already has. In fact, I would rebut them on that argument by saying that if the minister currently has that power to do this unilaterally through an order in council cabinet decree, would it not be a good thing to have an advisory council to at least talk to the minister about how maybe that would not be a good idea?

If we can ensure that the advisory council has indigenous representation, representation from the hunting community and representation from the sport shooting community, in my mind, that is a good thing. I will let them continue to say that, but they know they cannot argue with me on those facts. Again, I am reading from the bill and from existing provisions of the Criminal Code. If they are going to try to muddy the waters, they can try to argue their way out of it, but the facts cannot be changed.

I want to turn to something more positive, with the airsoft community. Last summer, I had the pleasure of visiting the Victoria fish and game club. I do not know if colleagues have been to Vancouver Island, but in the middle of my riding is the Malahat Mountain. It is the big mountain that separates the Cowichan Valley from the city of Langford and the whole west shore. It is the traditional territory of the Malahat people, but on top of it is where the Victoria fish and game club is, on a beautiful property. Right beside it, there is an amazing forest setting for the club's airsoft games. I went out there with one of my constituency assistants on a weekend. They invited us to come and see a match. We got to don the referee uniforms, so that we could walk out in the middle of a pitched battle. I think one of my constituency assistants accidentally got shot.

• (1910)

It was so fun to see how much fun these players were having, to talk to them about how passionate they were about their sport and to really understand that this is more than a hobby for them. This is something that allows them to get out into the great outdoors with their family and friends.

They were really worried about Bill C-21 because of a section in the bill that would basically turn their airsoft rifles into prohibited devices. I invited some of them, with other colleagues around the committee table, to come to committee, to submit briefs and to say their piece. I have to say that the representatives of the airsoft industry, the manufacturers and the players associations did themselves proud. They made a good argument, and they convinced those around the committee table. They did what is done in a democratic system. They fought for change, and they achieved it.

The NDP amendment that was put forward to delete the offending sections from the bill was passed. That is a victory for the airsoft community. All they are asking for is not the sledgehammer approach of legislation that was in the original version of Bill C-21, but a regulatory approach. They are more than willing to work with government on the regulatory approach. That message was heard, and that is something that all parliamentarians can celebrate.

Let me turn to the handgun freeze and the amendment that we put forward as an attempt to expand the exceptions of the handgun freeze to allow for other sport shooting disciplines. As the bill is

currently written, at this third reading stage, the only exemptions that exist are limited to people who are at an extremely elite level. They are Olympic athletes and Paralympic athletes. I use the terms “exemptions” and “exceptions” interchangeably.

After speaking to members of my community who participate in the International Practical Shooting Confederation and speaking to members who are in single-action shooting as well, I felt that these people are athletes. They train for what they do. They are passionate about their sport. They deserve to have exemptions as well. Therefore, I put forward an amendment to try to expand that. That amendment almost passed. There was a little bit of confusion on the Liberal side when that amendment came to a vote.

When I tuned in to watch the committee hearing at that stage, I was pleasantly surprised to see the Liberal member for Kings—Hants speaking in support of our amendment. It was a wonderful surprise to see, except that when it came to a vote, unfortunately, he abstained. It resulted in a five-five tie; of course, this had to be broken by the Liberal Chair. We came really close.

I have received a lot of flak from certain sectors of society for my stance on this. That is okay; I can take it. I am not going to apologize for standing here and making an attempt to fix the bill on behalf of my constituents who simply want to be able to practise their sport. To those who are arguing against that, I would simply point to the submission that was given to our committee by none other than the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. They said:

We believe that a handgun freeze is one method of reducing access to these types of firearms, while allowing existing law-abiding handgun owners to practise their sport.

That is what I was basing my amendment on, as well as the interventions made by my constituents. We tried our best at committee to make that change. Unfortunately, because of the votes falling the way they did with the Liberals and Bloc, it did not pass.

I will give another reason. The top IPSC competitors were telling me that they shoot about 50,000 rounds of ammunition a year. That is an incredible amount. We have to understand that a handgun is essentially a mechanical device. If someone is shooting it 50,000 times a year, it will break down. Sometimes, handguns have to be replaced. In my mind, it was unfair, not allowing an exception for an athlete of that calibre to have the means to be able to replace a tool that they use to compete.

We may have lost this particular battle, but what I would say to members of those sport shooting disciplines is that I will continue to pursue this issue. I will find other avenues to fight to make sure that their sport has an exemption.

Government Orders

• (1915)

We have completed the report stage part of the bill, but there has been some controversy from some women's groups who were unhappy with the red-flag provisions of the law, and I understand that. When I approached the committee hearings on this, I understood the controversy that existed around red-flag provisions. There were some women's groups that felt that adding this extra layer of bureaucracy through the court system did not serve women or other people who were in vulnerable situations where firearms might be present. They felt that we should have a properly equipped and responsive police force, and I agree with them.

I will turn critics' attention to members of the National Association of Women and the Law, because when Bill C-21 was reported back to the House, they made some public tweets, which are all up there for people to read. They said that with all the amendments that were proposed, these are some of the ways that the bill would make women safer: "The provision on licence revocation when someone has committed violence is now strengthened and clarified. A licence must be revoked when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that an individual may have engaged in family violence." They also said, "people who have been subject to a protection order will now be ineligible to hold a licence if they 'could pose' a threat or risk to the safety of another person. This way, safety comes first." That is the onus test.

They went on to say, "The Bill had no timelines for reacting to danger and domestic violence. Thanks to the adoption of our recommendations, there is now a statutory duty to act within 24 hours. This will protect women at the critical time of separation, when risk of violence is at its highest."

A lot about the bill has been subsumed by the debate over hunting rifles, shotguns, airsoft and the handgun freeze. However, it is important for us to realize that, in the heart of the bill, there are actually some very important measures, which have now been improved by the committee. I have worked with members of the National Association of Women and the Law, and I respect the submissions they have made. If they are willing to come out and publicly endorse the bill in this way, I am glad to have their support as a stakeholder, and I give it a lot of credence.

I also want to talk about ghost guns, which relate to another "unsung hero" part of the bill. We heard from law enforcement, and I want to read into the record the testimony that came from Inspector Michael Rowe, who is a staff sergeant in the Vancouver Police Department. He said:

In addition to what is already included in Bill C-21, I would ask this committee to consider regulating the possession, sale and importation of firearms parts used to manufacture ghost guns, such as barrels, slides and trigger assemblies. These parts are currently lawful to purchase and possess without a licence, and they can be purchased online or imported from the United States. The emergence of privately made firearms has reduced the significance of the currently regulated receiver and increased the importance of currently unregulated gun parts that are needed to finish a 3-D-printed receiver and turn it into a functioning firearm.

That is the request coming from law enforcement. We know that this is a growing problem, and they asked for a specific legislative fix to the problem. I am proud to see that the public safety committee delivered on that request from law enforcement.

Much has been said about indigenous communities. They are, of course, the ones who led the way in opposition to the bill. I remember, back in December, when the Assembly of First Nations came out with a unanimous emergency resolution opposing those eleventh-hour amendments that were made by the Liberal government. They said that the amendments went against the spirit of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. They helped us to understand, as parliamentarians, that these are not toys or hobbies; rather, they are a way of life. In some indigenous communities, they are necessary for the protection of life. I am glad to see that the committee listened, and no current make or model of a rifle or shotgun that is currently in use in indigenous communities is touched by Bill C-21. The committee went further and added a clause, which now references section 35 of the Constitution Act to show that indigenous rights are upheld.

• (1920)

I will conclude by saying I can honestly go back to the hunters, farmers and indigenous communities in my riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford and tell them their currently owned firearms are safe. I am glad we were able to force the government's hand on this matter.

• (1925)

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for all his work on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. Throughout this debate, I have been hearing a lot of misinformation and disinformation, especially from gun lobby groups, as well as the Conservative Party, but a lot of that NRA north style attacks and disinformation. I was wondering if he could comment on how he dealt with that on the committee and what he takes from the debates that have gone on for the last little while.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, to anyone who is thinking of joining the public safety committee, they better have a thick skin. I will say without a doubt that is probably the most-watched committee out of any parliamentary committee. One can probably see one's actions reflected in real time just by watching one's Twitter feed.

On dealing with the gun lobby, I do not like using that term all the time. I know of the groups that exist like the CCFR, but a lot of my ordinary constituents are also logged in to the gun lobby. A lot of them came forward with some very legitimate concerns, and I am glad a lot of committee members took the time to listen to those.

Yes, some of the vitriol I have seen on Twitter has been a little "out there", and I have just tried to keep myself straight and narrow to my principles and I am glad we were able to do the work to make sure the bill is where it is at today.

Government Orders

Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am going to try to be positive with the member first before I am a bit more on the pointed side. Even though I am not a permanent member of the committee, I have been sitting in at public safety quite a bit. He is greatly missed. He is much preferred on that committee than his current NDP colleague, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, because he does have a lot of common sense. I want to congratulate him on getting the airsoft exemption through.

To get more on the pointed side, he talked about the necessary changes in the last-minute amendment. He talked about that at length. This was brought in by the Liberal government, going after hunters and sport shooters, their tools and rifles and shotguns. We challenged in that committee that it was out of scope. We had a chance to put it completely to bed, but that member voted in support to keep that in there.

I would like to give the member the opportunity to maybe apologize to the hunters right across Canada for putting them through that unnecessary pain and putting the whole committee through the pain of months when this could have been shut down back in November.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the kind words. He also has been a good person to work with. What a lot of people forget about in these heated debates is that we are all human beings. We may come from different political backgrounds, but a lot of us actually work in a very respectful way.

In regard to the member's question, I will let my actions speak instead of my words. If the member will recall, in early February I put a motion on notice to refer those amendments to the Speaker. It was that threat of a motion that actually I think was the straw that broke the camel's back and forced the Liberals to withdraw the amendments.

To the hunters, farmers and indigenous communities in my riding, my actions made up for that, and that is what forced the Liberals to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member was emphasizing that farmers, indigenous people and law-abiding gun owners did not need to fear this legislation, and I suspect he is doing that because he recognizes there is a great deal of misrepresentation of the reality surrounding Bill C-21.

Many, including myself, would argue the primary motivating factor for the Conservative Party has more to do with fundraising and using Bill C-21 as a fundraising tool as opposed to seeing it as something good for increasing public safety in our communities. What does he believe the Conservatives' spreading of misinformation on the issue does to the public perception of what is taking place?

● (1930)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I referred to Bill C-21 as the goose that lays the golden eggs for the Conservative Party because it certainly has enjoyed its financial windfalls.

To his question more generally about misinformation, I took the time in my speech today to read from the bill. I systematically re-

futed Conservative talking points. Every time I have challenged Conservative MPs to name a rifle or shotgun, they have been unable to do so.

I will leave it up to the Conservatives to explain themselves, but it certainly makes our job a lot harder in this place when we are trying our best to present the facts and what is actually in the bill and it gets collided with misinformation again and again. That makes our job very hard. It does not mean I am going to stop doing my job, but it does make it more difficult.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I hold my colleague in high regard. I had the opportunity to tell him that earlier. I think we worked well together on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. It is too bad he was not there for the study of the bill.

One thing I am having a hard time understanding—

The Deputy Speaker: I must interrupt the hon. member because there is a problem with the interpretation.

The problem has now been resolved.

The hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the interpreters, who do an incredible job every day.

I was saying that my colleague and I work very well together on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. It is too bad he was not there for the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, there still seems to be a problem with the interpretation.

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Deputy Speaker: It starts and then it stops again. I will therefore suspend the proceedings while we find a solution.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 7:33 p.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 7:34 p.m.)

The Deputy Speaker: The problem has now been resolved, so the hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia can continue.

● (1935)

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the interpreters and technicians again. I think it is a plot to make me repeat for a third time that I really appreciate my NDP colleague. I really enjoyed working with him at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. It is too bad he was not there for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-21.

There is one thing I am having a hard time understanding. It is the red-flag measure, which the government presented as a measure that could help protect women who are victims of intimate partner violence. Ultimately, what we heard from dozens of women's groups from across the country is that they fear this measure will shift the onus from law enforcement to victims. Even some lawyers testified that it could increase the workload of the courts, which are already busy enough at this time. Everyone agreed that it was not a good measure, and that it would not do anything more to help women who are victims of intimate partner violence.

The NDP is usually in favour of such positions. Like the Bloc Québécois, they want to do more to protect women. However, while the Bloc Québécois and the Conservative Party voted against these government clauses, the NDP supported them.

I would like to give my colleague the opportunity to explain why, because I still do not understand this.

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, I wish I had the ability to answer in a more fulsome way. I was not at the committee. All I can do is reiterate what I said in my speech, that if we look at the public statement that comes from the National Association of Women and the Law, it took the time to say that with the amendments that were adopted at committee, it feels that this bill would make it much safer for women who are in difficult and dangerous situations involving a firearm.

The National Association of Women and the Law has a lot of credibility. I valued working with it. I take a public statement like that on the current version of Bill C-21 at face value and accept its ultimate judgment on this bill and what it would do for women in violent situations.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his incredible work on this file. I have heard throughout my constituency of a great amount of respect for the work he has done, and the airsoft community has been very clear in its appreciation.

I am just wondering if the member could answer a question. I have talked to a lot of gun owners and indigenous people across my riding, and one of the things I have actually found, for the most part, is that there is a common-sense reasonable discussion. I really respect the people who have talked to me, and we have had really good conversations about this issue, because it is complex and there are challenges to it.

I am just wondering if the member could talk about how the government could do a better job of actually talking to the people who use these tools for very specific reasons that do not harm the larger community. How could that be better reflected in the government's legislation?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, this allows me to give a shout-out to our dear colleague, the member for Nunavut, because she also helped educate me on the way of life in the north.

It became very clear, after these amendments were dropped. We had indigenous witnesses come before our committee, and it was clear that consultation had not happened. Given that the government has attached so much importance to that relationship and the

Government Orders

fact that it has passed legislation saying federal laws had to be in harmony with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it was quite obvious that those amendments were dropped with no consultation, and through indigenous efforts and the pressure indigenous people put on government, they can take a bow, because they are the ones who forced the government to backtrack and respect their way of life.

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity. I will be sharing my time with the member for Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam.

I want to start by expressing my gratitude to the good people of Don Valley East for giving me the privilege to be in this House and to speak on this issue. All of us are fortunate to have the opportunity to come into this esteemed House and speak on behalf of our communities to bring their concerns and their voices here. I am honoured to be here and to listen to my colleagues, and I mean that, because it is a really important thing. I am honoured to be in this House and listen to so many different perspectives from across the country. It speaks to the uniqueness we all bring to this House. Canada is a vast country, with diverse regions and a multitude of different voices, opinions and political views, and we often do not see eye to eye, even within our own parties. That is the beautiful thing about this House, that it maintains our good democracy in this country.

Many members know that I spent a lot of time in the Ontario legislature, and when I first arrived here, I was a bit taken aback. I thought this was even slower than the Ontario legislature. When things happen, it is a drawn-out process. We go to committees, go to caucus or sit in the House. However, there is a reason for that. It took me a couple of months to figure out why things work the way they work around here. It is because of those different opinions from across the country. We need to foster a mutual understanding of each other because we bring all these different perspectives. The more time I spend here, the better I understand the diversity of opinions of my colleagues, their passion and their motivations. The choice of words they use in this House makes a huge difference.

I want to take the opportunity to share my experience with respect to this bill and talk a bit about my community, my experiences and what this bill means to me.

I come from a community in the Don Mills corridor. It is an interesting neighbourhood because there are homes that are worth, in some cases, \$7 million, and there are homes not too far away, a two- or three-minute drive, that are Toronto community housing. There is diversity in economics, but also a diversity in cultures.

Government Orders

I grew up in a section of the community where there were some economic challenges. Like many neighbourhoods in the city of Toronto, my community experienced a lot of gun violence. Without a question, there is an association between poverty and gun violence. It is a fact in a city like mine. During my youth, growing up in my community, I probably knew several young men, the majority of whom were Black, who were murdered in my community as a result of gun violence. Many neighbourhoods in Toronto face this challenge, and there is no question that poverty is linked to that. If we go into any neighbourhood in Toronto experiencing challenges with respect to gun violence and ask people under the age of 21 if they know someone who has died because of gun violence, the answer is usually yes. That is a fact in the communities that are economically challenged in Toronto.

In my community, growing up with this experience opened up a new perspective for me. I wanted to look for ways to balance the playing field and open up opportunities for young people. That is what made me get involved in politics as a young man. It drove me to become a youth worker in Scarborough for many years. It was what made me run for school board trustee and then go on to the Ontario legislature, where a lot of my work had to do with finding opportunities for young people who go through these challenges.

I can remember when I was the minister of children and youth in Ontario and I went to a community called Mount Olive in Toronto. I was with a group of about 40 young people between the ages of maybe seven and 13. I remember asking this young girl who was walking with us if she liked her community. She said that she loved her community because there were fewer gunshots this year than the previous year. That shocked me, because that was her reality.

• (1940)

The fight against gun violence is nothing new in a city like Toronto, in many parts of our city. Again, I am sharing my perspective, a Toronto perspective from a community like mine. Gun violence usually impacts people who come from poorer communities and racialized Canadians.

There is no question, and I have heard many times in this room, that the guns causing the crime are illegal guns. That is factual. The majority of these guns are illegal. I think there is something bigger here. By freezing the sale of handguns, we have the opportunity to send out such a strong message to Canadians that we are better off as a society when we do not have to resort to owning guns and using guns. It is such a simple concept to me.

I have collaborated over the years with many communities that have been torn apart, literally, by gun violence. I have sat with mothers, a dozen mothers, who have all lost a child. I have sat with advocates who, for 20 or 30 years, have been looking for ways to find solutions to the problems that gun violence brings forward.

I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to those folks, because they make a difference in our city and they work, day and night, to look for ways to mitigate that violence. These are not people who are put up for the Order of Canada or the Order of Ontario. These are people who keep their head down. They work on the ground level, on the street, and they look for ways to find solutions.

I will tell members this. For many years, in fact for decades, these advocates who witnessed the violence in their community would say that they agree with what this bill is doing. They agree that we should stop selling handguns in Canada, and they would agree that we have to have stricter rules in place for people who distribute guns in the community. It is not the kids, the young men and others in the community who are actually out there manufacturing these guns. These guns are being brought in from different jurisdictions and they are being used in the community to terrorize the community.

I want to go back to my original point. I have skipped three or four pages; time goes by so quickly here when one is speaking. My original point was that we are here as MPs with probably one of the greatest privileges, to come and speak on behalf of our community, and just because we may have different opinions, that does not mean that another member is right or that I am right. What it means is that we are bringing forward opinions from our communities.

Last year, I did a survey in Don Valley East. We send out a survey every year. We sent it out to the entire community, and just under 2,000 surveys came back. I want to share some of the numbers. Most questions were multiple-choice, but there was one question where I asked people if they support the freezing of handgun sales in Canada. I want to share the numbers. Remember, this is 2,000 people, so we know that, without question, there is a very low margin of error and it is good data. There were 82.2% of people in my community who said they do not support the sale of handguns; 8.7% were neutral and only 8.6% were opposed to this bill.

To me, that is exactly the message that I am bringing here to the House. I understand that we all have different perspectives, but in a community like mine, the importation of guns, the sales of guns and the use of guns have no place. My community does not support it and, on top of that, we know that, over the years, it has been really difficult and really challenging for a community like Don Valley East and the city of Toronto when it comes to gun violence.

• (1945)

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one thing that stood out to me very strongly was the member's statement that he does not believe Canadians should own guns. That is a view that he says his constituents share.

I represent a rural riding where people enjoy hunting and sport shooting. Generations of my constituents have passed down firearms to their relatives who enjoy hunting and sport shooting. They would take great issue with that. I would also point out to the hon. member that in Toronto, last year and so far this year, half of the individuals who have been charged with homicides have been individuals out on bail.

Even though we differ on whether Canadians should own firearms, does he at least agree that we should be evidence-based and go after the real cause of what is happening with crime, which is individuals who are out on bail, repeat offenders, rather than going after the law-abiding firearms owners in my riding of Fundy Royal?

Mr. Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, if we are going to be factual and we are going to resort to truths here, the member should read the bill. The bill is very clear about gun ownership. It says that if people have rifles, certain types of hunting rifles are still available. There is a clause in there that would allow people with handguns to continue to have their handguns; they just cannot be traded or resold. I would just suggest that the member read the bill for clarity and he would understand what the actual rules are. The farmers and the folks who hunt, who need those firearms, would still have the opportunity to use the appropriate gun for the work they do.

• (1950)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I often hear the government touting Bill C-21 as a bill that bans assault-style firearms. That is how it presented the bill to groups like PolyRemembers, by saying that this bill would finally ban assault-style firearms.

Unfortunately, that is not the case. What we are seeing is that, in May 2020, the government issued an order in council banning 1,500 guns, including the AR-15, which is quite popular and was used in a mass shooting in Canada.

Today, even after the passage of Bill C-21, the WK180-C will still be in circulation. That is a gun that uses the same magazine and ammunition as the AR-15. It is a semi-automatic weapon that works almost the same way and that is also an assault-style firearm. That gun will still be in circulation even after Bill C-21 is passed.

I am wondering how the government can say that Bill C-21 bans assault weapons when the definition of a prohibited weapon that is proposed in this bill is prospective, meaning that it will apply only to weapons that will come on the market in the future. I must have missed something. When we ask the minister to issue an order in council banning weapons similar to the AR-15, he does nothing.

I would like my colleague to share his thoughts on that.

