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(HANSARD)

Wednesday, September 28, 2016

The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, September 28, 2016

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

[*Translation*]

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

LEADERSHIP OF SENATE LIBERALS

Hon. Joseph A. Day (Leader of the Senate Liberals): Honourable senators, yesterday I had the opportunity to talk about the various changes that have been made within our Liberal caucus. I had the privilege to talk about Senator Hubley, Senator Munson, Senator Downe, and Senator Mercer. Today I would like to focus my remarks on Senator Fraser and Senator Cowan.

In 2013, Senator Fraser accepted the position of deputy leader for the second time. At the time, some said she was a glutton for punishment. Now she would like to focus on her other senatorial responsibilities.

Her in-depth knowledge of the rules and her immense respect for this institution may well be matched by some, but never surpassed. Her colleagues will note that no one has stepped forward to replace her, which illustrates what a tough act she is to follow.

She promised to remain available to share her knowledge with this chamber, and I intend to hold her to that.

[*English*]

This brings me to Senator Cowan. He has served our leadership team since January 2007, when he became whip. He was appointed Leader of the Opposition in the Senate in November 2008 by the then Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion. He was so clearly a good choice that he was confirmed in that position by each of the successive Liberal leaders since that time: Michael Ignatieff, Bob Rae and Justin Trudeau. Following "Independence Day," as we affectionately refer to January 29, 2014, our caucus elected him to continue in that position as leader.

Senator Cowan exemplifies so many of the attributes Canadians want in a senator. He has found that critical balance between independence of thought and political judgment that is the challenge for all of us here in the Senate. His wisdom and character have earned him the respect and genuine affection of everyone who has served with him. He truly has been an exceptional leader, not only for our caucus but as part of the leadership team of the entire Senate.

I have been proud to serve under this leadership team and can only pledge, in my new role as Senate Liberal leader, that our team will aspire to meet the standards he has set.

I look forward to working with all honourable senators in the weeks and months ahead as we set about our task as independent senators working to do our best for Canadians. Thank you.

ALBERTA

FORT MCMURRAY—REBUILDING

Hon. Douglas Black: Honourable senators, I rise today to update this chamber on Fort McMurray, Alberta. I have spoken twice before in this chamber on this vibrant, family-oriented community that has welcomed thousands of Canadians and has been the piston in the engine of Canadian prosperity. Then the price of oil collapsed, discussion on export pipelines stalled, and May 5, 2016, dawned.

On that day, Fort McMurray was overwhelmed by wildfire — the largest natural disaster in Canadian history. The complete city was evacuated; then the city sat as a ghost for a month.

I visited Fort McMurray last week to see and learn first-hand about the challenges being faced, how they are being met and what my colleagues in the Senate can do to be of support.

Flying into the city, you see for miles the burnt forest, but I was not prepared for the stark devastation I saw in several large areas of the city: homes, businesses and schools simply ravished or abandoned.

The physical rebuilding will cost billions of dollars. Insurance claims alone are approaching $4 billion, the largest insurance event in Canadian history. Many businesses have folded, demand on service agencies has exploded, and mental health is a major concern.

The challenges could be overwhelming, but the resolve of the community to rebuild is even more overpowering.

I met with the leaders of the Wood Buffalo Recovery Committee, the Chamber of Commerce and the mayor. Each of these leaders is committed to the tough road ahead.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the leaders of Fort McMurray, the Government of Alberta, the Government of Canada, the millions of Canadian donors and the Canadian Red Cross, all for their inspirational and generous support that is helping Fort McMurray to get back on its feet.

And what can senators do? Firstly, while the Fort McMurray disaster has faded from the headlines, I would ask senators to keep the physical and social rebuilding on their minds, to look for opportunities to be supportive. The support of senators to date has been noted and deeply appreciated.

Secondly, and most importantly, while Fort McMurray is rebuilding from this natural disaster, we as senators must ensure

that oil pipelines are built from Fort McMurray to both the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Black: It is this critical nation-building infrastructure that will ensure Canadian prosperity and Fort McMurray's continued vibrancy.

The signs I saw all over Fort McMurray during my visit proudly and defiantly declared: Fort McMurray Strong.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

• (1410)

PARALYMPIC GAMES 2016

CONGRATULATIONS TO KATARINA ROXON

Hon. Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall: Honourable senators, I rise today to recognize Canadian swimmer and proud Newfoundlander Katarina Roxon, who at the early age of 23 exemplified the spirit of Paralympic competition in the Rio de Janeiro Paralympic Games 2016.

Katarina was born in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, on April 5, 1993, and she has made Kippens, Newfoundland, her place of residence. She won the gold medal in the 100-metre breaststroke earlier this month at the 2016 Paralympic Games in Brazil by taking nearly two full seconds off her previous personal best time. She accomplished winning the gold medal in just over one minute and 19 seconds, the best time she has ever accomplished.

Katarina began swimming when she was only five years old. Her parents thought swimming would be a necessary life skill for Katarina's growing up on an island like Newfoundland surrounded by water.

At the early age of 14, Katarina was already a world-class swimmer, winning several medals in various championships. At the 2007 Rio Para Pan-American Games she won a gold medal, two silver medals and one bronze medal.

At the age of 15 she was the youngest Canadian swimmer on the Beijing 2008 Paralympic team. She also competed in numerous other international competitions, such as the 2010 Commonwealth Games, the London 2012 Paralympic Games, the 2014 Commonwealth Games as well as the 2013 and 2015 International Paralympic Committee World Championships.

Katarina had one of the best seasons of her career in 2015 when she won six medals at the Toronto 2015 Para Pan-American Games. She won one gold medal, three silver medals and two bronze medals at that competition.

Also, at the 2015 International Paralympic Committee World Championships, she won a bronze medal in Canadian record time in the 100-metre breaststroke.

Katarina Roxon, a proud Canadian, is hoping to open more doors for youth who want to engage in a sport and have a disability. The Paralympic Games celebrate the ability and remarkable power of the human spirit, and the values of diversity and inclusivity are central values to the lives of people with disabilities.

Honourable senators, join me in celebrating Katarina's great example in recognition of her outstanding personal achievement and her important contribution in support of Canadians living with disabilities.

THE HONOURABLE JACQUES DEMERS

CONGRATULATIONS ON INDUCTION INTO QUEBEC SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Hon. John D. Wallace: Honourable senators, there is indeed something very significant that former NHL hockey stars Patrick Roy, Guy Carbonneau, Denis Savard, Vincent Lecavalier, Adam Oates, Doug Gilmour, Steve Yzerman and all of the members of this chamber have in common, and that something is actually someone who is none other than our very own Senator, Coach Jacques Demers.

These outstanding players are but a few of the many that our friend and colleague Senator Demers left his indelible mark on during his storied hockey career in the National Hockey League as coach of the Montreal Canadiens, the Quebec Nordiques, the St. Louis Blues, the Detroit Red Wings and the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Colleagues, this evening in Montreal, Senator Coach Demers will be honoured for his outstanding accomplishments and influence in hockey as he is inducted into the Quebec Sports Hall of Fame, a tremendous personal honour from his home province that is so well deserved.

Among the many highlights of his illustrious coaching career, Coach Demers twice received the Jack Adams Award as the NHL's Coach of the Year, in 1987 and 1988. He is the only coach in the history of the NHL to ever receive this prestigious award in consecutive years.

As we all well know and remember so well, especially Montreal Canadiens fans, Coach Demers led his Habs to a Stanley Cup victory in 1993, which to this day remains the last time a team from Canada has brought the cup home.

Undoubtedly, throughout his professional hockey coaching career, as well as his time here in the Senate, both his personal and his team successes are the direct result of his outstanding leadership abilities, and, as we are all well aware, at the heart of all true leadership lies strength of character, unwavering commitment to succeed and overcome challenges and obstacles in the face of adversity and, of course, the mutual respect of your teammates and colleagues.

Senator Coach Demers has all of that in spades. He is genuine. He is the real deal.

Honourable senators, he is a proud Quebecer, a proud Canadian, and each of us in this chamber is extremely fortunate and proud to have him as our colleague and our friend.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Wallace: Congratulations Jacques, to you and all of your family, on this wonderful personal honour of being inducted into the Quebec Sports Hall of Fame.