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for the advocacy that she has taken on gun violence. In question period, I often hear her speak on the issues that are impacting communities in different parts of the country, and I just want to say thanks for her advocacy.

Going back to my point, we all have different opinions on how we should do things around here. I think this bill is a well-balanced approach to looking for ways to mitigate gun violence in our country, and I am proud to support it today.

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member brings up some very important points. Our country is very diverse and there are different opinions. I would like to hear more from the member regarding what kind of impact this bill, coupled with many other measures, could end up having on a community like the one in his riding.

Mr. Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, the part that I missed in my speech was about preventative programs. We know that just putting in place rules around guns and weapons is not enough. I think every single person in this House would agree that investing more into

Government Orders

programs that prevent these crimes from happening is the right approach. Therefore, it has to be a multi-faceted approach to mitigating gun violence, and I am happy that the member asked that question.

Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I quite enjoyed the speech by the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford. I might differ on a few quibbles, but by and large I really appreciate his treatment of the matter.

It is an honour to join this discussion on strong, new federal firearms legislation and to join the voices of those supporting the progression of Bill C-21 through Parliament. The committee on public safety and national security has done the remarkable and arduous job of scrutinizing this bill. I would like to thank colleagues from both sides of the aisle for their constructive deliberations and collegiality. We would not have gotten this done without their invaluable co-operation, and every one of us has a stake in it.

We have heard from members who described the impact of gun violence in their communities. We have heard from survivors. We have heard from those who work with the government on many matters of public safety. They all make the point that we cannot lose another life to gun violence in this country. That is why I am so proud to be part of a government that cares about moving forward.

We know that, working with parliamentarians across the aisle and with Canadians at large, we can pass Bill C-21 as a package of reforms that would broadly enhance firearms safety throughout Canada. This would be the strongest firearms legislation we may ever see as parliamentarians. It would introduce stiffer sentencing for trafficking and new charges for illegal manufacturing of ghost guns and for altering the magazine or cartridge of a gun to exceed its lawful capacity. It would set out new wiretapping authorities for police to stop gun violence before it happens.

Bill C-21 would introduce a national freeze on handguns, and that would mean that the vast majority of individuals would no longer be able to transfer, that is buy, sell or import handguns into Canada. This would end the growth of handguns in Canada. This bill is also significant in how it would address the role of guns in gender-based violence, a pernicious issue we simply cannot ignore. It would prevent handguns from falling into the wrong hands. Individuals with a restraining order against them, whether previous or current, would no longer be able to obtain a firearms licence.

Government Orders

New red-flag laws would allow courts to order the immediate removal of firearms from individuals who may be a danger to themselves or anyone else. Additionally, yellow-flag laws would allow chief firearms officers to suspend an individual's firearms licence if the CFO receives information calling into question their licence eligibility.

The identity of vulnerable people who provide information to the courts would be protected. Let me be clear that there would be no obligation for victims to use these laws. These provisions would not remove any current tools. They would be there to offer additional protection, additional tools in the tool box.

The unwavering goal of this legislation is to protect Canadians, particularly those who are most at risk. Statistics show that victims of intimate partner violence are about five times more likely to be killed if a firearm is present in the home. I would like to share a few more important statistics with my colleagues. We know that the more available guns are, the higher the risk of homicides and suicides. Handguns are the most commonly used firearms in homicides, and suicides by firearm accounted for 73% of all firearm deaths in Canada between 2000 and 2020. Fifty-eight per cent of crime guns are traced to domestic sources that are predominantly from straw purchasing and theft.

Reducing the number of guns in our communities would mean reducing the number of victims of gun violence. Making handguns unavailable for transfer and restricting their importation just makes sense. However, as we have said from the beginning, we are not targeting responsible handgun owners or those using firearms for purposes like hunting or sport shooting; this is about tackling violent crime and preventing senseless, tragic deaths.

- (1955)

We know that no single initiative will end the complex issue of gun violence. This bill is but one part of our comprehensive approach. We have seen far too many tragedies, including those recently in Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec. We have seen close to 16,000 incidents of violent crime involving firearms in Canada since 2010. We have been clear that firearms designed for war, capable of rapid reloading and discharge that can inflict catastrophic harm, have no place in our communities.

We have also been clear that we fully respect and recognize the traditional and cultural importance of hunting for indigenous communities. The government recognizes the importance of consultation and co-operation with indigenous peoples to ensure consistency of federal laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This bill also includes a specific clause that clearly states that nothing in this definition is intended to derogate from the rights of indigenous people under section 35 of the Constitution.

It must be emphasized that guns that have already been designed and manufactured when the bill would come into force would not be affected. Other than so-called ghost guns, no existing rifle or shotgun whatsoever would be affected by this bill.

We would also be re-establishing the Canadian firearms advisory committee to independently review the classification of firearms on the current market with a diverse membership from across the

country. This independent panel would be charged with making recommendations to the government about the classification of firearms and what constitutes reasonable use for hunting.

It is our goal to keep communities safe. I am confident that Bill C-21 would get that balance right. As we have said from the beginning, no single program or initiative can end gun violence. That is why this is just one of the many initiatives we are deploying, alongside border measures, investments in community infrastructure and banning assault-style weapons to keep our communities safe.

Since 2015, we have focused on the social causes of crime with programs like the \$250-million building safer communities fund so that we can tackle gun crime and support community-led projects. We have also invested over \$1 billion, since 2016, into the initiative to take action against gun and gang violence, which provides funding to provinces and territories to reduce gun and gang crime in our communities and enhances the capacity of the RCMP and CBSA to detect and disrupt gun smuggling. That is on top of the over \$40 million provided annually through the national crime prevention strategy, which invests in community-based efforts that prevent youth involvement in crime and help address the risk factors that have been known to lead to criminal activity.

Federal officials have met with our federal, provincial and territorial colleagues to talk about the ways in which we could all make certain modifications to the bail system so that we can address specifically the challenges around repeat violent offenders who have used either firearms or other weapons, and this is how we will keep our communities safe through collaboration, discussion and multipronged approaches. Bill C-21 is a key piece of this puzzle.

I want to thank all members once again for their constructive input. I encourage all members to join me to today in making sure Bill C-21 moves forward.

- (2000)

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety and the parliamentary secretary have stated numerous times that the majority of Canadians support the ban of hundreds of models that were previously unrestricted firearms, yet when the current government conducted consultations with 133,000 Canadians, 77% of those very Canadians stated that no further restrictions were required. Upon which data does the government rely when it makes the statement that the majority of Canadians support these additional bans?

Government Orders

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I personally do not know which data it is using, but I know that the government has undertaken considerable effort to conduct consultations both recently and before Bill C-21 was initially launched in the 43rd Parliament. We have reached out to people at gun clubs, to gun aficionados, to sport shooters and so forth right across the country to ensure that we were approaching this matter in a correct way.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and his work in committee. As chair, he did a very good job during the clause-by-clause study in committee.

It is interesting to hear his opinion this evening. Usually, committee chairs have a duty to stay neutral. That being said, he had to take a position at some point during the clause-by-clause study. One of his colleagues abstained from voting on an extremely important amendment and there were as many votes in favour of the amendment as there were against the amendment. He had to take a position, that of his government, and vote to prevent making the handgun freeze completely useless as the Conservative Party and the NDP tried to do.

While there was grumbling about the amendments the government tabled in November, and there was pressure from all the opposition parties and civil society in general, I know that there was pressure coming from within the Liberal caucus to withdraw these amendments.

I would like the member to explain to us how this happened on the government side with the tabling and withdrawal of amendments on assault weapons, which were rather controversial.

[*English*]

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, it is great to be working with the member on the committee, and I would like to assure her that clause-by-clause is not always this bad and does not always take six months.

On the amendments we brought forward in the fall, it became clear, after much debate and much consultation on an ongoing basis, that they needed work, so they needed to be withdrawn and another approach taken. That is what we did. We responded to what people were saying. We listened and we took action so we could move this forward in a positive way.

• (2005)

Mr. Dave Epp: Mr. Speaker, in the response to my previous question, the member stated that the government had consulted with many hunting clubs and gun aficionados. I believe those were the terms he used. There are six hunting clubs in my own riding. I personally am not a gun aficionado, but I did take my PAL and my RPAL before becoming elected, in order to understand this industry. What advice did the government hear from those consultations? It is apparently different from what I am hearing, so what did the gun clubs reveal to the government?

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I know that, in the 42nd Parliament, I believe, the then-minister of public safety and emergency preparedness conducted quite extensive consultations right across the country. He spoke with gun clubs and many people involved in

the gun community. I set up a meeting between him and members of my local gun club. In my riding, there is one of the largest outdoor ranges in the Lower Mainland, and I have actually been invited there to shoot on a couple of occasions and quite enjoyed it. I do not know how anybody can afford to do that, because it is pretty expensive. Regardless, I arranged a meeting between them and the former minister. This consultation resulted in the first iteration of Bill C-21, which did not survive that particular Parliament; it was a starting point, however, for this new version of Bill C-21.

Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am always grateful to be here speaking in the House on behalf of the constituents of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, but more importantly, for all the law-abiding firearms owners out there right across the country, particularly veterans, those in the military, those in law enforcement, sport shooters and even those in our parliamentary protective services.

I am disappointed to be once again speaking here under time allocation. When I spoke to the bill at second reading last year, it was under the same time allocation restrictions.

My speech will highlight three key factors: basing any dialogue or debate on the bill around data and facts, being open and transparent to Canadians and ultimately respecting our firearms owners. Underlying all of that, I will highlight the need for education to the general public and parliamentarians.

For the sake of transparency and to help educate all MPs and all Canadians listening tonight, let us review the history of how we got here at third reading via the data and facts.

First off, we have heard the terms, which have already been used a few times tonight, “assault weapon” and “military-style assault weapon”. I have been trying for three years to get an answer on that. The government's own commission report from Hill+Knowlton, which is on the Public Safety website, talks about the data that my fellow colleague spoke about: The vast majority of respondents, just shy of 200,000, do not support a handgun ban at all. In particular, the report talks about the need to define what is meant by “military-style assault rifle”. That is what the report says. When I asked the government to get that in writing, it said to look at this report, but the report says that the government better define it. Now here we are, umpteen years later, with no definition, and I have been trying with every tool at my disposal as a member of Parliament to get it.

Government Orders

As to the data on gun crime, over 85% of gun crimes are committed with illegal guns. They are not done by law-abiding firearms owners. In fact, law-abiding firearms owners are three times less likely to commit any crime compared to the average Canadian. I find it very frustrating for us to be debating a bill that is targeting the wrong demographic. We should be focusing on criminals, not law-abiding firearms owners.

In any case, the bill was brought forward last June as a handgun freeze, which ultimately the government did through regulation last October. There were a couple of other components to it. It talked about making airsoft or paintball guns illegal, and it talked about bringing in enhanced red and yellow flag laws.

Unfortunately, once the bill was debated in the fall, it did not take long for the government to use time allocation again to get it through second reading and get it to committee. It was then studied at committee, where loads of time was taken up with testimony. Experts were brought in to refute and apparently support the government's legislation in some ways. However, in the end, funny enough, in all the testimony brought in around airsoft, we heard, "Whoa, why are you going after this community? They're not the problem."

On the red and yellow flag laws, I think initially there was a somewhat unanimous belief that the government's intention was correct, but we heard from the vast majority of women's groups that, in fact, they were going to make things worse and make it more difficult for them to get a response from law enforcement for their own safety. Members do not have to take my word for it. Ms. Rathjen from PolySeSouvient said, "there is not one women's group that asked for this measure." Also, Louise Riendeau, from Regroupement, said, "we think these measures are unnecessary and may even be counterproductive for victims.... [W]e recommend that clauses...which introduce these "red flag" measures, be [removed from the bill]."

When we got through that, it was getting pretty evident to the government that the whole purpose behind the bill and two of the elements did not even make sense. They likely were not going to survive, so what did we see happen next? At the last minute, the government table-dropped hundreds and hundreds of amendments, including the infamous G-4 and G-46, which went after the vast majority of hunters' and farmers' semi-automatic rifles and shotguns right across this country, which obviously created a great uproar.

● (2010)

Before I forget, I am splitting my time with the member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

I know the chair of the committee was speaking before me. We automatically challenged the whole idea of going after law-abiding hunters' shotguns and rifles. It was out of the scope of the bill and was not what we debated. Unfortunately, the chair ruled that it was within the scope. Then we challenged it, but the member from the NDP supported that it was in scope, which created a great uproar because we could not kill this the minute it was tabled. The Assembly of First Nations, many indigenous groups, the vast majority of hunters and farmers and even sports icons came out in opposition to these last-minute amendments, and the backlash was great.

Fortunately, the NDP saw the light. It changed tactics and ultimately the Liberals realized their mistake. However, when they realized they were in trouble, they started filibustering the committee. In fact, one Liberal member ate up two meetings alone talking about firearms 101 just to kill time as they tried to figure out how to back themselves out of the situation they put themselves in.

We hit Christmas recess and came back in the new year. The committee then had to wait over six weeks for the Minister of Public Safety to show up and testify at committee, which he finally did a few weeks ago, in late April. Lo and behold, what did we see happen less than a week later? On May 1, the minister came out and said he was going to come forth with another new amendment to Bill C-21 that he would introduce at the last minute. It was a new definition of prohibited firearms. This was just a day prior to the clause-by-clause review recommencing at committee.

Obviously, members of the committee were very concerned. If I had had a chance to ask the chair, I would have asked if he thought there was any filibustering going on. We ate up one two-hour meeting asking officials some legitimate questions to make sure this new definition of prohibited firearms was not going to impact hunters, sport shooters and law-abiding firearms owners right across this country. Remember, we already had the Prime Minister on the public record saying he was going after some of the hunting rifles from our law-abiding firearms owners.

I was sitting at the committee that day, and I was quite surprised by the NDP House leader when he immediately started accusing the Conservative members of the committee of filibustering. In fact, at one meeting, 45 minutes into it, the Conservative members had talked for less than a minute and the member from the NDP had spoken for more time than anybody else in that 45 minutes while he was complaining about somebody filibustering.

Unfortunately, we are here now at third reading. However, I have some good news to share with Canadians and with members here in the House. I got an amendment through, which basically passed unanimously at committee. It was an amendment to focus on providing the necessary resources and ability for a licensed firearm owner to temporarily store their firearms with another licensed individual or business while they are dealing with mental health issues. Once the handgun freeze was brought in, a lot of veterans, who are potentially dealing with PTSD and mental health issues, were afraid to do anything with their guns. They were not going to seek help because they did not want to lose them full time.

Government Orders

Some bad news is that the red flag laws were supported by the NDP. They did not get cut from the bill. Even now, the Prime Minister and the government have come out and said they are going to use the Canadian firearms advisory committee, which they stopped using over four years ago, to continue to target the rifles and shotguns of law-abiding hunters and farmers.

Let us just educate Canadians and focus support on the root causes of gun violence in this country: crime, drugs, gangs, illegal trafficking of firearms, no substantive bail reform and, most importantly, poverty. That is instead of going after our law-abiding firearms owners. I will be voting against Bill C-21, a basically useless bill.

• (2015)

Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for his amendment being passed. The committee worked very hard to do so. It was great to have him substituting in here and there on the committee. It was a good help.

He mentioned that there is a problem with the definition of what an assault-style firearm is. I would agree that it needs work. That is, in fact, the purpose of the firearms advisory committee. It will consult with sports shooters, hunters, indigenous people and people across the country, from all walks of life, who will help it to formalize a correct and good definition of what an assault-style firearm is. I certainly hope that he will contribute to that discussion.

Mr. Alex Ruff: Mr. Speaker, absolutely I will contribute. In fact, I will give a little history lesson for the member and for everybody here.

Assault weapons have been banned in Canada since January 1, 1978. As somebody who has carried assault weapons in the theatre of war, I know there is not a single firearm out of the 1,500, now 2,000, firearms that have been prohibited through the May 1 OIC, and subsequently through an order in council and the firearms program, that I, as a military member, would have ever purchased, helped define or take on, with the exception of a couple of sniper rifles, which do not fit the definition that has been put forth.

I will correct the member. The terms “military-style assault firearm” and “assault firearm” are not in the bill or anywhere in legislation that I am aware of, not a single spot. The definition that has been brought forward is a new definition of a prohibited firearm. The NPD member earlier even talked about how the government already had the capacity to redefine what a prohibited firearm is just through regulation. The minister has that power.

Ultimately, I am confident that with a future Conservative government, we will properly define firearms in this country.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague ended his speech by stating that he will be voting against Bill C-21, because it is useless.

However, I did appreciate my colleague's efforts to adopt an amendment that he proposed at the last minute. When he sat down beside me to discuss this amendment and to ask me if I would be voting in favour of it, he saw that I had noted on my sheet that I would be voting against it.

He asked me why I wanted to vote against his amendment. He explained the intent behind it. He told me that people had confided in him that they had mental health issues they wanted to treat, but that they would not seek treatment because they were afraid their firearms would be confiscated immediately. The amendment he was presenting would allow them to entrust their firearms to someone else while waiting for help to address their mental health issues.

Once he explained that to me and made me aware of the issue, I agreed to vote in favour of the amendment. The same thing happened with all our colleagues and it was unanimous. We voted in favour of his amendment that, I believe, will help many people. I think it is a shame to hear him say that the bill will not serve any purpose. I understand that he would have liked us to do more about firearms trafficking, to do more in other areas, but I would still like to hear him say that there is at least one good thing in this bill and that he directly contributed to that.

• (2020)

[*English*]

Mr. Alex Ruff: Mr. Speaker, look, I will not argue. My amendment is a very good amendment, and I do appreciate the support we got. In fact, as I said in my speech, the NDP amendment to remove the airsoft portion was a good amendment too. However, the best amendment would have been to get rid of the handgun freeze in the first place. Then I would not have needed my amendment, because that is what created the problem.

The demographic that is three times less likely to commit a crime in Canada, the restricted firearms owners, is being penalized and targeted by the Liberal government, which is not allowing them to legally use their firearms. That is why I needed the amendment. I have a constituent who was going through a situation, and he transferred, not temporarily stored, his handguns to another person. The guy works with the local law enforcement back in my riding, but now he is stuck. He sorted out his mental health issue or whatever the problem was, and he cannot get his own handguns back.

My point is that if that freeze had not come into place, I would not have needed to introduce my amendment. The fact that I introduced a necessary amendment to make the bill less worse does not make it a useful bill. It is still a useless bill.

The Deputy Speaker: That is all the time we have for that one.

Just as a reminder, I will ask members to keep comments and questions as short as possible so everybody can participate in tonight's debate.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

Government Orders

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to speak to Bill C-21, an act to amend certain acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms).

I want to speak today in solidarity with all the honest, law-abiding people in Lévis—Lotbinière who legally own guns for reasons other than committing violent crimes.

My colleagues will no doubt understand that I have come here to defend honest hunters and shooters, farmers, and collectors who own guns passed down from one generation to another.

The absurd thing about the Liberal government is that their bills miss their targets most of the time—that is probably a bad pun—as does their budget, for that matter.

How will legalizing drugs prevent or reduce crime? That is utter nonsense. How can anyone believe that restricting the use of certain registered and legal weapons is going to reduce the same criminal activity that continues to rise because of bad Liberal decisions?

The solution to the ever-increasing crime is quite simple, and it is the same for everything else that has not worked in our country since 2015. We are headed straight for a cliff because the Liberals are in power and they are making bad decisions.

The goal of the new Liberal amendments to Bill C-21 is not to protect us, but to score political points and instill a false sense of security in the population. The facts prove otherwise and nothing will change.

I would like to talk about academic and government stakeholders, such as Dr. Caillin Langmann, assistant clinical professor at McMaster University. He stated that available research has demonstrated that the proposed ban on handguns and semi-automatic weapons would not reduce the rates of homicide and mass homicide.

Someone who wants to inflict harm has the imagination and means to do so. What causes an individual to commit the irreparable quite often begins with the family violence that children witness. These children will become uncontrollable adults who abuse drugs that have become legal and who commit increasingly serious crimes.

The rehabilitation system for these individuals is not working and the Liberal Party encourages this scourge through bad policies and complacency. As proof, the Liberal Party's catch-and-release policies are not working. After eight years of Liberal governance, violent crimes have increased by 32% and gang-related homicides have doubled.

Rather than cracking down on the illegal guns used by criminals and street gangs, the Prime Minister is working to take hunting rifles away from law-abiding farmers, hunters and indigenous peoples.

Let us be clear. The Liberals' new definition is the same as the old one. The commonly used hunting firearms targeted by the Liberals in the fall will likely be added to the ban by the new Liberal firearms advisory panel.

Let there be no mistake. There is nothing new in the amendments proposed by the Liberals. They have just wrapped the initial amendments up in a new package. Hunters, farmers and indigenous peoples are not naive, and neither are the Conservatives. The Conservatives do not support taking guns away from law-abiding farmers, hunters and indigenous peoples. When the Liberals say that they are banning so-called assault-style firearms, they really mean that they are banning hunting rifles. The Prime Minister even admitted as much a few months ago.

No one believes that the government is going to reduce violent crime across the country by going after hunters and legitimate hunting rifles. That is part of the Liberal government's plan to distract Canadians from the real issues our country is facing and to divide them.

• (2025)

For eight years now, have the Liberals been aware that they are making life easier for violent criminals by repealing mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes with legislation stemming from Bill C-5?

Are the Liberals aware that they are making it easier for violent criminals to get bail with legislation stemming from Bill C-75?

Are the Liberals aware that they are making life easier for violent criminals by not stopping the flow of illegal guns across the U.S. border?