ARCTIC COUNCIL

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: Honourable senators, 20 years ago, on September 20, 1996, inspired by a Canadian-led initiative to form an intergovernmental Arctic governance body, the Ottawa Declaration formally established the Arctic Council, a high-level intergovernmental forum to provide a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic states, with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular, issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.

Canada served as the first chair from 1998 to 2000 and then again from 2013 to 2015, this time under the leadership of the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council.

As an Inuk who was born and raised in the Arctic and grew up in Gjoa Haven, Nunavut, Minister Aglukkaq travelled across the Arctic to consult directly with northerners in their communities to establish the chairmanship theme: Development for the People of the North.

For the first time, the Arctic Council was putting the human element of the Arctic at the forefront of its mandate. At the conclusion of Canada's chairmanship, Minister Aglukkaq stated the following:

> Over the past two years, Canada has put Northerners first and championed a number of initiatives that will directly benefit Northern families.

These initiatives included the integration of indigenous traditional knowledge into the council's work, the creation of the Arctic Economic Council in an effort to promote Arctic-to-Arctic business opportunities, the push to reduce black carbon methane emissions, a new action plan to enhance oil pollution prevention, and the sharing of best practices to improve mental wellness and resiliency.

Colleagues, many of you may also remember from my previous speeches on Bill S-208 how the Arctic Council served as a major vehicle for allowing products of the Inuit seal hunt to be marketed in Europe when Canada leveraged the European Union's application for observer status to the council to get the EU to agree to "take into account the extent to which observers respect the values, interests, culture and traditions of Arctic indigenous peoples and other Arctic inhabitants; [and] have demonstrated a political willingness as well as financial ability to contribute to the work of the Permanent Participants and other Arctic indigenous peoples," effectively removing its ban on the import of seal products from indigenous hunters to the European market.

Another signature accomplishment of the Arctic Council occurred in Nuuk, Greenland, on May 12, 2011, when the Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic was signed. That agreement states that parties will promote the establishment, operation and maintenance of an adequate and effective search and rescue capability within its area, facilitate better exchange of information, agree to request and provide support, and shorten communication lines.

Now, several times since and recently, this once again proved an essential agreement, protecting the lives of seven Nunavut fishermen whose ship, the *Saputi*, struck ice on February 22, 2016, took on water and was seriously listing. The Canadian Forces Joint Rescue Coordination Centre sent two Hercules aircraft to deliver pumps, and the Danish naval patrol ship, the *Knud Rasmussen*, provided additional pumps and escorted the ship through rough waters to Nuuk, Greenland, where they stayed until they could be flown home.

• (1420)

So I would invite honourable senators to join me in congratulating the Arctic Council on the occasion of their twentieth anniversary and wish them continued success in all of their endeavours.

[*Translation*]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AFFECT QUESTION PERIOD ON OCTOBER 4, 2016

Hon. Diane Bellemare (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

> That, in order to allow the Senate to receive a Minister of the Crown during Question Period as authorized by the Senate on December 10, 2015, and notwithstanding rule 4-7, when the Senate sits on Tuesday, October 4, 2016, Question Period shall begin at 3:30 p.m., with any proceedings then before the Senate being interrupted until the end of Question Period, which shall last a maximum of 40 minutes;

That, if a standing vote would conflict with the holding of Question Period at 3:30 p.m. on that day, the vote be postponed until immediately after the conclusion of Question Period;

That, if the bells are ringing for a vote at 3:30 p.m. on that day, they be interrupted for Question Period at that time, and resume thereafter for the balance of any time remaining; and

That, if the Senate concludes its business before 3:30 p.m. on that day, the sitting be suspended until that time for the purpose of holding Question Period.

[*English*]

CANADA-EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

TWELFTH CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION, JUNE 14-16, 2016— REPORT TABLED

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the Twelfth Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, held in Ulan-Ude, Russia, from June 14 to 16, 2016.

Your Honour, no senators participated in these meetings or travelled.

[*Translation*]

PARLAMERICAS

ANNUAL GATHERING OF THE OPEN PARLIAMENT NETWORK OF PARLAMERICAS, MAY 25-28, 2016— REPORT TABLED

Hon. Pana Merchant: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of ParlAmericas respecting its participation at the Annual Gathering of the Open Parliament Network of ParlAmericas, held in Asunción, Paraguay, from May 25 to 28, 2016.

[*English*]

RELEVANCE OF FULL EMPLOYMENT

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Diane Bellemare (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the relevance of full employment in the 21st century in a Globalized economy.

LITERACY ON PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 5-6(2), I give notice that, two days hence:

I will draw the attention of the Senate to the current state of literacy and literacy programs on Prince Edward Island, including the need for federal support of the PEI Literacy Alliance.

[*Translation*]

QUESTION PERIOD

HEALTH

TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. With respect to the negotiations between the federal government and the provincial and territorial governments on transfer payments for health care, we see that the federal health minister plans to impose conditions on the transfers.

The Government of Quebec has been very clear. Imposing conditions is out of the question, and Quebec would prefer that the federal government respect its autonomy in this provincial jurisdiction.

The Conservative government honoured the health transfer agreement signed with the Martin government in 2004. I would like to quote the press release issued by Mr. Martin's Liberal government on September 15, 2004:

> Recognizing the Government of Quebec's desire to exercise its own responsibilities with respect to planning, organizing and managing health services within its territory, and noting that its commitment with regard to the underlying principles of its public health system — universality, portability, comprehensiveness, accessibility and public administration — coincides with that of all governments in Canada, and resting on asymetrical federalism, that is, flexible federalism that notably allows for the existence of specific agreements and arrangements adapted to Quebec's specificity . . . .
>
> Funding made available by the Government of Canada will be used by the Government of Quebec to implement its own plan for renewing Quebec's health system.

Since the minister has decided on a maximum increase in the health transfer of 3 per cent, as was the case with our government, why does the government not adopt the same

respectful attitude towards the provinces and allow them to establish their own priorities based on their own needs?

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*English*]

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the honourable senator for his review of this important dossier over the last number of years.

The Government of Canada, specifically the Minister of Health, has made clear its agenda in this area. The Minister of Health made a very comprehensive speech recently in Kingston outlining the view of the Government of Canada as these discussions with provinces are about to take place or have begun. It would be wrong for me to comment on the state of the negotiations and the negotiating positions except to underscore the commitment of the Government of Canada to improve the performance of the health sector in working with provincial colleagues in the areas of new priorities that were identified in the minister's discourse.

We will hopefully see felicitous conclusions of those negotiations in the days ahead.

[*Translation*]

Senator Carignan: Leader, don't you think that, by imposing conditions on the funding of the provincial health care systems, the government could put an end to asymmetrical federalism? Is that what the government wants?

[*English*]

Senator Harder: I think the position of the Minister of Health is focused on improving the performance of the health system in Canada. That is the objective.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

CLOSURE OF WESTERN FEEDLOTS

Hon. Betty Unger: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate and concerns the announcement by Western Feedlots Ltd. that it will idle its Alberta operations next year. Western Feedlots is one of Canada's largest cattle feeder operations and has been in business for almost 60 years. Its president and CEO has been quoted in the media as saying that some of the reasons for this decision are the current state of the market and the imposition of carbon taxes by government.

The closure of Western Feedlots is a wake-up call for the future of our economy in Alberta — companies shutting down and good paying jobs lost. If this Liberal government continues with its plans to bring in the federal carbon tax, what lesson will this Liberal government learn from the closure of Western Feedlots? Will it finally acknowledge that carbon taxes reduce profits, kill jobs and hurt the economy?

• (1430)

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): Any job loss is regrettable, and I'm sure the honourable senator would share that view with all senators, that we regret when economics forces companies to make certain self-determined positions.

It would be a hypothesis on my part, and indeed on the questioner's part, to suggest that carbon taxes are a determinant in and of themselves. The issue of carbon taxes that you raise is one that's important, and it's the view of the government that we must deal with climate change effectively for this generation and future generations. It would be regrettable if every sparrow that fell was identified in this chamber with appropriate action on climate change.

Senator Unger: The CEO of Alberta Cattle Feeders Association, Mr. Bryan Walton, recently pointed out that while governments are not responsible for fluctuation in commodity prices, governments at all levels need to consider the cumulative impact that taxes and fees have on business, and how can this Liberal government expect private-sector investment to create jobs and drive economic growth if they are being taxed out of business?

Senator Harder: I thank the honourable senator for her supplementary question.