Conservatives support common-sense gun policies, policies that will stop dangerous criminals from getting guns. That is why a Conservative government will invest in policing and securing our borders rather than spending billions of dollars confiscating guns from farmers, hunters, indigenous people and law-abiding Canadians.

Let us not be fooled. The Liberals are the champions of wishful thinking. The Liberals are also the champions of empty gestures, empty words and wasting our hard-earned money.

Quality of life has gone down considerably in Canada in the past eight years in every area of daily life and not just because of the increasing crime rate, which, again, jumped by 32%. When we look at the facts, the current situation and the numbers, we see that this is no longer working. One just needs to look at the number of available jobs, the backlog in immigration cases, the applications for temporary foreign workers that are blocked and have caused businesses back home such as Olymel to shut down.

I am thinking about the Liberals' rejection of my Bill C-215, which sought to promote life by allowing people with a serious disease such as cancer to be entitled to 52 weeks of employment insurance to get back on their feet. I am thinking about all these young people to whom the Liberal Party is offering addiction to dangerous substances as a life work; as we all know, using hard drugs brings more problems. That is obvious and it only makes sense to acknowledge it.

I have a hard time seeing how Bill C-21 will achieve the Liberal Party's murky goal of lowering the crime rate and making our streets safer.

In closing, in Lévis—Lotbinière, the majority of us are responsible, law-abiding people. More than ever, we need a return to a Conservative government to restore order in our country and in our politics, and to put money back in our pockets.

• (2030)

[English]

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, during his speech, kept referring to the Liberal government attacking law-abiding hunters and law-abiding farmers who are trying to get rid of pest animals on their farms. Could the member please tell me which hunting rifle currently used by law-abiding hunters would be banned if this bill were passed?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, simply introducing this bill in the House, going after honest Canadians instead of going after criminals and those who bring illegal guns into Canada, shows how much the Liberals have chosen to politicize an issue tied to safety, one on which we could have worked together, just for political gains because they are truly afraid of losing the next election.

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised. I have been following this debate for two days, and yesterday I heard the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord say that the Conservative Party was the only party standing up for hunters. I heard that many times.

It is clear, however, that the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia has proven herself to be doing just that. No hunting weapons will be affected by Bill C-21.

As public policy-makers, I think we have a duty to tell our constituents the truth. I would like to hear my colleague tell the truth once and for all about the fact that hunters will not be affected by Bill C-21. If he is honest, I think he has to say that.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, the truth is that an inordinate amount of time, nearly 14 months, has been spent on an issue that could have been tackled from a different angle in order to make Canada safer. The biggest part of the problem is the illegal guns that are coming across our borders and being bought by criminals and street gangs, who use them to commit violent crimes.

I would like my friend to understand that the Bloc Québécois is currently defending criminals rather than honest citizens.

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, hopefully the third time is a charm. I will ask my hon. colleague a third time: Can he stand in this place to name one rifle or shotgun that would be prohibited by Bill C-21? If he cannot, will he publicly state and acknowledge that this bill does not, in fact, go after farmers, hunters and indigenous communities and the models they are currently using?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, I hope that my colleague can recognize the great collusion of the NDP and the Liberal Party in proposing policies that undermine public safety in Canada.

At present, we are working on a bill that may not remain on the books. The government is not really tackling the issue of illegal

Government Orders

weapons that cross the U.S. border into Canada and are purchased by street gangs that commit serious crimes.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am curious. I may not have followed everything, but I do not believe that I heard the answer to an important question. What type of firearm used by hunters is banned by this bill?

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, I would like my esteemed colleague, who is a minister, to assure the hunting community that the advisory committee to be created and appointed by the Liberals will protect hunters' interests.

To ask the question is to answer it.

• (2035)

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I apologize to my hon. colleague that at this hour, my French is not up to putting this question.

We have had discussions of the red-flag laws in this place on Bill C-21. I have read the Mass Casualty Commission report and find it deeply disturbing that, over a period of over a decade and a half, reports were made to the police that the man who ultimately killed 22 Nova Scotians had guns, and over the course of 15 years, reports were made to the police that he was violent and had done damage to his intimate partner. No action was taken in any of those cases.

I would like to ask the member if he considers that it is worth it to bring in a law that could have saved 22 lives in Nova Scotia if it had been in place before the events of April 2020.

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, I think that is the most intelligent question I have been asked this evening.

Of course, if a person who has been granted the right to own a firearm is negligent, engages in domestic violence or is found to be suffering from mental illness, then it would be appropriate for that person to lose that right. A red-flag measure could be considered in such cases.

[English]

Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Outremont.

I am pleased today to speak to this legislation, Bill C-21, which speaks to the complexities of responding effectively to the escalating gun violence we are seeing in this country. There is surely no easy solution.

Government Orders

In Canada, we continue to justifiably pride ourselves on being a place of peace, but there are fissures in that feeling of security. The debate on Bill C-21, in particular the now infamous amendments, is no exception. From what I have heard to date, whether from constituents at home in the Yukon or from any member of the House speaking to this subject, we all agree that more needs to be done to keep our communities safer, even as each party, perhaps each member of the House, may harbour different ideas as to how best to achieve the peace we are all seeking.

Acts of violence have increased again in recent years. Despite the rhetoric of easy blame, there are likely multiple reasons for this increase. Organized crime, intimate partner violence, gang violence and random acts of violence are all contributors. From the horrific mass casualty event in Nova Scotia in early 2020, to the recent tragic stabbing of a 17-year-old in Vancouver, to the shooting of Sgt. Eric Mueller hardly a stone's throw from the House just last week, we cannot ignore the rise in violent crime.

Enter Bill C-21. When this bill was initially introduced, many of my constituents reached out to express concerns about some of the provisions. They were from both vigilant and law-abiding firearms owners and those without their own firearms who were concerned about the further pressure on an already tightly regulated activity. Thus began my own journey with this bill and its various iterations.

When consulting with Yukoners, I found support for some of the provisions of the bill, such as bolstered law enforcement to address illegal sales and smuggling, stiffer penalties for transgressions, commitments to invest in early diversion program, and measures such as the red-flag and yellow-flag laws to make it easier for early intervention where risk was apparent. These all remain notable and worthy aspects of Bill C-21.

However, I must highlight, before we address the amendments and their revisions, concerns remain from handgun owners. Some of them are collectors, and others use handguns on the trapline or when they are travelling in remote areas. In skilled hands, handguns provide protection against potential predators in the wilderness and are far less cumbersome than a rifle.

There were also concerns about the ban on airsoft rifles, the limitations to be set restricting the pathways to elite sports shooting and the ability of indigenous peoples to access guns to pursue their livelihoods, rights recognized in the Constitution Act of 1982.

I have been assured that pathways to sports shooting will be addressed in regulations, but the uncertainty of who will be included remains disconcerting for many. It is now no secret that, when the substantial G-4 amendments were introduced in committee, they arrived in short notice and were welcomed by few. The amendments, in addition, were confusing to interpret, and arrived without substantial prior consultation with indigenous peoples, hunters, sport shooters, or for that matter, rural MPs.

I would not dwell on the angst that these original amendments aroused in my riding, as well as in other areas of the country. The lack of clarity confused and angered many. Law-abiding Canadians, indigenous communities with recognized rights and others were uncertain whether certain rights would be upheld or indeed, if and how they were going to be fairly compensated for firearms that

would need to be handed over. Some collector pieces, whether handguns or rifles, are worth hundreds, thousands, even tens of thousands of dollars. Regardless of prices, some of these pieces have heritage or sentimental value that cannot be matched by undefined promises of compensation. In short, it is no wonder that many reasonable Yukoners were upset.

In speaking for Yukoners, as well as for other potentially affected people around the country, including first nations and other indigenous communities, I was pleased to see how much improvement to these amendments we were able to influence and achieve. Ultimately, the controversial amendments were withdrawn with ensuing consultations around the country, including in the Yukon, leading to the new amendments currently being considered in this debate.

The Minister of Public Safety came to the Yukon to meet with hunters, outfitters and first nations, and his efforts were widely appreciated. The now revised amendments have, likewise, been recognized as a positive step forward from those initially proposed. No longer is there a massive and confusing list of banned guns. Firearm models presently on the market are to be exempt from the assault weapon definition, and current owners now have some room to breathe.

A new advisory committee, which would include hunting and sport shooting experts, indigenous peoples and gun control advocates, would be launched to determine classifications on firearms newly on the market. The onus on classification would now shift from the owner to the manufacturer. Few would argue that we need urgent action to address ghost guns and their vast potential to make gun crime easier to commit and harder to detect.

● (2040)

I am encouraged by the proposed makeup of this advisory committee, and I hope that this committee will help bring together individuals with different perspectives to chart a course forward to make our communities safer, something that we need to do much more of to achieve effective and lasting solutions to gun violence.

Government Orders

From the opportunities I have had to sit at the public safety committee from time to time and hear testimony from both gun control advocacy groups, such as PolySeSouvient, as well as from hunters and sport shooters, all agree that there is more we must do to keep our communities safe and there is space for these different perspectives to come together to find a way forward. Speaking of the public safety committee, I would like to thank the chair and all members of this committee. They have worked long hours of late to deliberate on the revised amendments on behalf of Canadians.

I appeal to all parties to not get bogged down in what has become an unnecessarily polarizing debate: urban vs. rural; progressives against Conservatives. On this issue and, may I say, on many others, we all want the same outcome.

Thus, I believe the proposed advisory committee could be a means to objectively, through expert and balanced eyes, take this assessment out of the hands of the politicians who have allowed it to become politicized through the oversimplification of the debates.

The statistics and quotes colleagues on both sides of the aisle are applying can also oversimplify the situation. While the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police supports Bill C-21, particularly the intensified border controls and penalties, and have recognized that a national handgun ban is preferable to a provincial or municipal approach, it also, in the same statement, acknowledges that banning legally owned handguns will have a limited impact on one of the root causes of handgun-related crime, the illegal handguns obtained through the United States.

We have seen an increase over the past few years in firearm-related homicides. For example, Statistics Canada reported an increase in firearm-related homicides by 91% between 2013 and 2020. One in three homicides in Canada are firearms-related, and about half of these are committed with handguns, yet 79% of solved homicides involving firearms have been committed by a perpetrator who did not hold a valid firearms license.

In a more local level, and a wrenching example, in October of 2021, there was a double homicide and an additional individual injured in a shooting in Faro, Yukon, using an illegally obtained firearm. Statistics alone, though, risk overlooking the thousands of Canadians whose lives have been touched by firearm-related crimes. Lives lost needlessly will never be returned, and the families changed will never be the same.

Setting Bill C-21 aside, we are continuing to work on making our communities safer. It is important to note that there is much more to this government's response to gun violence than what is contained within the bill. Control of trafficking at the borders is essential. Our government has invested \$312 million over the last few years to enhance the capacity of the RCMP and CBSA to halt the flow of illegal guns through our borders. We need to do more to clamp down on straw sales and the illegal movement of firearms.

Earlier this year, I was honoured to be on hand when the City of Whitehorse received almost a million dollars through our building safer communities fund. This fund strives to divert at-risk youth away from gun and gang violence early and prevent devastating situations from arising.

Just last week, the Minister of Public Safety announced almost \$390 million for the provinces and territories to build upon the government's take action against gun and gang violence initiative. As a Canadian, as a parent, and as a public health physician, I abhor gun violence. I am distressed by how we have seen a rise in gun violence in Canada. This is not the Canada we want. We are obliged to do better to address gun violence. We need to learn from our mistakes and move on.

Bill C-21's journey, including the amendments, has been a quest for an urgent solution to address gun violence. It arguably did not meet all the requirements for a collaborative, consultative approach that would bring people of different perspectives together to chart a course forward. However, with these new amendments, including the formation of a new advisory committee, we have the potential to set the stage for a collaborative and expert-driven approach that will not only help to build a safer Canada but also, in so doing, help rebuild the trust that has been lost.

As we carry on with our work to address all aspects of gun violence, I will continue to play my part to ensure that the voice of the Yukon is heard.

● (2045)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at the end of his speech, my colleague admitted that we need to work harder for gun control, particularly to crack down on illegal firearms trafficking. I completely agree with him.

The legislative summary we received from the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness on Bill C-21 had many subheadings on various subjects. It said that Bill C-21 does more to crack down on illegal firearms trafficking, but the bill contains only one measure in that regard.

In Bill C-21, we see that the government wants to crack down on illegal firearms trafficking by increasing the maximum sentences for those convicted of such a crime. We are wondering how effective that measure will be, because we know that criminal groups usually use people with no criminal records to bring in firearms. Then, since they do not have a criminal record, they are given shorter sentences.

Right now, the maximum sentence is 10 years, but that is a penalty very rarely handed down. Will it really change anything to increase that maximum sentence to 14 years?

I do not think so, and I think my colleague might agree with me.

Government Orders

Mr. Brendan Hanley: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question and for her work on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

I can tell her that there are many targeted measures at the border. For example, \$300 million is being invested to enhance the intelligence and investigative capacity of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency to stop the flow of illegal weapons across the border. We have brought in many measures that we hope will address this complex problem.

[*English*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Yukon began his speech referencing the mass casualty report, and I just recently had an exchange on it with another member.

The mass casualty report on the events of April 18 and 19, 2020, in Nova Scotia is really a ground truthing of why we need to change our laws. The concepts of gender-based violence, violence against intimate partners and coercive control should permeate the ways in which we look at how we prevent the use of any weapon in ways that kill one person, such as an intimate partner, or cause a mass casualty. The mass casualty report is a deep report of over 3,000 pages of solid evidence that 22 people in Nova Scotia did not need to die.

They died because, despite various reports over many years of the predilection of a rural Nova Scotian to collect illegal guns and to have an illegal police car, which looked just like a real police car, and reports that he was violent toward his partner, over and over again, for more than a decade and a half, the police did nothing.

I wonder if the hon. member for Yukon could reflect on whether he sees Bill C-21 as making a difference in a circumstance such as this in the lives of rural Canadians.

• (2050)

Mr. Brendan Hanley: Mr. Speaker, I would say a few things. One is that the mass casualty report, to its credit, hugely emphasized prevention and how much more we need to do in prevention. As well, as the member described, opportunities for early intervention are really part of prevention. The other thing is that, as I pointed out earlier in my speech, the red-flag and yellow-flag laws would have that capacity to help address these situations for preventative early intervention.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are here at this late hour to debate Bill C-21 and, more broadly, gun control in Canada.

There is no doubt that if this bill passes, it will be the most significant reform of our gun control laws in over a generation. I would like to take a few moments now to explain why the fight against gun violence and in favour of stricter gun control is so important to me. It was in my community of Outremont, at École Polytechnique, that we experienced an unthinkable tragedy over 33 years ago.

I often think of that evening. I still vividly remember that we were waiting for my father to arrive for dinner. I was waiting for my father at the window beside the door. We did not know why he had not yet returned from his job at the university. I remember seeing my father return with a sombre look on his face. I remember him explaining what he saw at Polytechnique the evening of December 6, 1989. I was nine years old. I asked him why 14 women had been struck down. It was simply unfathomable for the young girl that I was.

I remember that day on December 6, 1989, not just with deep sadness but also with renewed determination. The survivors of that tragedy, those courageous and resilient women, transformed their pain into action. I am thinking mainly of Nathalie Provost, who was shot and has dedicated her life since then to fighting for better control of firearms in Canada. I want to thank her and the entire PolyRemembers team for their relentless fight, even when they have to face the constant and often shocking attacks of the gun lobby.

Canada should never again have to witness such a tragedy. We have a collective responsibility to make sure firearms do not end up in the wrong hands. We must act with courage and determination, just like the Polytechnique survivors. That is one of the reasons I made gun control one of my top priorities in my political career.

[*English*]

Another important motivation for me in my fight for stronger gun control is based on the numbers. The numbers do not lie. They are not emotional.

Let me start with my friends and neighbours to the south. There was a time when gun ownership was not so widespread in the United States and when gun control policies still garnered some consensus in America, and I am not talking about ancient times. In 1993, the U.S. Congress passed legislation to establish background checks and waiting periods. In 1994, the federal assault weapons ban came into force, prohibiting the manufacture of many types of semi-automatic firearms for civilian use. This law, which also banned large-capacity magazines, had tangible results. During the decade it was in effect, the number of mass shootings in the United States fell by 37%, and the number of people dying from mass shootings fell by 43%.

Unfortunately, this law was allowed to expire in 2004, followed by a heartbreaking surge in mass shootings. Between 2004 and 2014, mass shootings in the U.S. rose by an alarming 183%, nearly 200%. Mass shootings are now a daily occurrence in the United States. In fact, last year, there were nearly two mass shootings, on average, every single day in the United States. Streets, schools and places of worship are the backdrops for these tragedies. Fire drills have been replaced by gun drills in elementary schools across the United States. Is that what we want for Canada? I certainly do not.

Government Orders

Today, America has had over 390 million firearms sold to private individuals, outnumbering the U.S. population in its entirety. This represents a 63% increase in the last two decades alone. Policies matter. The impact of looser gun laws and unbridled gun culture is as clear as it is devastating.

• (2055)

In Canada, although we, thankfully, have more restrictive gun laws and fewer shootings, since 2013, we have seen an alarming increase in firearm-related crimes. The biggest spike actually occurred between 2013 and 2015, when Statistics Canada reported a 30% increase in the firearm-related crime rate. Since then, it has, unfortunately, continued to rise, albeit much more slowly. As is often noted in this debate on Bill C-21, many of the weapons used in these crimes are illegally imported from the United States into Canada, demonstrating again how the prevalent American gun culture and looser gun laws can cross borders and impact us right here at home.

We need to confront the reality of these numbers, because they are not just statistics. They tell a story. We must continue to enhance the RCMP and CBSA's capacity to detect and disrupt gun smuggling. That is why our government has once again invested in the initiative to take action against guns and gangs, that is why we must continue to crack down on gun trafficking and that is why Bill C-21 would increase maximum sentences for firearm smuggling.

Listening to some of the arguments from my Conservative colleagues, one could be led to believe that we, here in Canada, have some kind of U.S.-style right to bear arms. That is simply not the case. There is no such right in our country. There is no such provision in the Canadian Human Rights Act and there is no such provision in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or anywhere else. This issue was adjudicated and resolved about 30 years ago at the Supreme Court of Canada, in the case of *R. v. Hasselwander*, where Justice Cory, writing for the majority on the court, stated, "Canadians, unlike Americans do not have a constitutional right to bear arms." He went on to explain that most Canadians put more value in the peace of mind and sense of security that comes with prohibiting the proliferation of dangerous weapons. I could not agree more.

The gun lobby and the Conservatives who choose to be the mouthpieces for the gun lobby have been consistently misleading Canadians, and this needs to stop. Instead of promoting disinformation or importing American gun culture or America's laws and politics, we should be focusing on keeping our Canadian communities safe and keeping handguns and assault weapons away from our kids, away from our schools and away from our streets.

I do want to be clear, though, that there is a time and place for some of these weapons. Some belong on the battlefield. Semi-automatic assault weapons should be in the hands of those brave Ukrainians fighting for their democracy. Hunting rifles belong in the hands of hunters who safely practise their sport. We respect the long-standing tradition of hunting in Canada, and nothing in Bill C-21 would get in the way of that, but no one needs an AR-15 or a 10-round magazine to hunt a duck or an elk. Those who do should probably find another sport.

I could go on at length about what I think about Bill C-21, but I would like to quote what Wendy Cukier of the Coalition for Gun Control has said:

No law is ever perfect but Bill C-21 is a game changer for Canada and should be implemented as soon as possible. The law responds to most of the recommendations of the Mass Casualty Commission and the demands of the Coalition for Gun Control (CGC), which, with more than 200 supporting organizations, has fought for stronger firearm laws for more than thirty years.

[*Translation*]

In just the past 24 hours in Montreal, our community has had two incidents of gun violence, in other words two murders. That is something we do not want to get used to in Montreal, in Quebec or in Canada. We cannot and will not tolerate this.

• (2100)

[*English*]

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the speech from the member opposite, although this is coming from the party that seems to detest American-style politics. All the member did was talk about what is going on in the United States. I do not remember once, not ever, anybody on this side of the House saying that it is a right to own a firearm. Conservatives have always said it is a privilege, and we have always said that privilege comes with responsibilities. We have never said it is a right.

I also listened to this debate and heard talk about misinformation and disinformation. That is a massive piece of it. Conservatives had to sit here and listen to that. We had to listen to what is going on in the United States. What does that have to do with what is going on in Canada? If the member wants to talk about that, she could talk about Chicago. It is a gun-free zone and it has double-digit homicides every single weekend. We can talk about Mexico if we want. It has massive gun control. Who has all the guns? It is the cartels, but that has nothing to do with what we are talking about.

When will the member get serious about what is going on in this country, strengthen our border and reduce the number of guns that are smuggled?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that my Conservative colleague opposite has very clearly stated that gun ownership is not a right in this country, but a privilege.

What we have done in Bill C-21 is increase sentencing for violent crimes that use handguns. What we have done in Bill C-21 is reinforce our borders with additional funding in order to ensure that our security personnel can intercept gun traffickers and we can curb gun smuggling from the United States into Canada.

Government Orders

I would like to know why the Conservatives, if they are serious about tackling gun smuggling, are voting against Bill C-21.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary mentioned the tragic massacre at École Polytechnique, which is in her riding. She mentioned the work of PolyRemembers and that of Nathalie Provost, who was shot that day.

I do not know whether the parliamentary secretary is aware that, with Bill C-21, her government is breaking the promise that it made to PolyRemembers. PolyRemembers asked the government to ban assault weapons. With the passage of Bill C-21, 482 models of assault-style weapons will remain on the market in Canada. That includes the WK180-C, a semi-automatic weapon that works exactly the same way as the AR-15, which has already been banned.

I do not know whether my colleague is aware that, since 2015, all her government has done is disappoint PolyRemembers.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Speaker, I thank my Bloc Québécois colleague for the work that she did on the committee responsible for this bill. The committee worked hard so that the House could debate Bill C-21.

As she is well aware, I work very closely with PolyRemembers. I know that it is important to PolyRemembers that we provide a definition of assault weapons. What we are doing in Bill C-21 is a first step in that direction. There will be a definition in the bill. We also set up an advisory committee to analyze the 482 models of assault weapons that my colleague referred to.

I would also like to say that our work is not finished. It has only just begun.

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask my colleague about other sport shooting disciplines. She may be aware that her Liberal colleague from the riding of Kings—Hants gave a very passionate defence at committee for including organizations like the International Practical Shooting Confederation. Other countries that have handgun bans have allowed members to train for this. Even the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has asked for law-abiding handgun owners to be able to practise their sport.

Why have the Liberals been so steadfastly against this when other countries have set examples? The members of her own caucus are arguing for it, as is the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.

• (2105)

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Speaker, I must admit I have been deeply disappointed in the position the NDP, the supposed progressive party, has taken on gun control in this country.

I understand that my colleague would like to have seen an exception for IPSC, which is a sport shooters association. The reality is that the president of IPSC indicated that he would very much welcome an exception because it would allow his members to essentially purchase handguns despite the handgun freeze in effect in this

country, thereby creating a huge loophole in the bill that is before us. I am glad that—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Nater): Resuming debate, the hon. chief opposition whip.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Beauce.

The Liberals are on a mission to ban hunting rifles in Canada. Tonight, we are debating Bill C-21, legislation that is designed to ban firearms used by law-abiding hunters and farmers. When discussing this bill on TV, the Prime Minister said, “we’re going to have to take [guns] away from people who were using them to hunt.”

That is why, at the public safety committee, the Liberals tried to slip in amendments that would have banned several common hunting rifles, including the SKS, the Ruger No. 1, the Mossberg 702 Plinkster tactical 22, the Westley Richards Model 1897 and many slow-to-fire hunting firearms designed to shoot birds or skeet.

After public backlash from rural communities across the country, and in the face of fierce opposition from the Conservatives, the Minister of Public Safety retreated in defeat. However, the Prime Minister is still hunting for a way to take away legal firearms from law-abiding Canadians. Since his plan A failed, he has moved to plan B.

He is now setting up an advisory committee to make further recommendations on gun control, and he has given himself the power to ban firearms by an order in council. Members can be sure that he will appoint activists to the advisory committee who will tell him what he wants to hear. He will then hide behind their advice and unilaterally ban hunting rifles without any further debate or votes in this House of Commons. Conservatives oppose giving the Prime Minister this power; we do not trust him to leave law-abiding firearms owners alone. After all, he already admitted his true agenda, which is to take away their hunting rifles.

The NDP members are putting their faith in the Liberal Prime Minister, as they always do. They will vote in favour of this secretive, undemocratic process, wherein the Prime Minister can once again attack rural Canada. The NDP once championed the rural way of life, but it has become a party that takes its marching orders from special interest groups and, frankly, woke, big city mayors. The NDP has forgotten about the rich hunting tradition in rural communities, a tradition that is as old as the land itself. Traditions have been passed down from generation to generation. Many families rely on wild game to fill their freezers and to feed their families. For them, hunting is a way of life.

When I was young, my family lived on beautiful Vancouver Island. I fondly remember friends and family celebrating their successful hunts. Recently, I travelled back to the island, where I spoke with a man named Frank. He is a small business owner struggling to make ends meet under crippling inflation, which is at a 40-year high. Given the high cost of food, driven up by the carbon tax, Frank cannot afford to buy meat at his local grocery store. Hunting with his legally owned firearm allows him to provide meat for his growing family of five. Frank is a law-abiding, hard-working and proud Canadian whose way of life is under threat from Bill C-21.

Frank is not alone. His story is like the stories of many others on Vancouver Island and in every region of the country. The rural NDP members have completely abandoned people like Frank. The voting record will show that NDP members from rural British Columbia have turned their backs on their own constituents.

This includes the member for Courtenay—Alberni, the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith, the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay and the member for North Island—Powell River. These NDP members do not have the backs of their constituents when they are thousands of miles away from home in the House of Commons.

In particular, I am disappointed with the whip of the NDP, the member for North Island—Powell River. She had the NDP member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford removed from the public safety committee in the middle of its consideration of the bill. She silenced him because he raised concerns about the bill. She replaced him with an urban, anti-hunting member, the NDP House leader, for fear that they might upset their big city base.

She should know that the data and evidence are clear in that licensed firearm owners are far less likely to commit a crime than the average citizen. That is why the Liberal-NDP coalition should leave law-abiding firearms owners alone and target the real perpetrators of gun crime.

● (2110)

What I find particularly egregious is that the Liberal-NDP coalition did the opposite by eliminating mandatory prison time for serious gun crimes, including robbery or extortion with a firearm, weapons trafficking, discharging a firearm with intent, using a firearm in commission of a crime and reckless discharge of a firearm. It is letting drive-by shooters and gun runners back into our communities sooner while targeting law-abiding hunters and sport shooters.

It also broke the bail system by legislating a catch-and-release program that has led to a 32% increase in violent crimes. As a result, B.C. cities, including my home of Surrey, are facing an onslaught of violent crime. University Magazine identified Surrey as having the highest crime rate in Canada. The decent, hard-working families who choose to live and work in Surrey just want a safe community to raise their families and live in peace. Under the soft-on-crime Liberal government, they are forced to live in a community where criminals are emboldened. This approach is not working in Surrey on anywhere in British Columbia.

Government Orders

We all remember the tragic murder of Constable Shaelyn Yang; while on duty, she was stabbed to death by a man who had previously been arrested for assault. He was released on condition that he would appear in court, which is something that, surprisingly, he failed to do. A warrant was issued for his rearrest, but when found living in a tent in Burnaby Park, he took the life of Constable Yang by stabbing her to death. Sadly, she is just one of 10 police officers killed in the line of duty this year.

In another case, a tourist was stabbed multiple times in the back while waiting in line at a Tim Hortons in Vancouver. His assailant was the subject of a Canada-wide warrant for failing to follow conditions of his release. In Vancouver, 40 offenders accounted for 6,000 arrests in one year. That is an average of 150 arrests each.

Unfortunately, the breakdown of public safety extends far beyond B.C. We all watched with horror last summer after the mass killing on James Smith Cree Nation happened in Saskatchewan. The perpetrator had previously been charged with over 120 crimes, but that did not prevent him from taking 10 indigenous lives.

Following that senseless tragedy, the Leader of the Opposition stood in this House, pleading for change. He said, “The James Smith Cree Nation was not only the victim of a violent criminal, but also the victim of a broken criminal justice system.” He went on to say:

A system that allows a violent criminal to reoffend over and over again with impunity does not deserve to be called a justice system. Leaving victims vulnerable to repeat attacks by a violent felon is not criminal justice. It is criminal negligence.

As Conservatives, we believe that someone who makes one mistake should be given every opportunity to build a productive life for themselves. However, the justice system cannot allow dangerous, violent repeat offenders to terrorize our streets. I will vote against Bill C-21, because it would do nothing to take illegal guns off our streets.

Canada needs a Conservative government that will target gun smuggling and end easy access to bail for repeat violent offenders. Only Conservatives will bring home common sense to public safety that targets criminals, not law-abiding Canadians. We will be a government that respects and protects law-abiding hunters, farmers and sport shooters. Why will we do this? We will do it because it is their home, my home and our home. We will use common sense to bring it home.

Government Orders

• (2115)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but I think my Conservative Party colleagues are taking intellectual shortcuts.

They say that Bill C-21 is the biggest ban on hunting rifles in Canadian history. They know full well that that is not true. They say that once Bill C-21, which does not affect hunting rifles, is passed, the minister is obviously going to issue an order in council banning hunting rifles. According to the Conservatives, this means that the government is going after hunters. That is not at all what is happening.

I want to know how my colleague can see into the future.

[*English*]

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I frankly resent the personal remarks of that member. I am a lawyer by background, and honour, ethics and integrity are important to me, as they are to the rest of my Conservative colleagues. I am not misinforming this House, and I am not stating falsehoods.

I am telling the truth about what Bill C-21 would do and what this advisory committee would probably do. One just needs to look at the earlier announcements, which ban such rifles as the Winchester model 100, Winchester 1910, Sauer 303, Ruger Deerfield Carbine and Remington 740. I could go on. Clearly they want to do by order in council what they did not want to do openly in this House.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that was, frankly speaking, an embarrassing speech.

First of all, the firearms advisory committee is a body that already exists. It is separate and apart from Bill C-21. Furthermore, the hon. colleague knows that the power to reclassify firearms already exists under the Criminal Code.

I am willing to bet that if I challenge that member to name one rifle or shotgun that is going to be prohibited by Bill C-21, she would be unable to do so. I am going to sit down now and give her the opportunity to do just that.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Mr. Speaker, the whole point of a committee that allows the Prime Minister the power to make further regulations, without coming back and debating them through legislation in this House, is what we are talking about.

The Liberals have already indicated the types of firearms that they were targeting before. I just listed several of them. There is no indication that they will not target them again. They have just given themselves an easier pathway to do it, by order in council.

Order in council is done at the cabinet table or in the Prime Minister's Office. There is no need to come back to this House for consultation.

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the hon. member's speech, she actually said that the penalties would decrease for gun runners. She referred to them as traffickers or smugglers. However, it was clear in the proposed legislation that the maximum penalty would be extended from 10 years to 14 years.

Could the hon. member clarify that point?

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Mr. Speaker, I love this question, because I am a lawyer, and I used to be the parliamentary secretary for justice. I know the difference between a minimum mandatory sentence and a maximum mandatory sentence. Maximum mandatory sentences are virtually meaningless, other than meaning that justice could not go further.

The whole point here is that the Liberals have taken a series of dangerous, violent crimes, with firearms, and lessened the penalties for them. It is clear. It is on the record. If the member was listening, I listed them in my speech.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate the speech that the opposition whip gave, which articulated some of the really important context that highlights some of the debate.

It is clear that the Liberals, in the work they did in committee, wanted to go further. In fact, there were members of the committee who said that. This legislation gives them the authority to go further with a secretive process that would likely, in the Prime Minister's own words, target law-abiding firearms owners.

My question for the opposition whip is this: Is that secretive process the best way to increase public safety, or would it actually be putting the real criminals behind bars?

• (2120)

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Mr. Speaker, of course the answer to that is no.

Orders in council are done for the convenience of the Prime Minister and his cabinet. They are not done to have a transparent or open process. They are not done to subject what is being done or changed to debate and discussion.

When this bill was originally tabled, there was so much backlash that the Liberals had to pull it all back and find another way to do what they wanted to do. There was opposition from constituents, Canadians right across the country, from coast to coast to coast, and from the Conservatives. The current way is now less transparent than what we had before.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will try to measure up to my colleague. It is not easy to speak after the official opposition whip. She gave a wonderful speech and did a great job of illustrating the challenges we face.

Today, I am speaking to Bill C-21, this government's flawed gun bill. Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the hard work my colleague from Kildonan—St. Paul has done on this file, as well as the work put in by all of my colleagues on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

Government Orders

Since the bill was introduced in the House, the Liberal Party has changed direction so often that it is difficult to keep up. The Liberals' inordinate attacks on the Canadian people have not gone unnoticed. The Liberals have shown their true colours to Canadians. Instead of cracking down on illegal guns and gang members, this government has introduced legislation targeting hunters, farmers and indigenous communities.

As usual, the Liberal government is completely out of touch with rural Canada, widening the all-too-real divide in our country. No one believes that going after hunters will reduce violent crime across the country. This is part of the Liberal plan to divide Canadians.

As Conservatives, we support common-sense gun policies that prevent guns from falling into the hands of dangerous criminals. The most important thing we can do is to crack down on smugglers at the borders and prevent illegal weapons from getting into Canada and falling into the hands of criminals and gang members.

I have had the opportunity to talk with many citizens in my riding about this bill. I talked to Mr. Vachon from Saint-Georges, who served in the army for 14 years and who is very worried about the impact this bill will have on him and his ability to hunt and sport shoot. He is an advocate for the safe use of firearms and understands very well that those who commit crimes with illegal firearms will not be concerned at all about this bill. The only people who are worried about it are law-abiding hunters and sport shooters.

I also talked to Mr. Deschênes from Sainte-Marie, who is extremely concerned about the impact this bill will have on shooting clubs in the region. They may have to close their doors in the future. He is a federal agent and needs to regularly train at these shooting ranges to keep up his skills and keep himself safe. He emphasized the importance of these shooting ranges for public safety because many police services use them to perfect their skills and maintain their accreditation, and they also educate other Canadians about gun safety.

Finally, Ms. Turcotte from Beauceville contacted my office just last week to express her dissatisfaction with amendments G-4 and G-46. These amendments were completely inappropriate and were subsequently withdrawn. However, hunters still worry about what the Liberal government will do next. How far is it prepared to go? Will it amend the same bill once it comes into force, introduce those amendments and shut down debate again?

In my riding, countless farmers also contacted me for fear that they would no longer be able to protect their livestock, which is their livelihood. The problem with this government is that it has a strange way of sending messages. It claims to have discussed this bill with stakeholders, but when the text of the bill and the amendments were published, many groups, such as hunters, indigenous groups and professional sport shooters were taken completely by surprise.

A member of the Alberta Mounted Shooters Association said that they are a very safety-conscious group. She added that before they can become mounted shooters, they must complete training, testing and background checks to obtain their restricted gun licences. They want more Canadians to practice their sport. They

want to grow and develop skilled target shooters and equestrians. They also want the ability to continue the legacy for our youth and produce more world champions.

● (2125)

At the rate this bill is going, I do not know if there will be any sport shooters left when this is all over. New athletes will have so many regulatory hurdles to overcome that any shooting discipline outside of the Olympics will be eradicated. Even Canadian Olympians will be forced to spend countless hours obtaining the necessary licences to travel with their sporting equipment.

This lack of comprehensive consultation has not just affected hunters and sport shooters; it has also affected the most important segment of the Canadian population, indigenous communities. As Chief Jessica Lazare of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake put it, the lack of thorough and comprehensive consultation with indigenous communities is demonstrated by the incoherence and inconsistency of the proposed legislation, the amendments and the lack of recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples.

This is further proof of the complete ignorance shown by this government and the Minister of Public Safety.

Let us talk about how the Prime Minister continues to fail Canadians when it comes to public safety. With bills like C-5, the government is making our country less safe. Bill C-5 removes mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes. How backwards can this government be?

For people who are guilty of armed robbery or firearms trafficking or who recklessly discharge a weapon, it is easier to get away with it thanks to the Prime Minister's soft on crime approach. This government has made things twice as bad with Bill C-75. The Prime Minister's bail policy has triggered a wave of violent crime in our country.

Our communities feel less safe, and the Liberal government is responsible for making the situation worse. A common-sense Conservative government will ensure that violent reoffenders stay behind bars while awaiting trial, and it will bring back the mandatory sentences for serious violent crimes that were cut by this government.

The bail reform measures that were announced this week are reactive and respond to weeks of news about the dramatic increase in violent crime in this country. Why does the government always have to play catch-up? It is incapable of getting ahead on anything. A Conservative government will ensure Canadians' safety and introduce bills that will truly keep Canadians safe.

Government Orders

Does the government realize that illegal guns are used in 99% of gun crimes? More than 85% of those guns are smuggled in from the United States. Why are they not allocating more resources at the borders to prevent these firearms from entering?

In my riding, there are two border crossings that do not even have CBSA officers. Truckers coming into Canada simply pick up the phone and call the nearest border service officer to open the gate and the shipments come into Canada without any screening. I am sure this may surprise some members of the House, but it shows just how low a priority border security is for the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety.

In conclusion, I think everyone in this House wants to make Canada a safer place to live, but Bill C-21 was never the right way to go about it. This bill was flawed from the start, and the government has completely missed the mark.

I also think the NDP has a lot to do with this failure, as the New Democrats continue to support the government in this process. However, many of the NDP members are from rural ridings. I hope their constituents have been watching them all this time and will remember this failure. Conservatives will always be there to keep Canadians safe and to protect law-abiding gun owners, whether they are hunters, farmers, sport shooters or indigenous people.

● (2130)

We will always protect their right to own and use firearms safely and lawfully. We will ensure that violent criminals and smugglers are prosecuted, instead of our law-abiding neighbours and farmers.

[*English*]

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member the same question that I have asked other members here tonight: Can the member opposite name one shotgun or rifle that is currently used by hunters and farmers in their regular hunting activities that this bill would actually ban?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Madam Speaker, these guns used by hunters were in an initial amendment that was later withdrawn. What guarantee do we have that this government, which is known for breaking its promises, will not bring them back and submit them to the committee established and created by the government and whose members are appointed by the government?

I believe that the answer is obvious.

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, since the beginning of this debate, the Conservatives have been saying that Bill C-21 will either ban hunting rifles or that it will allow the Prime Minister to ban hunting rifles.

It would be one or the other in the best of all possible worlds. The truth is, it is neither.

I would still like to hear my colleague's thoughts on the second part. If I understand the Conservatives' argument correctly, until Bill C-21 is passed, it is impossible to ban guns by order in council.

I would like him to explain how the government managed to ban guns by order in council before Bill C-21.

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Madam Speaker, my colleague asked an excellent question.

I will send it back to her because I just told my colleague opposite that there is a committee in place that could later decide to take everything that was in the absurd amendment G-4 and put it back in.

I do not know how my Bloc Québécois colleagues can trust the current government, but I for one cannot.

[*English*]

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, for a party that touts contemporary messages to its constituents, I am surprised by the outdated messaging that this member has shared during his intervention in talking about the G-4 and G-46 amendments, which have been removed.

I would ask the member if he realizes that there are updated amendments regarding indigenous peoples' rights in Bill C-21. How does he plan to educate his constituents, whether they are indigenous or not, on section 35 and how that has been incorporated in Bill C-21?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Madam Speaker, I think that we are going around in circles with this question. Yes, targeted firearms could be used by members of indigenous peoples, hunters or farmers, especially in my region.

I understand that people are concerned, and they have questioned me many times about this issue in the past few weeks. We cannot blame them for being afraid that, in the end, the firearms that were included in a previous amendment and were removed could be put back in. What is to stop the current government from banning them again once the law is in effect?

I find it difficult to understand why my NDP colleagues always blindly support a government that has the impertinence to often change its mind. What is to stop it from changing its mind again?

● (2135)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will do pick up where the last question was posed to the member, because I think it is an important question. I cannot help but notice that, whether they are a Liberal, a Bloc member a New Democrat or, at times, a member of the Green Party, members pose a very simple question asking the Conservative Party to justify what it is actually saying in the House. If we listen very closely, we will find that the Conservative Party does not have a legitimate answer to the question.

Government Orders

What the Conservatives do is skirt around the question, and as we witnessed with one member, but they are not the only member. They will put on that whole conspiracy theory mentality, saying that if this happens, then that will happen and that will happen, and something could happen. That is all they need to do, as it has been explained adequately for anyone to truly understand that there is nothing within the legislation that would be an attack on our hunters, our farmers or indigenous people and the rights they have. That is the reality, and that is why the Conservative Party is having a very difficult time answering some of those simple questions, such as naming one shotgun or rifle that would be banned through this legislation.

It is a very simple answer. The answer is zero, but the problem is that the speaking notes the Conservatives have been provided do not allow for them to say that. Why is that?

I had the opportunity to ask a question about the motivating factor for the Conservative Party on Bill C-21. My colleague gave the answer when he talked about the golden egg. This is one of those issues the Conservative Party loves, because the government and other opposition parties have an objective in passing Bill C-21, an objective that is very simple and straightforward. It is all about public safety. That is what I have consistently heard from the Bloc, the Green Party, the NDP and Liberals. That is the motivating factor.

What is the motivating factor for the Conservative Party? It has nothing to do with the safety of our communities. It has everything to do with the dollars over the years. If I could pose a question and knew I would get an actual answer, the question I would be asking is "How much money has the Conservative Party raised on the issue of guns?"

I have been involved in this debate since 1991, both at the provincial legislature and here in the House of Commons. The far right of the Conservative Party stems from the Reform Party, but they are not to be confused, because I think the current leader has even taken the Conservatives further to the right than Stockwell Day. What we see is that on this particular issue, we are talking about millions of dollars over the years. It has been a cash cow for the Conservative Party, and that is really what is driving it to take the position it has today.

The Conservatives are not going to trade that off, and that is why it does not matter how many questions they are asked or how they are challenged on what they are saying. They are not changing. We can look at social media.

● (2140)

The Conservative Party will tell anyone who wants to listen to them, but specifically to someone in their targeted groups of farmers, hunters or indigenous people, to watch out as the federal government, the Liberals, Bloc and NDP are after people's rifles and shotguns. They are going to take them away from people. That is the type of message it is trying to portray. No need to read between the lines. Conservatives are trying to get farmers to think that we are going to take what are often very important tools used on a farm. For many community members it is a way of life to go out and enjoy them as a sport or for hunting purposes. Those are all legitimate.

This is not an attack on law-abiding hunters but, listening to the speeches being given by the other side, one would think that this is an assault on farmers, hunters and indigenous people. Nothing could be further from the truth.

To get a sense of why, we do not have to look far. There was an article that I believe appeared in the Free Press. It was written by Blake Brown with a headline of "MCC report calls for stricter gun laws". It reads:

The final report of the Mass Casualty Commission investigating the April 2020 mass shooting in Nova Scotia that left 22 people dead makes several recommendations to meaningfully change Canada's gun laws.

Before I go on we need to recognize that the Conservatives can take shots at the Liberals, Bloc, NDP and Greens, but they cannot easily push aside this particular commission. The makeup of the commission itself is significant because the commission is a non-partisan body. The chair of the commission, Michael MacDonald, is a retired Nova Scotia chief justice. The other commissioners are Leanne J. Fitch, who served for seven years as the chief of police for the Fredericton Police Force, and Dr. Kim Stanton, a lawyer and legal scholar. The headline of "MCC report calls for stricter gun laws" says it all.

I highlighted another section because when thinking about it, we should also think of this specific issue. It reads:

The commission also determined that the safety of women survivors of intimate-partner violence is "put at risk by the presence of firearms and ammunition in the household."

I have heard members from the Conservative Party in essence say that every aspect of this bill is useless. Even when they were asked by some members if there is any part of the legislation that they like or support, the response has been "no". There are things within this legislation that I would think that even the Conservative Party would recognize have value to our community. Instead, it is a blanket "no". I find that somewhat disingenuous and not reflective of the expectations that Canadians have of all parliamentarians from all political parties.

We need to see some more moderates coming from the Conservative Party. We need to see some more progressive members of the Conservative Party that existed many years ago take a look at this as an issue that Canadians are concerned about coast to coast. One member stood up to say *x* number of people made a submission and a majority of those people said that this is bad, bad, bad.

● (2145)

A Leger poll was conducted that talked about the general direction that this government and parliamentarians, I would suggest, are taking on the issue of gun control. Eighty-four per cent of Canadians said that we are on the right track in pursuing gun control reforms. That was through a Leger poll, not a Liberal poll. Whether it is through budgetary measures or legislative measures, Canadians will find that the things that we bring to the floor of the House of Commons are a reflection of what we believe Canadians expect us to do. That is what Bill C-21 is. It is a reflection of what a vast majority of Canadians support. I would ultimately argue that even Progressive Conservatives would support it.

Government Orders

One can go to the history of the gun registry when it first came into being. We are not bringing in the gun registry. Some Conservatives now are going to go out there and say, “the parliamentary secretary said the gun registry”. We are not bringing in the gun registry, but the idea actually originated from the Conservative Party. I know many people might find that hard to believe, but do not confuse the Conservative Party of the past with the Conservative Party of today. That was under Kim Campbell and the word “progressive” was in front of it. It came from the Conservative senator and Kim Campbell was looking at implementing it, and then the Reform Party and everything else came into being.

At the end of the day, when one looks at the legislation, one sees that it is contrary to what the members of the Conservative right-wing caucus are talking about. It is not an attack on law-abiding gun owners. There is a deep respect for law-abiding gun owners from, I believe, all caucuses that sit in the chamber. The bill addresses issues that are of the utmost importance to Canadians when it comes to gun control and what we can do to respond to issues such as the commission report that I just referenced. By the way, the commission did an incredible job, given the circumstances and the recommendations that it has brought forward.

When the Conservative Party members say they do not like any of the bill, what are they actually saying? Is it ghost guns? I am sure the members opposite know what a ghost gun is. If they do not, they will find that in the last number of years it has become a major issue throughout Canada in some cities more than in others. If they talk to some local police agencies or do a Google news search I am sure they will find some articles on it. They will see it is a serious issue and it is a growing issue. This legislation, Bill C-21, would be used as a tool in good part to deal with ghost guns. It is not just members of the Liberal Party or any other party who are saying it. We are hearing it from law enforcement agencies and we are hearing it from other concerned citizens and many different stakeholders out there.

When members in the Conservative caucus stand up and speak and they are posed the question, “Is there anything good about the legislation”, I would like to think that, even though we know they are voting against the bill, they would recognize the value of the attempt to deal with ghost guns. That is a positive thing and one would think that the Conservatives would be supporting the stakeholders, including law enforcement officers who are looking for that to be incorporated into law.

We talk about getting tough on people who commit crimes using guns. Within this legislation, we would expand the maximum time served. I believe it is something like 10 to 14 years, or something like that, within the legislation.

• (2150)

Time and again, Conservatives say we have to get tough on crime and go where the guns are, where the problems are. Not only are we dealing with that from a legislative point of view, but also from a budgetary point of view, and it has been effective. We just need to take a look at the results.

Stephen Harper reduced the support for border control. It is true. This government restored and enhanced that support. Last year, 1,200 guns were confiscated at the border, in addition to thousands

of other weapons that were confiscated. I can assure members, because I have posed the question and no one has come forward to tell me I am wrong, that when Stephen Harper was in power, there was no year in which Conservatives even came close to what we did last year.

As a government, we can do more than one thing at a time: investing through budgetary measures to support law enforcement and border control agencies, which see tangible results, and bringing forward legislation. When Conservatives stand up and say that we should go after gun smuggling, we are doing that. The proof is in the pudding. I just mentioned the numbers. Let us contrast that to Stephen Harper. We are doing that. We did not need to be told by Conservatives to do that. The idea is that, as a government, we are taking a multi-faceted approach to ensuring there is a higher level of safety in our communities.

There was an investment of \$250 million to address the root cause of gang violence. Conservatives say that we should go after the gangs. Part of going after the gangs is that we have to provide financial resources to support our law enforcement, much like the investments we made in border control, where we saw results. Then Conservatives say we are spending too much and we need to make cuts. That is the contrast. We see that in question period, where we are constantly being criticized for providing the types of supports that really make a difference.

The Conservative Party asked about the airsoft guns. That concern has been dealt with. There are other issues, but airsoft guns have in fact been dealt with. We saw a high sense of co-operation at committee. New Democrats brought forward amendments that have improved the legislation. That is something we have been saying consistently as a government, that we bring forward legislation and are open to improving and strengthening it where we can, and we have seen that with Bill C-21. The airsoft gun issue, in good part, has been resolved and the industry will play a vital role going forward.

When members of the Conservative Party say there is nothing inside the legislation, I think they need to read it, as opposed to the Conservative spin they are being provided before they walk in here to give their comments, because there are a lot of good things in this legislation. It is legislation the Conservatives should be supporting. I would say they should put the safety and concerns of Canadians ahead of raising dollars for the Conservative Party.

• (2155)

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, I think the government and the member have selective memories, going back to old memories and short memories. The member never told Canadians which version of Bill C-21 we are talking about. That is the confusion that the Liberals created throughout the whole process with the back-and-forth on this bill.

Now they are questioning why Conservatives do not trust what they are putting in the bill. How can we trust them after this long journey of changing their minds back and forth: move this, present this, abandon those models, take out these models? No one can understand anymore what the government is doing due to its short memory.

Government Orders

Which version of Bill C-21 are we dealing with here? At least then we will know what the member is talking about.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am talking about the bill that we are going to be voting on. I would encourage the entire Conservative caucus to read the bill that we are voting on. Unfortunately, even though there is so much good in this legislation that would make our communities safer and respond to many of the needs, things that not only Canadians but law enforcement officers and other stakeholders want to see, that does not matter because the leader of the Conservative Party has already taken a position.

As I said, it is the cash cow for the Conservative Party and its members are spreading misinformation, trying to create an atmosphere in which people are confused. They are doing it intentionally. They are doing it so they can raise money. That is why I say that the motivation, whether it is for the Liberals, the NDP or the Bloc, is community safety, but not for the Conservatives. For them, it is about raising money for the next election.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to hear what my colleague from Winnipeg North has to say about this. Tonight, people in the House keep complaining that the Conservatives do not understand the bill. In fact, they understand it very well, but they are twisting it, saying that the government is going to ban hunters' guns. However, if the government had done the job properly from the start and consulted with hunting groups, rather than moving forward with a bad bill that banned hunting rifles, we might not be in this position.

Would my colleague agree that we would not be where we are tonight, or at least, not so far down this path, if the government had done its job properly from the start rather than leaving bogus arguments as low-hanging fruit for the Conservatives to take advantage of?

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, if we look at how the bill came to be, a great deal of consultation was done. As the Prime Minister has said in the past, at the end of the day, when the bill goes through the process in the chamber and goes to the standing committee, there is a reason why we have that process. It is so that if there are ways in which we can enhance and strengthen the bill, make it a more sound and better legislation, we should be doing that.

We can look at the number of opposition amendments that Liberals have supported over the years, even when we were in a majority government. That was often done. It was not done when Stephen Harper was prime minister. Could there have been more consultations? Whether in a provincial legislature or in the national legislature here in Ottawa, one can always do more consulting. There is no doubt about that. However, the homework was done on this particular bill. It is a great bill today and, as such, I expect that it will pass, despite the Conservatives' desire to filibuster and never see it pass.

• (2200)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to turn to the subject of other sport-

shooting disciplines. The NDP had an amendment at committee that would have expanded the exemption of the handgun freeze to other disciplines, like the International Practical Shooting Confederation. We actually had our hopes up, because the member's Liberal colleague, the member for Kings—Hants, gave a beautiful speech at committee in support of our amendment. Unfortunately, he decided not to vote for it and abstained when push came to shove, but I was glad to see some Liberals support it.

We also have support from the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, which believes that existing law-abiding handgun owners should be able to continue to practise their sport. There are other countries around the world that have banned handguns but still allow their citizens to practise and compete in the sport. I think a lot of Canadians would find this to be a reasonable exemption for people who are obviously very passionate about what they do, put a lot of hours into it and train excessively to be the best they can be.

Why does the member not agree with his colleague from Kings—Hants? Why do the Liberals remain so obstructive to what I think a lot of people would see as a reasonable amendment to this bill?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the standing committee did a fabulous job in being able to go through this entire process, make the changes and come up with the necessary votes to be able to bring it to the state that the legislation is today.

I believe a majority of the House will, in fact, ultimately pass that. We are going to find out tomorrow, but the expectation is that it will pass.

I suspect that the member might want to introduce his changes in a possible private member's bill if he has not already started that.

At the end of the day, I think this is good legislation as is, and hopefully we will get it passed.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier, a couple of us in the House asked questions of Conservative MPs, trying to see whether, in the bill, there was anything that restricted the use of firearms by hunters in Canada. They had trouble answering.

Can the MP be kind to us and to them and make it more clear as to whether, in the bill, there are actually things that are restricting the use of firearms by hunters?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and I share the same concern.

Others have actually posed that sort of question to members of the Conservative Party. They have been kind of dumbfounded, not knowing how to answer it, so they go right to the spin cycle that the Conservative Party says, and a part of that is "do not answer it".

The simple answer is: zero. There are no restrictions. As I say, this is not, in any way, an attempt to put restrictions on those law-abiding gun owners.

Government Orders

We are being very respectful of that and we will continue to do so.

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

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, it seems that the government members are looking for more information related to the firearms that Conservatives are concerned that the Liberals are seeking to ban, so I would seek unanimous consent from the House to table the amendment—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We cannot seek unanimous consent at this time.

The hon. member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened closely to my colleague's speech.

As he did in his speech about the Conservatives, I would like to talk to him about what the Liberals were doing several years ago. When the Liberals were the official opposition, some Liberal MPs swore up and down that they would never legalize drugs. The first thing they did in 2015 when they came to power was to legalize marijuana. The only thing stopping the Liberal government from legalizing hard drugs is the fact that they have a minority government.

Right now, Canadians are asking us to build their trust. They must trust the government on Bill C-21 and believe that this legislation will never affect the guns of honest Canadians. However, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance said about an hour ago, here in the House, that the bill provides all the necessary tools to move forward and do even more.

Does the statement made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance here in the House this evening mean that the Liberal government has a hidden agenda?

• (2205)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, there is no hidden agenda on the government's side. We are very much an accountable and transparent government.

It is interesting. The member wants to talk about one issue, and I can say that when I listen to the members talk across the way, they often talk about the bail issue.

We have Bill C-48 that has just been introduced. The Conservatives have a chance here. Bill C-48 is being exceptionally well received, virtually coast to coast to coast.

If they are genuinely concerned about bail reform, what they should be doing is saying, look, let us see if we can actually get this bill passed and out of second reading once it gets introduced, so that it can go to a standing committee.

One of the ways they can demonstrate, instead of all of the complaining and the unparliamentary word that I cannot use, instead of doing that, is to actually look at Bill C-48 and see if we can, once it is introduced for the second reading, get the support for it and send it to committee so that the committee will have all sorts of time then to be able to look at all of the wonderful things it is doing and seeing if maybe there are ways we can improve that.

I say Bill C-48 because the member went off this debate and this is how I would respond to it.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Banff—Airdrie.

I rise in strong opposition to Bill C-21, the latest ideological, evidence-free attack by the Liberals on law-abiding firearms owners.

Canada is facing a crime wave after eight years of this disastrous Liberal government. Violent crime is up 32%. Gang-related homicides have nearly doubled, up a staggering 94%. An unprecedented 10 police officers since September have been murdered in the line of duty. Random violent attacks on public transit and on the streets are now commonplace in cities right across Canada. More and more Canadians are feeling less safe in their communities, and that is because more communities that once were safe are no longer safe or are less safe now than when the Liberals took office.

By contrast to the staggering 32% increase in violent crime under the Liberals, under Prime Minister Harper's Conservatives, violent crime went down 33%. In fact, the Liberals have managed to do something that no government has done, which is to reverse a 30-year trend in which Canada, until the Liberals came to power, saw a downward spiral in crime. Now it is up 32%.

I say that because this violent crime wave did not happen in a vacuum, it did not happen by accident and it did not even happen as a result of inaction on the part of the Liberals. It happened as a result of very deliberate and very specific policies regarding Canada's criminal justice system embraced by the Liberals.

The Prime Minister has embraced, full stop, a series of virtue-signalling, woke criminal justice policies. These are policies that the Prime Minister has imported from the United States. They are disastrous policies that have been implemented south of the border by radical, left-wing, big-city mayors and district attorneys. They are policies that have resulted in large swaths of once great American cities, such as Chicago, San Francisco, Seattle and Portland, Oregon, turning into crime no-go zones. It is these American-style policies that the Prime Minister is importing to Canada.

Let us look at the disastrous record of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister, in 2018, was responsible for passing Bill C-75, which established catch-and-release bail. Thanks to the Prime Minister, a judge is now required to make it the primary consideration that an accused be released at the earliest opportunity with the least onerous conditions possible. This has resulted in a revolving door. It has meant that, in many instances, criminals are released back onto the streets and are out committing crimes the very same day they were arrested for the crimes they committed. That is catch-and-release Liberal bail.

Government Orders

Let us look at some of the statistics as a consequence.

In the city of Vancouver, 40 hard-core criminals are responsible for 6,000 arrests a year. That is 150 arrests per offender. Liberal catch-and-release bail has meant that a small number of hard-core criminals are overwhelmingly and disproportionately responsible for a significant number of criminal incidents.

• (2210)

In Edmonton, a community I am proud to represent in this place, a young mother, Carolann Robillard, and her 11-year-old daughter, Sara, are now dead thanks to Liberal catch-and-release bail. Carolann and Sara were brutally murdered, stabbed to death at a park, of all places, at an elementary school.

They were brutally stabbed to death by who? It was a total stranger who happen to be a hard-core violent criminal, who, thanks to Liberal catch-and-release, had been released on bail just 18 days prior. Who was this violent offender who stabbed to death an 11-year-old girl and her young mother outside an elementary school? He was someone who had a 14-year rap sheet of committing violent attacks.

He had been convicted multiple times of serious offences such as aggravated assault, assault with a weapon, multiple robberies and assaulting a correctional officer. Last year, he attacked a 12-year-old girl on an LRT in Edmonton. That is who was released thanks to Liberal catch-and-release bail. He never should have been released. He should have been kept behind bars. He never should have been on bail. It is outrageous that he was.

It is outrageous that the folks across the way can so sanctimoniously defend a series of policies that are indefensible. They are putting lives at risk and endangering public safety. How dare they.

It is not just catch and release. This is a government that, last year, passed Bill C-5, the fourth piece of legislation the government introduced in this Parliament. It is obviously a top priority for the government. What does Bill C-5 do? It significantly expands house arrest for some very serious offences, including sexual assault, kidnapping and human trafficking. In other words, criminals convicted of such offences will not have to spend a single day in jail.

What about firearms? We hear a lot about the Liberals' professed concern about firearms. It seems they are obsessed with firearms as objects, but they have not figured out that firearms do not commit crimes; criminals with firearms commit crimes. What have the Liberals done about criminals who go out and commit offences with guns? Bill C-5 actually eliminates mandatory jail time for serious gun crime, including robbery with a gun, using a firearm in the commission of an offence, discharging a firearm with the intent to injure and weapons trafficking. That is the approach of the Liberals.

It is a policy of the woke. It is a policy grounded in absurdity. Compounding that absurdity is Bill C-21, which is now before the House. It is a bill that does not take illegal firearms off the streets. It does not keep repeat offenders behind bars where they belong. Incredibly, it goes after law-abiding, licensed firearms owners, who are among the group of Canadians least likely to commit a crime.

Those are the people the Liberals are going after. It could not be more absurd. The government's set of priorities could not be more backwards.

• (2215)

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will ask the hon. member opposite the same question I have asked many times this evening during this debate.

The Conservatives keep saying that we will not allow people to use commonly used guns, whether it be hunters, farmers or whomever, and that these weapons would be banned forever and a day. Could the member list one legally used hunting rifle that would be banned by this bill?

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, what I will say to my friend, the member for Avalon, is that the Prime Minister said this in December: "there are some guns, yes, that we're going to have to take away from people who were using them to hunt." Those are the words of the Prime Minister. It is true that the Liberals, after considerable pressure, withdrew their table-dropped amendments, but they have established a firearms advisory committee that is going to be tasked with future bans, and the Prime Minister has signalled very clearly that hunters are a target of the government.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, after listening to my colleague, one would think that Bill C-21 is the worst bill that ever existed. I do not know whether he is aware that his fellow party members voted in favour of most of the amendments that were moved to improve this bill.

Take, for example, the ghost gun and yellow flag measures that help women who are victims of domestic violence. Even his colleague from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound moved an extremely important amendment to allow gun owners to give their guns to someone else while they seek help for a mental health issue. Everyone was in favour of that amendment. The Conservatives also voted in favour of the Bloc Québécois's amendment to require people to have a licence to purchase cartridge magazines.

In short, the Conservative Party helped improve Bill C-21. Is my colleague aware of that?

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, it is true that the Conservatives supported certain amendments at committee. We helped improve a terrible bill to make it a slightly less terrible bill.

Government Orders

The member cites red flag laws. I note that section 117 of the Criminal Code already provides law enforcement with the authority to seize firearms when there is a safety issue, without a warrant. That aspect of the bill, really, is not an improvement, and it does not take away from the fact that the entire concept of the bill is misplaced. It targets law-abiding firearms owners, people who are not going out committing crimes. They are the targets of Bill C-21. The government should really be going after the gangs and criminals who are going out and committing crimes with guns.

• (2220)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague has been talking about going after crimes. I would like to hear his opinion on a part of the bill that has been overshadowed by much of today's debate.

The National Association of Women and the Law contributed greatly to the committee hearings on this bill. It submitted a lot of amendments that really helped improve it. It has publicly stated that many of the provisions in Bill C-21 are going to help women in domestic violence situations by providing that a firearms licence must be revoked when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that someone may have engaged in family violence, by making sure there is a protection order and by making sure that somebody would be ineligible to hold a licence if they pose a threat or risk to the safety of another person.

I wonder if my hon. colleague can talk about that. This is a very well-respected organization that studied the bill and came up with great amendments, and it has publicly stated that these provisions are actually going to make lives safer.

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, some 20 women's organizations came before committee and said that the bill was problematic. Specifically, the so-called red flag provisions of the bill were problematic by virtue of the fact that section 117 of the Criminal Code already gives law enforcement the tools necessary to seize weapons when a woman is in danger.

What the Liberals are providing is that, instead of law enforcement doing its job, a woman in danger would now be required to go to court. Women's organizations have said this is burdensome, puts women at risk and does not do the job.

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Madam Speaker, here we go again. This reminds me of an old song I used to like to listen to in high school. Whitesnake was the band, and the lyrics are "Here I go again...down the only road I've ever known". This speaks to this bill. This is the Liberals. Here they go again, going down the only road they have ever known.

Violent crime in this country is up by a third since the Liberal Party took office. Murders have doubled and our border to the south is like a sieve, with black market handguns flowing through there every single day. What is the Liberal response to this? What is their big idea? What are they going to do to protect Canadians in the face of rising crime and in the face of porous borders with black market handguns flowing through on a daily basis?

The Liberals' response is, again, "Here we go again. Let us just keep going down the only road we have ever known", but it is a nonsensical one. It is one we have, sadly, seen before, and we have

seen it too often from that same bunch over there. Their response to illegal guns coming in from the United States and getting into the hands of criminal gangs in cities of this country is to simply deprive millions of law-abiding Canadians of their right to own legal property, their hunting rifles. Here we go again, with the Liberals going down the only road they have ever known. In doing so, they are trying to deny and deflect from the fact that their real goal is actually to deprive hunters, farmers and indigenous people, anyone and everyone who legitimately owns firearms, of those firearms they have used legally and responsibly, often for much of their lives.

The Prime Minister already admitted that taking hunting rifles is his goal, when he said, during a CTV interview, "Our focus now is on saying okay...yes...we're going to have to take [some guns] away from people who were using them to hunt." That has been made pretty clear. The Liberals want to take away firearms that not only are part of our collective history in Canada but also are embedded in rural culture and in traditional ways of life in this country. They are so dishonest about their intentions that they try to do this under the guise of addressing an urban violence problem.

It defies common sense, actually, to believe banning legal firearms of licensed owners would somehow address a problem of illegal guns in the hands of criminals, but there we have it. That is the Liberal brainwave for public safety. It certainly would not bring about the outcomes they claim. They know this, and it galls them to think Canadians know it too. The government faced a massive public backlash from ordinary Canadians all across the political spectrum who saw its actions for what they are, which is the largest attack on hunters and duck hunters in Canadian history. Then they backpedalled and temporarily paused their attack. They were no doubt taken aback a bit by realizing their distaste for legal firearm owners and the legal activities they like to enjoy was not as widely shared as they thought.

However, the Liberals' endgame has always remained the same, and here we are with "new" amendments to Bill C-21. I, like most members, including, I am sure, most of the Liberals who are putting forward Bill C-21 in the first place, have been swamped with calls and letters from constituents pleading for common sense to prevail. They ask what sense it makes to pursue a so-called gun control strategy that relies on further penalizing some of the world's most regulated and restricted legal firearm owners, while at the same time turning a completely blind eye to the flood of smuggled illegal guns being used by criminals in the streets of our major cities. It is a great question that is central to the matter, and it is one the Liberals continually fail to answer.

Government Orders

• (2225)

That is why this issue continues to simmer, despite the government's best efforts to defuse it. It is because Canadians understand instinctively that the government proposals here make no sense, if the stated goal is actually to address crime. No one believes that going after hunters will reduce violent crime. I do not think even most Liberals truly believe it, but they pursue it anyway because it is a matter of ideology for them, rather than one of intellect. We have been dealing with this issue for years, but the Liberals are content to ignore the repeated common-sense arguments against their attempts to end legal gun ownership in Canada.

I have spoken on this many times, and I think, if I am telling the truth, there is not a whole lot I have left unsaid, so I thought I would spend a bit of time differently, to allow some of my very concerned constituents to have their own say on the matter here in the chamber. I think the Liberals need to hear it from these people first-hand. I am unfortunately under no illusion that the members of the Liberal Party will care about what law-abiding firearm owners have to say, but they are going to have to hear it anyway.

I received a letter recently from Joel in Rocky View County, in my riding of Banff—Airdrie, who quite rightly pointed out that granting the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security broad powers to address unlawfully manufactured, unserialized and untraceable firearms could inadvertently infringe upon the rights of responsible gun owners and impose unnecessary burdens on law-abiding citizens. Joel says that the amendments to the definition of prohibited firearms seem overly broad and lack clear criteria and could potentially lead to legal ambiguity and confusion, impacting the rights of legitimate firearms owners without effectively targeting criminal activity. He is exactly right. The bill would do nothing to impact criminal activity.

I got another letter, from Lars, who wrote to me from my hometown of Airdrie. He asks when this constant attack on legal firearm owners would stop. He asks what has been done in the meantime to strengthen our justice system or resources to our border to prevent the smuggling of illegal firearms. He notes that the Liberal government has been under scandal over and over again, yet it is telling Canadians what it takes to be safe. Lars says that this needs to stop. Those are more great points.

Justin, who resides in my riding, in Morley in the Stoney Nakoda Nations, points out the complaints many indigenous people have about the bill, and he talks about their frustration at trying to get the Prime Minister to respect their concerns. He asks me to please let the Prime Minister know that, as owners, they will never abide by measures that take away their personal property. He notes that there are many indigenous hunters on the reserve who depend on traditional hunting to support their families. He closes by saying that I can read his email in Parliament, and that he stands with all legal firearm owners, as they were never consulted.

There are so many more examples I could submit for the record, and they all have the same theme. This is probably not surprising, when we consider all the ways the Liberals have tried to make it so much easier for criminals to flourish. They have repealed mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes. They have made it easier to get bail. They have failed to stop the flow of illegal guns across the

U.S. border. Their catch-and-release policies for violent criminals and their lax attitudes toward secure borders are clearly not working.

The Liberals are trying to convince Canadians that, somehow, going after hunters and other legitimate firearms owners would reduce violent crime in this country. It is a nonsensical plan. It would have the effect of doing nothing to deter the real problem of illegal guns and the associated gun crime.

Instead of spending billions of taxpayer dollars to confiscate the legal property of law-abiding farmers, hunters and indigenous Canadians, we could see a common-sense firearms policy under a Conservative government that would keep guns out of the hands of dangerous criminals and leave alone those who legally possess guns and use them responsibly.

• (2230)

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, many times in the member opposite's speech and in many of his colleagues', they have stated that what needs to be done in order to tackle gun crime in this country is to bring in stiffer penalties and more measures at the border. I find it interesting that they all failed to state that Bill C-21 does that.

I want to know if the member agrees with increasing the maximum penalties from 10 to 14 years of imprisonment for firearms-related offences. That is a good measure in the bill. Do Conservatives not think that increasing penalties is a good measure?

Mr. Blake Richards: Madam Speaker, I suppose if the member wants to believe the talking points she has been handed to read in the House she would make that argument. What she is failing to understand is that we are not talking about a mandatory penalty or even a minimum penalty; we are talking about a maximum penalty.

Anyone who understands the criminal justice system knows that a maximum penalty means it cannot be more than that, but it certainly does nothing to penalize crime. There are a lot of measures that could be taken to deal with the gun crime we are seeing in our cities, but that one is laughable to say the least. The bill does zero at trying to address crime.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague talks a lot about doing more to address crime. I agree with him.

Government Orders

The only measure in Bill C-21 that the government proposed for countering firearms trafficking is to change the maximum sentences from 10 years to 14 years for anyone found guilty of firearms trafficking.

Although this is not a bad measure, the problem is that it is quite rare for someone to get the maximum sentence of 10 years these days. Why? It is because criminal organizations use people who do not have a criminal record to smuggle illegal firearms across the border. As a result, these people get lesser sentences. They rarely get the 10-year maximum.

Today, with Bill C-21, even if we increase the maximum sentence to 14 years, will that really have an impact? I do not think so. I think that my colleague may agree with me. Does he think that is enough?

• (2235)

Mr. Blake Richards: Madam Speaker, I completely agree with the member. That measure will not have an impact on crime in this country. This bill only affects gun owners who are not responsible for crimes.

[*English*]

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, although there was a lot of disinformation and misinformation in it, I thank the member for his intervention. I would have very much appreciated hearing about, with respect to Bill C-21, how hard my NDP colleagues are willing to work to protect the rights of people. I asked a different Conservative member about the outdated information Conservatives are sharing this evening in this debate.

I know Bill C-21, in its current state, has the best balance and offers many ways to ensure that the right of indigenous peoples to hunt is protected, and that hunters who are lawful gun owners are able to continue using their rifles. In this whole process, it has been Conservatives who have made a lot of mistakes, including trying to ensure there are no more exemptions for sport shooters.

I would like to ask the member what his read of Bill C-21 is with respect to what rifle is being banned that would not allow hunters to hunt or would not stopping criminals from using—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We are out of time. I have to give the hon. member for Banff—Airdrie a few seconds to answer.

Mr. Blake Richards: Madam Speaker, I am not really even sure what the member's question was, but I did hear her talk about there somehow being disinformation in what I had to say. I would challenge her to stand up to give an example of one piece of disinformation she heard.

However, I can say what is disinformation. Every time the NDP members in the House stand up and call themselves an opposition party, that is disinformation. What we are seeing is a—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle has the floor.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to mention that I will be sharing my

time with my hon. colleague, the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

I rise today to speak to Bill C-21, an act to amend certain acts and to make certain consequential amendments with respect to firearms. To begin, I would like to say that, as everyone knows, I will be voting in favour of Bill C-21. The reason is that, thanks to the efforts of the Bloc Québécois at committee, most of the criticisms have been addressed.

Today, we have a bill that is far from perfect. The government rejected our proposals, which were very reasonable. However, let me say that Bill C-21 is better than it used to be. Let us remember that the bill was introduced to attack the black market for firearms in Canadian cities. Instead, the government attacked hunters.

In Laurentides—Labelle, outfitters, nature reserves, controlled harvesting zones and hunting cabins are an integral part of our regional identity. Hunting is a major activity. It is important to protect it and keep it alive. That is why I am pleased to say that it is thanks to the Bloc Québécois that hunters will be able to continue practising their sport in Laurentides—Labelle.

I want to acknowledge the hard work of my colleague, the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, who is here beside me. I want to congratulate her on a job well done. It must have taken her so many hours, emails and studies to go from layperson to subject matter expert. She deserves so much credit.

What happened is that, together, we convinced the government to withdraw its amendments and remove the reference to hunting rifles. I am going to address hunters, but before I do, I want to mention that the government tabled 400 pages of amendments without any explanation. There were thousands of models of firearms listed in those pages. The government was disorganized, to be frank. This made hunters angry. That is an unacceptable way to work.

In its bill, which is intended to curb gun crime in cities, the government had used some strange definitions, to say the least. It referred to hunting rifles when they were not the problem. It is easy to imagine how angry hunters were when they saw that they were being treated like criminals. Moreover, the government did not consult them. We need to go after the gun runners and criminal groups first and foremost, not the people who drive down Highway 117 to the controlled harvesting zones to hunt.

Hunting rifles were never included in the bill. The government wanted to create confusion, and it worked. It took political pressure from the Bloc Québécois for the government to recognize its mistake and change the definition to make it clearer.

I want to say to the hunters, to everyone who contacted me, to the hundreds who have written to me, who have called me, who have stopped me in the street to express their concerns, that they are not criminals. They are not dangerous. The Bloc Québécois will always stand by their side. They have already seen that. I will be by their side to stand up for their sport, their strength and their honour. They know how to handle guns. They know how to protect their guns and, above all, how to respect their environment and all livestock.

• (2240)

I would like to tell them that they are not the problem. The government went after the wrong target and needs to acknowledge that.

I am pleased to be able to address the people of Laurentides—Labelle on this subject because there has been a lot of disinformation and manipulation of public opinion. I thank those who had the patience to listen to everything that was said. Today, we set the record straight. That is what happened.

I have said it before and I will say it again: When Bill C-21 was introduced, hunting rifles were not at all affected by the bill. That is still the case today after the study in committee. I want to reassure hunters because the Bloc Québécois worked really hard to ensure that hunting rifles would not be affected. I will say it again. Hunting rifles are not affected.

The Conservative Party is once again trying to lead people to believe that Bill C-21 is the biggest assault on hunters across the country. Unfortunately, I do not know whether they read the bill as amended by the committee. That is a good question. No hunting rifles will be banned with the passage of this bill. The new definition of prohibited firearms is prospective, which means it will only apply to weapons that do not even exist yet but will come on the market in the future.

I do not know why they keep scaring hunters with this. In fact, I wonder, are they doing this to get votes, regardless of the facts? That is another question, and it is unfortunate.

At the start of my speech, I talked about how important hunting is in Laurentides—Labelle. I am thinking about the Papineau-Labelle wildlife reserve, the Rouge-Matawin wildlife reserve and the Mazana controlled harvesting zone. I will name several. I am thinking about Mekoos, Jodoin, Cecaurel, Mitchinamecus, Fer à cheval. I have been to all of them, they are my playground. I could also mention the Air Mont-Laurier outfitters. People fly in to hunt and enjoy nature in the north.

I can assure everyone that Bill C-21 will not interfere with our activities.

As the member for Laurentides—Labelle, I will always stand up for my region, its economy, its environment and its development.

I have two riding neighbours on the Liberal benches. I want the people of Argenteuil—La Petite Nation and Pontiac to know that the Bloc Québécois understands rural issues. We support rural communities, and we recognize all the effort that goes into regional development. We always work toward maintaining the right balance between everything. We work for these people.

The Bloc Québécois has been very clear. We want to see fewer handguns on the streets of Montreal and Laval. We must make our streets safer. We must ensure that criminals do not have access to guns to shoot people in the street. This is why the Bloc Québécois is working so hard in committee and in the House to get the government back on track. We are the voice of reason between the sloppy Liberals and the hysterical Conservative.

In closing, I want to tell the people of Laurentides—Labelle that the Bloc Québécois is the party of the regions and of regional de-

Government Orders

velopment. It is the party that represents the voice of Quebeckers in the House of Commons. I will always work for the people in my community. That is why I am here.

• (2245)

[*English*]

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague mentioned in her speech the poor crafting of the original bill, the massive amounts of amendments introduced by the Liberals and then, of course, the work done by her colleagues, of which she is so proud. I am incredibly proud of the work my colleagues did to bring forward common-sense amendments to make the bill better.

Some of the Liberals in this place have stood today and accused Conservatives of a lot of the propaganda, disinformation and misinformation, which she also mentioned, for the purpose of fundraising. Does the member think the Liberals have used the bill in the same way and for many of the same purposes? Could she speak to how important it is to do that hard work to be an opposition party that works to propose solutions for legislation?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question.

With what is happening with the different parties, I believe that there is always more we can do.

The Bloc Québécois acts according to its conscience, intellect and solely in the interest of our people. I believe that answers the question that the opposition parties, especially the Bloc, which keeps the interests of Quebeckers in the forefront, are not being partisan or playing politics with this issue.

On one side or the other, there were good ideas at every stage in the past few weeks.

• (2250)

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, the member for Laurentides—Labelle had very thoughtful remarks on this bill. I have found over the course of the debate that there has been a lot of muddying of the waters, where Conservatives and people on social media are bringing up the firearms advisory committee, which I will state for the record is a body that already exists. They talk about how the government is going to use that body to strike out firearms. That is a power that the government already has under the Criminal Code.

I would like my colleague to reflect on that as part of the misinformation out there. A lot of people are trying to confuse those existing powers with those found in Bill C-21. Could the member clarify that those are in fact very separate elements?

Government Orders

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Madam Speaker, someone mentioned political strategy earlier. What I said earlier in my remarks was that this needs to be addressed, because it is serious. With my colleague leading the way, the Bloc Québécois has put pressure on the government to stop. People are being shot down in the street. At some point, the government needs to wake up and take action.

Yes, certain measures can be taken, but it is also important to have a clear conscience and carry out consultations in order to end up with a good bill, even if that does take a while. At the same time, this is one step, but it is far from complete.

That is why I said that the process was very messy right from the outset.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like my colleague to talk to us about the red flag provision that the government proposed in Bill C-21. I think she has heard me talk about it often. In the beginning, it looked like a good measure that would help women who are victims of domestic violence, but all of the women's groups that appeared before the committee told us that it would not help them. They were afraid that it would cause law enforcement to shirk its responsibilities and put the burden on victims.

The Bloc Québécois voted against these provisions in Bill C-21. The Conservative Party did too. However, the government and the NDP still went ahead with this measure.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about that. I am sure that she has women's groups in her riding that are disappointed that the government is moving forward with this measure.

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Madam Speaker, this is a very specific example of the importance of listening to our constituents and representing them. When we consult people, when we listen to them and understand them, then we need to act on what they say.

That is exactly what the Bloc Québécois did with the red flag provision.

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will begin my remarks by thanking the pages as we take part in an evening debate. I do not know if this is a first for Parliament, but I am speaking while wearing my cleats, which I have not taken off because tonight was the long-awaited soccer game between the House of Commons representatives, the Commanders, and the team of pages. I think there were over a hundred of them on the sidelines. I was surprised at how relentless they were. While they are great at bringing things to people in the House, they are also great at taking the ball away from us. Still, we won two to one, with a goal from Benoît Dupras, whom I want to commend. He is from Abitibi—Témiscamingue. He is a parliamentary intern and scored the winning goal. I wanted to mention that.

I rise today as a member who represents a rural riding to speak to Bill C-21 on gun control, and also to recognize the insights of the members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. I invite members to take the time to read the report entitled "A Path Forward: Reducing Gun and Gang Violence in Canada".

The first step in solving a problem is to understand it. That is what I do with my own files, including the issue of athletes who are victims of abuse and mistreatment. Sport is a cause for concern at this time, and the Bloc Québécois will continue to demand that the government adopt a holistic approach by launching a public inquiry to understand the systemic problems that helped maintain the culture of silence and the toxic culture.

That is why I am not at all surprised by the results achieved by my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, who was able to constantly seek a consensus. I thank her, because I am convinced that she did all the necessary work to achieve the result that we have before us. I tip my hat to her because it was a successful collaboration.

Developing effective public safety legislation is not limited to theory, but also requires close attention and a deep understanding of the problems underlying gun violence. It also requires, as I was saying a few minutes ago, a comprehensive approach and a careful analysis of the contributing factors to this complex reality.

Parliamentarians have understood and recognized that developing effective legislation cannot be done in a vacuum. It is essential to listen to and understand the diverse perspectives of stakeholders, including public safety experts, rights advocacy groups, law enforcement organizations and members of civil society. This inclusive step opens the door to gathering a variety of ideas and taking into account the concerns and experiences of all the players involved. One of the contributions of the Bloc Québécois is to ensure that these people, especially our hunting federations, are heard.

Communities affected by gun violence needed to be listened to first. It is important. Parliamentarians obtained valuable information on the local realities, the specific needs and the potential solutions. This helps create a global strategy that meets the unique challenges of each region while addressing the structural problems on a national level.

The Bloc Québécois worked hard to speak on behalf of and give a voice to those who are affected by gun violence and ineffective public safety policies. We have finally taken an important step.

The airsoft associations in my riding and across Quebec and Canada will be happy to hear that the political parties unanimously decided to remove the clause banning airsoft guns. That amendment was adopted, which means that airsoft associations can continue to practise their sport without any of the previous restrictions. Airsoft associations should be pleased about that decision, which will allow them to continue their activities in accordance with the new regulations.

When the folks from the airsoft associations contacted me, I also wondered about how these provisions would affect biathletes. From what I understand, the use of guns in a sport context is generally dealt with in a distinct set of regulations or protocols, so the acquisition, possession and use of guns in a biathlon context is dealt with separately from the firearms framework.

I am here for the hunters in my region, those at the other end of Highway 117. They expressed serious concerns following the hastily made announcement regarding the amendments proposed by the government in the fall of 2022. I was able to learn what a Rover and an AR-15 are.

• (2255)

Thanks to the Bloc's interventions, however, some problematic items were rectified. First, the infamous list, which was a source of confusion, has been removed. This was a list of firearms that were considered assault weapons. It created uncertainty. That is what had the worst impact on hunters. When this list was removed, a major source of their concern disappeared.

In addition, the specific reference to "hunting rifle" in the prospective definition of assault weapons was also removed. This reference could have led to confusion and unwarranted restrictions for hunters who legitimately use hunting rifles for their activities. Thanks to the efforts of the Bloc Québécois, this reference was removed, which addressed hunters' concerns. In particular, I want to acknowledge my friend Danny Lalancette, who brought this to my attention.

The Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs said it was satisfied with the changes made by the government following the Bloc's interventions. These adjustments corrected the initial gaps and ambiguities and thus ensured that hunters could continue their activities while complying with the new regulations, without unwarranted restrictions. I want to acknowledge the leadership they showed in committee.

Let us talk about the red flag and yellow flag system, which is included in the bill. Red flag measures allow any person to apply to a judge for an order to immediately remove firearms from an individual who may be a danger to themselves or others. These orders can also be used to remove firearms from an individual who may make them available to a person who poses a threat.

However, domestic violence victim advocacy groups are concerned about this measure and indicated that they would like to see it removed. These groups are concerned that it would relieve the police of their responsibility and put the burden of safety on victims. Despite the Bloc Québécois's opposition to this section, the NDP and the Liberal Party voted to retain it. I therefore call for greater vigilance at the slightest indication that this solution is losing its effectiveness.

Under the yellow flag measure, an individual's firearms licence could be temporarily suspended if information comes to light that calls into question their eligibility for that licence. This suspension would prevent the acquisition of new firearms, but would not allow the seizure of firearms already owned by the individual. However, these firearms could not be used, for example, at a shooting range during the suspension.

A new measure in this version of Bill C-21 is the immediate revocation of the firearms licence of any individual who becomes subject to a protection order or who has engaged in an act of domestic violence or stalking. This measure seeks to enhance safety by quickly taking firearms licences away from such individuals in

Government Orders

order to reduce the risk of gun violence in situations of domestic violence.

In closing, the drafting of this bill has once again proven how important it is to take a holistic approach and to have a sound understanding of the issues underlying gun violence. The legislative and regulatory review would not have had the same scope had the committee and my colleague not considered the social, economic and cultural factors that contribute to this problem.

It is clearly essential that we listen to and understand different perspectives and take into account local realities. Consultation with stakeholders, including public safety experts, advocacy groups, law enforcement agencies and members of civil society, is key to developing effective solutions separate from the passage of the bill. I am thinking about access to mental health care, crime prevention, education, support for victims and many other things.

By working together, a balanced approach can be achieved that protects communities while respecting the rights of individuals and supporting legitimate sporting activities. Developing firearms laws and regulations needs to be an ongoing process. It must be adaptive and inclusive in order to meet the changing needs of society and keep everyone safe.

In closing, I want to say that my thoughts go out to all the victims of gun violence. I am thinking in particular of the victims of Polytechnique and the PolyRemembers group, as well as the victims of the Quebec City mosque.

• (2300)

[*English*]

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague mentioned he is from a rural area in Quebec. I am from a rural area in Nova Scotia. We have a lot of individuals who competitively sport shoot with handguns. One of the things I have said on the record is that I hope the government can address, in regulatory measures in the days ahead, a pathway for competitive sport shooters. Right now the definition is Olympic shooters, which is relatively actually quite narrow in the country. It would exclude, I would presume, shooters in his riding and mine.

I am wondering if he has heard about that from IPSC or other members in his riding and what his response would be to that tonight.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, who I was expecting on the soccer pitch this evening, but who was not there. I hope he will be there next time, because we played together last year.

That said, I am pleased that he is addressing the subject of shooting clubs and sport shooting. I am a hunter. I have a hunting licence. It is a family activity that I wanted to do. In my case, it is more about having a glass of wine in the evening and spending time in the bush than being an experienced hunter, but I went through the process.

Government Orders

What is interesting is that I had never used a firearm. I was able to obtain my possession permit. I went through the process with the help of Pierre Auger, a retired police officer who looks after the shooting range in Rouyn-Noranda

I was pleased, although not surprised, to see the supervision provided at the shooting range. This practice is strictly controlled. It is very rigorous. There is training, and safety is very important.

Why are these places important? If people practice shooting in these places, then we would be able to identify people who might have suspicious behaviour. Maybe we should make it mandatory for people to spend time at these shooting ranges to reinforce the safety aspect. These places are essential in our communities, especially the rural ones.

If we think about other measures for improving the use of firearms or licensing, maybe guidance and education by peers at shooting ranges might be an approach worth exploring.

• (2305)

[English]

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will ask the member from the Bloc a question that I asked one of his colleagues during the discussion at committee.

As I heard from them, some of the initiatives the Liberal government is forwarding are similar to those that have already been implemented in Quebec. However, when I asked if there was data that supports the idea that any of these measures would result in a reduction of violent crime, specifically violent gun crime, I did not get an answer.

I would ask that simple question. Certainly, the evidence that I have heard from my constituents and from experts across the country is that this legislation will do nothing to address the real problem, which is criminals, who are not following the rules to begin with, and will target law-abiding firearms owners like hunters, farmers and sports shooters.

[Translation]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire: Madam Speaker, if people say that the Parti Québécois is the party of the regions, it has to do with interventions such as those. We are ensuring that hunters and farmers are not covered by this—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I just want to make a small aside about the name of the party mentioned. It is not the Parti Québécois. As far as I know, that party does not sit in the House. I just wanted to remind the hon. member of that.

Mr. Sébastien Lemire: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

One of the reasons we in the Bloc Québécois define ourselves as the party of the regions is because we had the ability to defend the interest of hunters and farmers when they needed it, and that includes having the infamous list removed.

To answer my colleague's question, there are certain initiatives happening in Quebec. When there are problematic situations, we make sure to take action through various pilot projects or other projects put forward in Quebec. I am repeating what I said earlier,

but there is real training that happens at shooting ranges to ensure that hunters understand the full scope of owning a gun. Perhaps such training should be expanded. People have to know how to use it the right way.

Maybe we should even make it a mandatory condition of gun ownership. If a person has been convicted of wrongdoing, the shooting clubs provide training to make sure that person will not do irreparable harm and that they understand the scope of owning a firearm.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as always, it is a privilege to be here tonight to debate Bill C-21 and the proposals to protect public safety and the rights and privileges of hunters and gun owners.

I would like to begin by mentioning that, as a member of Parliament, I represent a rural riding in Nova Scotia, Kings—Hants. There are many hunters and many people who own handguns and firearms in my riding.

[English]

It is part of our way of life. Every one of us who comes to the House does so bringing the voice and lived experiences of their constituents and, I would say, the experience of those in the communities they have the privilege of representing.

I want to start by saying that I do represent a rural riding. I have 20 minutes tonight, which is good. It is a privilege to be able to speak to this legislation for that length of time. I want to start with just a bit of a story.

My father taught me how to shoot a rifle and a shotgun. I would say it is almost a rite of passage in rural areas, although maybe a little less so now than it used to be. Guns are part of the culture in Canada, certainly the culture in rural communities. I do not actively shoot today. I have had lessons and the courses, but I do not actively hunt, and I do not actively shoot. However, I certainly respect those who do.

I can appreciate that, any time we have the conversation about public safety, gun control and legal gun owners, there can be a lot of tension. This is a challenging subject. It brings forward emotion. I have seen that at committee. I do not sit as a permanent member, but I did have the opportunity to sit in for a couple of hours last week. I have seen the debate here in the House, and how this is framed.

I hope to be able to give my perspective on the bill writ large, and maybe even, just broader, how we could tackle some of the challenges that we are seeing across the country. I want to start by saying that the issue of public safety is an important one in the country. We are seeing challenges with gun violence from Newfoundland and Labrador to British Columbia and everywhere in between. I have a statistic.

• (2310)

[*Translation*]

Gun violence has increased 81% since 2009.

[*English*]

It is not unlike other challenges. We cannot point to one single factor, as to why there might be that certain outcome, but it is certainly an issue that we have to tackle with a nuanced approach, with a lot of different mechanisms moving forward.

I look forward to talking about Bill C-21 and also some of the work that the government is doing to try to tackle what I think is a challenging problem. We are not the United States. I do not say that loosely. We are not seeing mass shootings every single day in the news. I just got back from Washington. I have to say that, when we turn on the news and look at the United States, sadly, it is happening almost every single day.

We should not make our policies in Canada on the basis of what is happening in the United States, but we should also not be naive to the fact that, traditionally, this country has been influenced by what happens in the continent. When we talk about border policy and gun control, part of that is about trying to actually stem the tide of illegal guns that come across the border.

The minister has spoken about the work the government is doing and the investments that have been made.

[*Translation*]

These investments are aimed at stopping illegal guns from entering Canada, because they pose a problem in our communities, in our provinces and across the country.

[*English*]

In what we have to focus on, we have to try to strike a balance between infringing on the individual privileges that exist in this country and understanding that we cannot completely stop every single act that may happen in the country. There are people who, for a variety reasons, may want to cause harm to our neighbours, our family, our friends or our countrymen. If we could take reasonable measures to try to stop the incidents of that, I think that would be appropriate.

Everyone in the House is going to have a different perspective on what that actually is, how far the limit should be. I heard some members in the House who think that the existing laws, even before Bill C-21 was proposed, might have been too stringent and that we did not need the ones that were already there, such as the order in council in 2020.

I know there are members of the House who would stand up here today and say they are completely against it. There are other members of the House who would probably like to see Bill C-21 be an even further measure, and there are some, perhaps, who are somewhere in between, so we all bring our perspectives to this conversation.

I am of the view that we already have very good, strong gun laws. I support the measures writ large that are in Bill C-21. I have certain concerns I will address in the time I have remaining. We do

Government Orders

have good gun laws and we do have good policy. If there are ways we can tweak it to move the yardstick as we see it here in Bill C-21, I do not see that as extremely problematic.

It is important to note that, with what is contained in Bill C-21, anyone who has been impacted by gun violence should not rest assured this bill alone would solve that. It is going to take a nuanced approach, as I said. We need to invest in the border, which the government is doing and is in the process of trying to tackle. The statistics I have before me show that CBSA has stopped more illegal guns than ever before from coming across the border, because of some of the enhanced measures that are there.

We need to invest in social programs. We are seeing some of the violence in our communities, particularly in urban centres, and some of this is driven by challenges around mental health. This is driven by addictions. It is driven by a lack of social programs for young people to have a place, mentorship and an ability to be part of something bigger. Trying to restrict guns will not solve that on its own.

The government has been very clear. Sometimes when we listen in the House, we would not know there is anything else going on because there is such a focus on this piece of legislation as opposed to on the broader work happening. I just want to highlight that this is going to be crucial in the days ahead. Those who go back to their community and talk about this legislation need to also talk about everything else that is happening in the context of solving the issue, because putting forward simplistic solutions to very nuanced problems is not going to get us very far.

• (2315)

[*Translation*]

Sadly, my riding, Kings—Hants, is where the worst mass murder in our country's history took place.

[*English*]

I remember well that day, three years ago. I woke up on a Sunday morning, and my wife brought to my attention that there was a shooter on the loose in Nova Scotia. It ended not too far down the road from me. Of all the members of Parliament in the House, and I do not wear it as a badge of honour and I do not wear it proudly, I have been able to see exactly the way in which gun violence has impacted communities in my riding in the most tragic way.

That brings me to the point of what Bill C-21 would actually do. There is a lot rhetoric. The word “misinformation” is getting used too much. There are a lot of overblown dynamics of what this bill would and would not do, so let me lay it out. This bill would establish a formal handgun freeze, in that one would not be able to import or buy a handgun unless one is an exempted individual under the legislation.

Government Orders

The bill would establish really important red flag laws. I want to recognize the member for Oakville North—Burlington. She has taken a considerable amount of abuse sitting on the public safety committee. She and I may not agree on exactly everything, but I am proud of the work she does. I texted her the other day when this bill made its way through committee. Notwithstanding a few of my concerns, I said that this would make a difference. I just want to go on the record and say that. Some of the red flag laws would be for intimate partner violence. There would be an ability for the RCMP to be aware of those individuals who could be red-flagged, and there could be a court process to revoke a gun licence until such time as we know it is safe for an individual to have one.

With respect to yellow-flag laws, as opposed to a court order, which is a higher threshold, the chief firearms officer already has a lot of discretion in the country. They would have the ability to revoke a licence and actually obtain the gun in a situation where it was demonstrably the case that they had to prevent an individual from harming either themselves or other people. Those are good things. In fact, Conservatives voted, I believe, for some of these measures. I have not heard all the speeches tonight. The Conservatives do not like to talk a lot about that, but there are some good measures for which there is undoubtedly a pretty good consensus in this House to move forward.

With respect to ghost guns, there was no criminal provision for someone who would take disparate parts and be able to build an actual gun that could cause harm. There would now be actual criminal provisions against ghost guns. Again, this is something that was approved across party lines, and I certainly commend that.

The legislation also walks back, as members will remember, the dreaded amendments. With respect to the amendments that the government sought to table, the intention was right. The application was wrong, in terms of what it would do. There was massive confusion. In fact, when I was back home in my riding just recently, I was still getting asked questions on what the government had tabled, back before Christmas. Thankfully, that process has been simplified. There is going to be a definition of a prohibited firearm, but it would only be on models moving forward.

Let me repeat that. I have listened, certainly tonight, to the Conservatives suggest that certain guns and hunting rifles would be banned. That is not the case. Any current model would not be touched by this prohibited firearm definition. That is extremely important, and it is not being recognized by the official opposition. I understand the members might have grievances and policy differences, but they should not frame this in a way that is not what is actually happening. That is extremely important.

The bill would also require firearms manufacturers to identify what the gun was actually designed for, moving forward. Therefore, either future models would have to conform to this definition or they would be prohibited in the country. That provides the certainty and clarity that gun manufacturers would like, and it would put an onus on them to identify that. Again, it is forward-looking. There is not one single aspect about a current long rifle in the market today. That is something that is not being stated enough here in this House.

The bill would establish a committee. I should say that this committee has already been established, as the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford rightly pointed out earlier in the debate. It would now be re-established to advise on the existing models on the market with respect to any that it might deem should be prohibited. I want to make it very clear, though, that this is not just a committee that would put a list together and say what is prohibited. There would still be ministerial discretion involved. That is important. Moving forward, members of Parliament could actually engage the minister once the committee re-establishes and identify models.

That was part of the problem with the amendments in the long list; there were a few hunting rifles that were included. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety made it very clear that this was not the intent, but that was how it applied. Therefore, I am glad that the government went back and recalibrated this to get it right.

I want to say one thing with respect to the advisory committee. It is a good process. I want to make sure that my advice is on the record; this is that the committee has to comprise individuals who are independent and individuals who know the technical specifications of firearms in this country. I know that there are strong advocates for gun control in this country who have been touched by violence. In my respectful view, that is not the place where these individuals should be. It should also not be the place of special interest groups that want to drive the gun lobby. To the extent that the government is able, I would suggest that it should try to find individuals who are not actually driven by one ideological preference or another but can provide technical advice to the minister and allow the minister to have discretion. That, to me, is absolutely key. There have been challenges with the firearms advisory committee in the past, including groups resigning because of the contentiousness of putting disparate groups together. This has to be an independent process.

• (2320)

We all come to the table with our certain biases, but again, it is going to be extremely important for those who are named to that advisory committee to be able to provide that recommendation based on policy evidence and not on emotion on either side of this issue.

With the last five minutes, as I have here in my notes, let us cut through some of the Conservative BS. Now, I did not say the word, but I am sorry and will rephrase. Let us cut through some of the Conservative narrative. Hopefully that is okay. Hunting rifles are not being targeted. How many times have we stated that on hunting rifles?

Government Orders

I represent a riding where there are a lot of hunters, and I had a lot of people call me during the amendments. Again, I mentioned already in my speech the concern around the amendment process and the confusion it was causing. For example, we were telling people to look at the list to see if their gun was listed there and whether we were banning it. However, the way the actual legislation read at the time, and the amendments that were tabled, is that it would say “the following guns are banned or prohibited, except for” and then it would name about 15 pages worth of guns that were actually being exempted and not being prohibited. We would tell people, of course, to go the list, they would ctrl+f to find their gun, but they did not scroll up 15 pages to see that it was actually exempted, and there was a lot of confusion.

However, let me make it very clear that the Conservatives are not correct when they say that this bill is targeting hunting rifles in any which way. They have no right to say that. They can have frustration with handguns, thinking that maybe they should be completely open and legal, which is fine, just say that, but anything around the hunting rifles is a complete fallacy. The bill does not apply to current guns. We can get into the dynamic around the advisory committee. I just made very clear where I stand on that, and the importance of that committee having independence, but this legislation, outside of putting a freeze on handguns, does not apply to any long rifles whatsoever. That needs to be recognized by the official opposition. I hope that they are not going to drive a narrative out to their constituents that runs contrary to what this bill would actually do.

Members of the official opposition supported a number of elements in this bill. However, they seem not to recognize that the government is taking other initiatives above and beyond. I agree with them that this bill alone would not solve gun violence. We need measures at the border, we need to be able to enhance criminal penalties, as this government has done for those who are smuggling guns across the border, and we need to invest in social programs. Even that may not solve the issue completely, and so let us not have rose-coloured glasses coming into this situation. Again, Conservatives need to recognize that this government is doing more than just what is in this bill.

However, Conservatives may agree with certain elements of the bill, and they obviously voted in committee on a majority of it. The member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford might be able to weigh in on this as he was a member of that committee for a considerable amount of time. My understanding is that the Conservatives actually voted for quite a bit of what is in here, but we would not know that by the way they actually speak on the bill.

I have two minutes left, and let me say that the one concern, among others, such as the advisory committee and the importance of its independence, is sport shooting. I have a lot of sport shooters in my riding.

The former warden for the municipality of East Hants is a guy named Jim Smith, and we have had a number of conversations. He invited me to the IPSC national championship that took place near the Halifax Stanfield airport last year. I have seen them work and the way in which these individuals go about their craft, and how they represent their province, their country and their locality at shooting competitions. I explained at committee that I was concerned that this legislation did not have a provision for this.

The NDP did move an amendment for it, and I would have liked to have seen that adopted, but it was not. The Bloc had moved a motion about certification, saying that if there is an annual certification, high-competitive shooters would be exempted under the Shooting Federation of Canada. I think that definition, in a regulatory measure by this government, has to include an organization like IPSC, which is a federated body all around the world, and there are hundreds of countries. Countries like Australia have banned handguns, similar to what this government is doing, but it found a pathway to keep IPSC as an organization.

I will conclude by saying that we can appreciate that for individuals who go to shooting competitions internationally, if Air Canada loses their gun, there would be no recourse, which is one of the limitations of this bill. A lot of the bill I support, and I will sleep on it tonight, but this is something I wish the government had tackled.

• (2325)

I will continue to call for the government to address it in a regulatory measure in the days ahead because it is important to make sure, as the minister said, that we have a pathway to Olympic shooting. That should include organizations like IPSC, which are highly professional and regulated and have really important membership.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, Conservatives have been receiving a very large number of concerns from constituents, not just in our constituencies but from across the country. We have been responding to their concerns.

Can the hon. member opposite ever deny that there is a vast number of Canadians who are concerned, are worried and do not trust what the government is doing with Bill C-21?

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, there are certainly legal gun owners who have concerns. Any time we talk about a certain restriction on guns, some people may not like that policy. It may not be my hon. colleague opposite, but certainly his colleagues, because I have heard them, drive some of that narrative and that fear. Every time a Conservative stands and says the government is going after hunting rifles, people sitting at home who do not watch this place see a Facebook post or some type of graphic that goes out on social media. No wonder they are angry or scared. The opposition drives a narrative that is simply not the case.

Government Orders

If Conservatives stood and said they do not believe that handguns should be banned in this country, full stop, which they did today by voting that this should be walked back completely, that is fine. They can lead on that, but they should not lead on issues that are not true. That is what frustrates me. We should not get to a place where we drive narratives that are simply not true. My speech today reflected a reality of where I stand on this bill, where there are limitations and where there are problems. I did not try to sugar-coat it. However, members should stop driving stuff that is not true. That is the frustration in terms of what goes forward.

• (2330)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to take a second to thank the interpreters. I know that my speeches can be challenging for them sometimes and I want to take the time to thank them.

I thank my colleague for his speech. We sense that he did his work and reflected on Bill C-21 very constructively. I would be curious to hear his thoughts on the bill's process.

Are there aspects that he was reticent about at some point? Are there amendments he would have wanted to move? Are there amendments that were moved that he applauds? Following the adoption at third reading, does he have confidence that the Senate will be able to respond quickly to pass Bill C-21?

[*English*]

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, normally I would love to engage in French, but it is late and I want to make sure that I am proper in my mother tongue.

There was one amendment that I wish we would have seen the government move on. The government position at committee was against what Mr. Julian moved in terms of allowing IPSC to be named. Maybe there is a more artful way to do this in the days ahead to make sure that competitive sport-shooting organizations like IPSC can qualify under the same type of Olympic program.

This bill, in the amendment process, has been cleaned up. That is thanks to the work, frankly, of all parliamentarians in this place, or certainly the two opposition parties that have collaborated to make sure this bill is good, along with the government and Liberal members. I do think there is a lot of good in this bill. My two concerns are that we need to make sure the advisory committee is as independent as possible in terms of the advice it provides to the government and that the government needs to find a regulatory pathway for sport shooters in the domain of IPSC.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I did not want to interrupt the hon. member while he was answering the question, but I will remind him not to say the name of the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I think the member for Kings—Hants can be forgiven. It is getting rather late.

I appreciate how he used his 20 minutes tonight. I think he approached this discussion from a very honest place, reflecting on his personal views and the views of his constituents. He is the chair of the agriculture committee, and I enjoy a good working relationship with him.

When this bill was going through clause-by-clause, it was a real pleasure for me to tune in to see the member for Kings—Hants voicing vociferous support for our amendment to the bill that was going to expand it to allow for IPSC. I congratulate him for taking that stand. I have had exchanges in this chamber on that with the member for Outremont, who took me a peg lower because I dared to publicly support that. We know from IPSC shooters, and I have gone to competitions, that some of the top-level athletes in that field can shoot 50,000 rounds of ammunition every single year. That leads to their firearms breaking down, and they need replacing.

Can he expand on how we need to be a bit more reasonable in this place in understanding that, while not everyone might like the same hobby, we should at least try to find a way to respect something that so many people put so many hours into practising. They try to perfect their craft and are simply asking for their sport, which is something they really enjoy doing, to be left alone.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague across the way. I agree with him that we have a great working relationship, and I think he is one of the more astute members in this House in terms of his interventions.

I completely agree. As I highlighted in my speech, this is one of the failings of the bill. There is a lot that is good about it that makes me feel a conviction to want to support it moving forward. The IPSC and competitive sport shooters part under the handgun piece is what I have a challenge with.

I want to address his comments about the NDP amendment that was brought forward. I was a sub-in on the committee. The government's position, of course, was to be against it. I was put in a difficult situation of subbing in at a moment when I would have really liked to support it. Out of respect for the government position, because it would not have normally been me on the committee, I abstained and the amendment was passed by the chair.

To Tracey Wilson and some of the firearms lobby, I ruined the IPSC part, but it would have been defeated six to five had I not been there. At least we had an ability to take it to the chair. There is probably no love lost, but I still think there is an ability, in the days ahead, for the government to get this right in a regulatory measure.

I mentioned that the Bloc passed an amendment that talked about annual certification. IPSC certifies on an annual basis. It makes sure that its members are participating and are involved. That could be an opportunity for the government to find a way to include this organization. We do not want to open the tent super wide, but I think in this case it is justified and it should be something the government is looking at in the days ahead.

• (2335)

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Madam Speaker, I just want to acknowledge my colleague's concern with some of the items in this bill. I know he is concerned about the 32% increase in violent crime and gang-related murders, which have doubled. I am optimistic that he will sleep on this tonight and take a look at it, and that his comments are genuine. He may be able to see improvements, but I do not know if he can put amendments forward to do that at this stage.

I would like him to comment on what I mentioned earlier: the increase in violent crimes and gang-related murders. Many in the industry are saying that this bill is not going to be the answer to solving and lowering those crime rates. Can he expand on that?

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I always appreciate the hon. member's interventions. He is a reasonable colleague and we need more level-headedness in this place.

I will say two things. I agree that this legislation, this proposal alone, is not going to solve gun violence. It is not going to solve violence in our communities. Solving it is going to take a more nuanced approach than that. It is going to take additional measures at the border, which the government has been working on and needs to continue to do. It is going to take investment in mental health. It is going to take investment in communal programs and social initiatives to make sure that individuals who might be lured into a life of crime have the opportunity to be engaged.

I would agree with him that this bill alone does not solve that issue. I know he may have certain challenges about the provisions in the bill. There is some contention, and I have wrestled with that tonight.

On the amendments, I want to register something, as I never had the chance to do it during my remarks. As I went through each of the amendments that were brought forward, I was concerned when the Conservative Party tried to move an amendment today that would have walked back the exemption on Olympic sport shooters. It was moved by the member for Kildonan—St. Paul. The Conservatives voted for it. I do not know why they voted for it, because that would have taken away the small exemption that does exist for sport shooting now, which I think should be expanded. Hopefully, some of the Conservatives can address that in their comments later this evening.

Mr. Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC): Mr. Speaker, hunting season is over. That is what a lot of Canadians are hearing tonight. I am trying to give them comfort and understanding of what has transpired in the months on this bill and why the Liberals, supported by the NDP, are going after Grandpa Joe's hunting gun.

This is one of the most frustrating parts of the job, of being a member of Parliament. It is almost midnight. There is no reason for

Government Orders

us to be up this late. We were up last night debating this as well. It is the mismanagement and incompetence of the Liberal government, which is why we are having to debate this late in the evening. There are real problems with the bill and it is just ramming it through.

I will try to walk us through why and some of the ways that it is going after Grandpa Joe's hunting rifles.

It is really because, eight years ago, when the Prime Minister got to Ottawa, he started changing things within our country, changing some of the fundamental principles of our justice system. The corresponding result was an increase in violent crimes of 32%. My heart goes out to family members who have lost a loved one due to violence. We know that gang-related murders have doubled under the watch of the Prime Minister. Instead of going after real criminals, he is going after Grandpa Joe.

Grandpa Joe might be in Newfoundland. He has enjoyed hunting moose for generations and is fearful of the next generation's inability to carry on a very important part of our heritage and our traditions in this country, because of the changes.

Common sense would dictate that, if we have a problem, we could ask where the problem is coming from. Once one has identified where it was coming from, that is where one should put one's efforts into stopping it, and we all want to stop violent criminals. I believe everyone, at heart, when they say they would like to stop the crime rates that continue to increase. This bill would do nothing for that because 90% of all firearms-related crimes are done with an illegal firearm.

Criminals do not follow the law. We know this. We know that the statistics out of British Columbia earlier this year showed that 40 criminals have been arrested 6,000 times. It is the catch-and-release bail policies that have been introduced by the government over the last eight years, which are driving this up.

We catch and release. We catch and release. Go out, commit a violent crime, get arrested and get released. That is the policy that has driven this spike in violent crime, up 32%, under the Prime Minister's watch.

Where does he decide to spend millions, if not billions, of dollars? Going after Grandpa Joe's firearms. It is wrong. Instead of going after illegal gun smugglers and criminals, they are going after the hunting rifles and shotguns of law-abiding farmers, hunters and indigenous people. That is where they are going to be spending the money.

I do want to remind everyone that I will be splitting my time with the member for Fundy Royal.

While I have the floor, I just want to walk through the common-sense understanding of the problem and what we can do to fix it.

Government Orders

The Liberals have, in every way possible, made it easier for these criminals. There used to be minimum sentences. In Bill C-5, they repealed mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes. Why would they do that?

• (2340)

We know these people cannot help themselves. These individuals need to be behind bars and in programs to straighten out their lives, but instead, they are getting lighter sentences because of Bill C-5. There are no minimums.

The Liberals like to make a lot of noise about how they are going to increase the maximums. There are no judges in Canada who hand out maximums anymore. That is the higher threshold that should be there, but they have bumped it up to a point where it does not have an impact. We are talking about criminals who are getting firearms across the border and, for the most part, committing the crimes that are concerning families in some of our larger cities. My heart goes out to them because losing a loved one for no reason is a heinous thing to think about. A lot of times these are senseless, unprovoked crimes using firearms coming over from the United States. We have a government that will not even shut down the illegal crossing of people, let alone firearms.

A much more common-sense approach to deal with this problem would be to go after the individuals who are committing the crimes and the firearms that enable those crimes, 90% of which are coming here illegally, but with all these laws on the books, the only ones who are going to be affected are the law-abiding hunters and indigenous people of this land.

• (2345)

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, was the point that, if criminals do not follow laws, we should therefore not have laws?

That aside, the hon. member was sitting while he is speaking. Our traditions are that we stand when we address the House. I do not know what the rules are with respect to sitting down—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Agreed. It is the rule to stand while we speak in the House, which is why we say, “While I stand in the House”.

The hon. member for Saskatoon—University.

Mr. Corey Tochor: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for pointing out how common-sense has left this place.

We are almost at midnight. I am leaning on my desk. The member comes rushing down here to raise a point of order that members cannot lean on their desk at a quarter to midnight because they could potentially be sitting. This is the lack of common sense that usually comes from the member and his party.

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, again, on a point of order, it is bizarre that the hon. member is talking about following the rules, but said the rules do not apply in the last 15 minutes while the House is sitting. I find that surprising, so I was just wondering—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We are getting into debate now, so I would ask the hon. member to conclude his speech.

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

Mr. Corey Tochor: Madam Speaker, I have the floor, and I am standing. I think that highlights the Liberal philosophy quite well. The common sense is lacking.

The common people of this country know what this bill does. This bill goes after hunting rifles that have been used safely across Canada. This is a frustration of Canadians. I am sure they are calling other members' offices. They are calling my office. I am meeting with people.

Conservatives do not support the confiscation of other people's property. This is what this bill would ultimately do. There is the Liberal firearms advisory committee that would do what the Liberals wanted to do with earlier amendments. It is clear that this panel would do the bidding of the Liberal government. We have seen this time after time. The Liberals try to do things through the front door, and if that does not work, they go through the back door. This is how they are bringing it in.

The Liberals are saying there are no firearms that would be banned by this legislation. However, it would appoint the Liberal firearms advisory committee. Who appoints it? It is the order in council. I wonder who they might put on that. Would that be a panel of experts who view the world how the Liberals view it? I wonder. A special rapporteur would figure this out, I am sure.

There is a whole bunch of things that could be improved in this bill. Obviously, with our track record in this country on violent crimes, we are on the wrong path. We need to fix the justice system. We need to have jail not bail. We need to have common-sense rules that govern our country. We will never have that until we defeat the Liberal-NDP coalition and get common sense back in this country.

I am fearful of the consequences if we continue down this path with individuals who pretend to have the best interests of the country at heart, but when flawed legislation such as this is brought forward, it brings up questions. If Liberals really want to lower crime, why are they going after Grandpa Joe's hunting rifle? There is no good answer. This is virtue signalling from the Liberals that they are somehow going to tackle violent crime by going after Grandpa Joe.

We know that it will not work. What is really frustrating is that we need sensible measures that get the criminals off the streets.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives are going off on a completely ridiculous tangent right now.

Government Orders

My hon. colleague talked about the firearms advisory committee. I would ask him to find where, in Bill C-21, that is mentioned. I will give him a hint. It is not there. He should take a look at the public safety website because he would see that the firearms advisory committee is a body that already exists.

At the risk of repeating myself for the nth time today and yesterday, I would challenge my hon. colleague to name one rifle or one shotgun that is in this bill that would be prohibited. I ask the member to give me one model, unlike all of his colleagues before him.

• (2350)

Mr. Corey Tochor: Madam Speaker, this is the NDP. Its members just trust the Liberals. If people who are watching at home want a Liberal MP, then could vote NDP and get the same thing. The NDP are just going to prop up the Liberals.

They are asking, “What firearms will the committee ban?” We know in the amendments they wanted the Winchester model 100, Winchester model 1910, Ruger Deerfield carbine, Remington 740, Remington 7400 and the Remington model 4.

This is just a small fraction of what the Liberals have wanted to ban. We know that is their intent because we have seen the amendments they slipped up on. They thought they could get something through on an amendment. We know exactly what they are going to ban, and they would ban them in the months to come.

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member mentioned that there was 40 people arrested 6,000 times. I googled it.

According to the Vancouver Sun, it was actually 40 people who had 6,300 incidents, and most of these people are people with mental health and substance abuse challenges. These are not arrests. These are incidents. Could the member please correct the record?

Mr. Corey Tochor: Madam Speaker, this is the common-sense Liberal. They say that these were not arrests; these were just incidents. They were individuals who were not following the law, and they will never follow the law until we get the bail and jail systems figured out. We need more jail, not bail, and as people are put in jail, they will not be committing crimes. This is the common-sense approach that needs to be done. We need to identify who is committing the crimes and fix the system so that they get the help they need, and if these individuals are having mental health troubles, I will bet they are addiction-related.

What happened in British Columbia? It just legalized hard-core drugs. Those drugs lead to addictions, which lead to more criminal activity.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I find it so troubling that the coalition of the Liberals and the NDP seems to be bent on bringing American-style politics into the conversation, yet what I find really interesting is that they actually invited a former presidential candidate who supports the second amendment in the United States.

They say one thing but do another on so many fronts. Could the member for Saskatoon—University highlight other examples of the hypocrisy we see in the Liberals, as well as the NDP?

Mr. Corey Tochor: Madam Speaker, the list of hypocritical things I have witnessed since getting out here is too long to mention in one sitting. I could probably do a 20-minute speech with rebuttals on how hypocritical they are. The different—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Corey Tochor: Now they heckle me, Madam Speaker.

An hon. member: We've been heckling the whole time.

Mr. Corey Tochor: Madam Speaker, I think the most hypocritical thing I have seen with the Liberals is in the bill before us, where they target law-abiding firearms owners instead of the criminals who are committing the crimes. They cry for the victims, and we should all cry for families when they have faced criminal activities that have robbed them of their loved ones. However, we should understand that their efforts are going after the wrong people out there.

Grandpa Joe's firearm is not what is shooting up downtown Vancouver and Toronto.

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to close out debate this evening on Bill C-21, and it is an honour, as always, to stand in this House and represent the constituents from the great riding of Fundy Royal who elected me. Many of those constituents enjoy hunting, farming and sport shooting and maybe have inherited a firearm from a relative. Hunting in my riding certainly is something many people like to partake in and enjoy.

What is the problem we are trying to go after? It is gun violence. What the facts tell us is that 80% of the firearms used in violent crime are illegal. What are some of the figures? Violent crime is up 32% in Canada in the last eight years. Gang-related violent crime, the stuff Canadians are talking about, seeing in the news and hearing about in their local newspaper, is up almost 100% in the last eight years. What about crimes that are committed with firearms? Eighty per cent of the firearms used in violent crime are obtained illegally. We have an illegal firearms problem in Canada.

What is the solution when we have an illegal firearms problem? We should go after the illegal firearms. The last thing we should do is spend valuable resources going after law-abiding, licensed firearms owners in this country. However, we should not be surprised that this is the approach the government took. We have to remember this is the same Liberal government that brought in Bill C-68, or the long gun registry, and that spent, according to the Auditor General, over \$1 billion registering the firearms of law-abiding Canadians while having no impact on crime.

Government Orders

It is the same government that brought in Bill C-5. What did Bill C-5 do? I mentioned that we have a problem with illegal firearms. Bill C-5, which was introduced and passed under the current government, repealed mandatory prison penalties for many firearms offences. They include robbery with a firearm, extortion with a firearm and weapons trafficking. These are the types of offences that Canadians would expect someone convicted to go to jail for. Unfortunately, Bill C-5 removed mandatory jail sentences for those crimes, so we are not going after the illegal guns and we are not going after the criminals.

The figures should get the attention of all members, no matter what side of the aisle they are on. In Toronto alone, one half of murder suspects this year are out on some type of release. In 17 of 44 homicides in Toronto last year, the individual was out on bail. We have a major problem in this country when it comes to gang-related violence and firearms violence with the revolving door, the catch-and-release, of our bail system.

The government had an opportunity with this bill to tackle some of those things. Instead, what it did is went after everyday, law-abiding Canadians, the type of Canadians I represent in my riding of Fundy Royal.

As parliamentarians, we need to take the issues that confront us in this country seriously. This bill does not do that. The government showed its hand when it brought it an amendment that would have banned all kinds of hunting rifles, rifles that have been in families for generations. These are not the problem. Law-abiding Canadians are not the problem. Licensed firearms owners are not the problem. Spending billions of dollars of taxpayers' money to buy back and confiscate firearms from law-abiding citizens is not the solution.

When this bill is fully implemented, Canadians will not be one bit safer. Until we have the courage to tackle the revolving door of

catch-and-release bail and until we have the courage to say that those who do serious crimes are going to get a jail sentence, we will continue to have these problems in Canada. We need to leave law-abiding people alone and go after the bad guys, and that is what the Conservatives will do.

● (2355)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): It being 11:59 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 9, 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 amendment.

● (2400)

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, we request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the division on the amendment stands deferred until Thursday, May 18, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

It being 12:01 a.m., the House stands adjourned until later this day at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 21(1).

(The House adjourned at 12:01 a.m.)

CONTENTS

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

West Island Communities	
Mr. Zuberi	14703
Edmonton West Pastor	
Mr. McCauley	14703
Asian Heritage Month	
Mr. Chiang	14703
Panchen Lama	
Mr. Brunelle-Duceppe	14704
Brain Tumour Awareness Month	
Mr. Lightbound	14704
Brain Stem Glioma	
Mr. Godin	14704
Keira's Law	
Ms. Damoff	14704
Ukraine	
Mr. Turnbull	14704
Passports	
Mr. Perkins	14705
Women's National Basketball Association	
Ms. Khalid	14705
Crimea	
Mr. Bezan	14705
Vyshyvanka Day	
Mr. Brock	14705
International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia	
Ms. Martinez Ferrada	14706
International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia	
Mr. Desjarlais	14706
Frédéric Bastien	
Mr. Blanchet	14706
Transport	
Mr. Williams	14706
Crimea	
Mr. Baker	14707

ORAL QUESTIONS

Finance	
Mr. Poilievre	14707
Ms. Freeland	14707
Mr. Poilievre	14707
Ms. Freeland	14707

Carbon Pricing	
Mr. Poilievre	14707
Ms. Freeland	14707
Mr. Poilievre	14708
Ms. Freeland	14708
Mr. Poilievre	14708
Ms. Freeland	14708
The Environment	
Mr. Blanchet	14708
Ms. Freeland	14708
Public Safety	
Mr. Blanchet	14708
Ms. Freeland	14708
Housing	
Mr. Singh	14708
Ms. Freeland	14709
Finance	
Mr. Singh	14709
Ms. Freeland	14709
Mr. Hallan	14709
Ms. Freeland	14709
Carbon Pricing	
Mr. Hallan	14709
Mr. Guilbeault	14709
Mr. Chambers	14709
Ms. Freeland	14709
The Economy	
Mr. Chambers	14710
Mr. Holland	14710
Mr. Deltell	14710
Ms. Freeland	14710
Mr. Deltell	14710
Mr. Duclos	14710
Democratic Institutions	
Mr. Villemure	14711
Ms. Damoff	14711
Ms. Gaudreau	14711
Mr. LeBlanc	14711
Carbon Pricing	
Mrs. Stubbs	14711
Mr. Guilbeault	14711
Mrs. Stubbs	14711
Mr. Guilbeault	14711
Mr. Barlow	14712
Ms. Freeland	14712
Mr. Barlow	14712
Ms. Bibeau	14712
Housing	
Ms. Gazan	14712

Mr. Hussen	14712
Labour	
Mr. Bachrach	14712
Mr. Sheehan	14712
The Economy	
Mr. Longfield	14712
Ms. Freeland	14713
Carbon Pricing	
Mr. Patzer	14713
Mr. Guilbeault	14713
Mr. Seebach	14713
Mr. Blair	14713
Mr. Melillo	14713
Mr. Holland	14713
Mrs. Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	14714
Ms. Bibeau	14714
Post-Secondary Education	
Mr. Blanchette-Joncas	14714
Mr. Fillmore	14714
Finance	
Mrs. Vignola	14714
Mr. Rodriguez	14714
Justice	
Mr. Paul-Hus	14714
Mr. Lametti	14714
Mr. Moore	14714
Mr. Lametti	14715
Mr. Moore	14715
Mr. Lametti	14715
Firearms	
Mrs. Shanahan	14715
Mr. Rodriguez	14715
Housing	
Mr. Aitchison	14715
Mr. Hussen	14715
Carbon Pricing	
Mrs. Vien	14715
Mr. Guilbeault	14716
Mr. Lehoux	14716
Ms. Bibeau	14716
Public Safety	
Mr. Sousa	14716
Mr. Lametti	14716
Women and Gender Equality	
Mr. Desjarlais	14716
Ms. Sudds	14716
Public Safety	
Mr. Vuong	14716
Ms. Damoff	14717
Presence in Gallery	
The Speaker	14717

Points of Order

Oral Questions

Mr. Barrett	14717
-------------------	-------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Criminal Code

Bill C-21. Report stage	14717
Motion No. 1 negatived	14718
Motion No. 10 agreed to	14720
Motion agreed to	14721
Ms. Kamal Khera (for the Minister of Public Safety)	14721
Motion for concurrence	14721
Motion agreed to	14722

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Financial Protection for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Farmers Act

Bill C-280. Second reading	14722
Motion agreed to	14724
(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee) ..	14724

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Committees of the House

Procedure and House Affairs

Ms. Chagger	14724
Motion for concurrence	14724
(Motion agreed to)	14724
Mr. Cooper	14724

Canada—People's Republic of China Relationship

Mr. Hardie	14724
Mr. Chong	14724

Natural Resources

Mr. Aldag	14724
-----------------	-------

Protecting Young Persons from Exposure to Pornography Act

Mrs. Vecchio	14724
Bill S-210. First reading	14724
(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)	14725

Petitions

Agriculture and Agri-Food

Mr. Vis	14725
---------------	-------

Taxation

Mr. Vis	14725
---------------	-------

Firearms

Mrs. Gallant	14725
--------------------	-------

Falun Gong

Mrs. Hughes	14725
-------------------	-------

Climate Change

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	14725
--------------------------------------	-------

Justice

Mr. Calkins	14725
Mr. Patzer	14726
Mr. Kurek	14726

Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lamoureux	14726
---------------------	-------

Motions for Papers

Mr. Lamoureux	14726
---------------------	-------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**Criminal Code**

Ms. Khera (for the Minister of Public Safety)	14726
Bill C-21. Third reading	14726
Ms. Damoff	14726
Mr. Dalton	14729
Ms. Michaud	14730
Mr. Davies	14730
Mr. Longfield	14730
Mr. Motz	14730
Mr. Calkins	14731
Amendment	14733

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**Criminal Code**

Mr. Fast	14733
Bill C-314. Second reading	14733
Mr. Lamoureux	14735
Mr. Thériault	14736
Mr. MacGregor	14736
Mr. Anandasangaree	14736
Mr. Thériault	14738
Mr. MacGregor	14739
Ms. Ferreri	14740

Points of Order

Amendment to Bill C-281 at Committee Stage	
Mr. Lamoureux	14742

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**Criminal Code**

Bill C-21. Third reading	14742
Ms. Michaud	14742
Mr. Longfield	14745
Mr. Maguire	14745
Mr. MacGregor	14745
Mrs. DeBellefeuille	14746
Mr. Gourde	14746
Mr. MacGregor	14746
Mr. Bittle	14749
Mr. Ruff	14750
Mr. Lamoureux	14750
Ms. Michaud	14750

Sitting Suspended

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 7:33 p.m.) ...	14750
---	-------

Sitting Resumed

(The House resumed at 7:34 p.m.)	14750
Ms. Blaney	14751
Mr. Coteau	14751
Mr. Moore	14752
Ms. Michaud	14753
Ms. Sahota	14753
Mr. McKinnon	14753
Mr. Epp	14754
Ms. Michaud	14755
Mr. Ruff	14755
Mr. McKinnon	14757
Ms. Michaud	14757
Mr. Gourde	14758
Mr. McDonald	14759
Mr. Simard	14759
Mr. MacGregor	14759
Mr. Duclos	14759
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	14759
Mr. Hanley	14759
Ms. Michaud	14761
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	14762
Ms. Bendayan	14762
Mr. Schmale	14763
Ms. Michaud	14764
Mr. MacGregor	14764
Ms. Findlay	14764
Ms. Michaud	14766
Mr. MacGregor	14766
Mr. Coteau	14766
Mr. Kurek	14766
Mr. Lehoux	14766
Mr. McDonald	14768
Ms. Normandin	14768
Ms. Idlout	14768
Mr. Lamoureux	14768
Mr. Aboultaif	14770
Ms. Normandin	14771
Mr. MacGregor	14771
Mr. Duclos	14771
Mr. Gourde	14772
Mr. Cooper	14772
Mr. McDonald	14773
Ms. Michaud	14773
Mr. MacGregor	14774
Mr. Richards	14774
Ms. Sahota	14775
Ms. Michaud	14775
Ms. Idlout	14776
Ms. Gaudreau	14776
Ms. Mathysen	14777
Mr. MacGregor	14777
Ms. Michaud	14778
Mr. Lemire	14778
Mr. Blois	14779

Mr. Kurek	14780
Mr. Blois	14780
Mr. Aboultaif	14783
Mr. Lemire	14784
Mr. MacGregor	14784
Mr. Maguire	14785

Mr. Tochor	14785
Mr. MacGregor	14786
Mr. Coteau	14787
Mr. Kurek	14787
Mr. Moore	14787
Division on amendment deferred	14788

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>