The government is actively — and has been for a number of months — consulting with a broad group of sectors on Canada's economic future. That report is expected to be tabled very shortly and ought to provide further direction.

I would also note that in the annual cycle of consultation, the Minister of Finance has recently launched appropriate consultation with, again, economic leaders and others on how the Government of Canada, faced with the circumstances of the economy of today, ought to react in the next budget. I am confident that this government will continue to seek measures that are appropriate for middle-class growth in the economy that respond to the priorities that were identified in the last election with respect to sustainable economic growth that benefits Canadians today and secures our future tomorrow.

NATURAL RESOURCES

CONSULTATION ON MORATORIUM OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Hon. Douglas Black: Honourable senators, before I get to the question, I think it is appropriate, given the context of my question, that I acknowledge the Government of Canada for the support that they gave yesterday to the Pacific NorthWest LNG project. We can only hope that the 190 conditions imposed upon that project will not be a barrier to project approval.

My question today is for the Government Representative in the Senate. The federal government has committed to an open, transparent and fair consultation process on natural resource

development projects, yet the consultation process on a moratorium on crude oil tankers off the northwest coast of Canada comes to an end this week. The government launched this consultation process on a tanker moratorium in silence in August and rushed this process through in less than six weeks.

The moratorium, if implemented, has the potential to stall investment in our energy industry and put at risk the expected creation of 830,000 jobs across Canada over the next 25 years.

Due to the secretive way this consultation has been carried out, Alberta's energy industry has not had the opportunity to be fully consulted. This is far from a fair process that the government has committed itself to, nor, I would point out, is it the process that is expected and practised by industry. Can the Government Representative tell us if the government will extend this consultation to ensure that our energy industry has an opportunity to provide meaningful input?

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the honourable senator — I think I do, anyway — for his question. I noticed there was some comment when the senator rose as to whether or not this was a planted question. If it was, maybe another plant would be acceptable.

The Minister of Transport has been to Alberta twice in the last number of months in consultation with all the stakeholders on this project and others, and has been extensively securing the views of affected communities in the West, including obviously British Columbia. I would be happy to take your question as encouragement for the minister to ensure that the consultations that you would anticipate have taken place, in fact, have and will.

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

APPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

Hon. Norman E. Doyle: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In August the Prime Minister announced a new Supreme Court selection process, and the Prime Minister said it does not guarantee that the next Supreme Court justice will come from Atlantic Canada.

Now, if the Prime Minister appoints a replacement for Justice Thomas Cromwell from outside Atlantic Canada, it would leave the court with no Atlantic Canadian representation for the first time since 1875 — 141 years.

Senator Mockler: Shameful.

Senator Doyle: Does the Liberal government recognize the existence of a constitutional convention that Atlantic Canada must have one member on the Supreme Court of Canada? Why did the Prime Minister choose to treat Atlantic Canada's seat on the Supreme Court of Canada in such a cavalier fashion?

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the honourable senator for his question and would simply reference a vote yesterday in the other place which was unanimous in respect to the issue that you have raised. Perhaps it would be useful if this chamber also recorded its view as represented by the honourable senator's question and, as similarly expressed, the views as recorded in the other place.

Senator Doyle: The Minister of Justice, during her testimony before a House of Commons committee on August 11, referred to Atlantic Canada's member on the Supreme Court as a custom rather than a constitutional convention.

Can the Leader of the Government provide the chamber with an analysis from the Department of Justice or PCO showing why the minister believes it is only a custom?

Senator Harder: I thank the honourable senator for his question and would be happy to inquire, although I would — just to temper the enthusiasm with which he might receive a response — recognize that advice to ministers is advice to ministers.

Senator Doyle: Also, the Canadian Bar Association released a letter in August urging the Prime Minister to amend the mandate of the advisory committee calling for Atlantic Canada to be guaranteed a seat on the Supreme Court.

Has the government, to your knowledge, responded to the Canadian Bar Association? If so, did the Liberal government defend its position that a Supreme Court without Atlantic Canadian representation is perfectly acceptable?

Senator Harder: I will take the honourable senator's question as notice.

Hon. Jane Cordy: Is it not true, leader, that last night in the House of Commons there was a vote, and everyone in the House of Commons, including the Prime Minister, voted that the Atlantic seat was to stay as it is on the Supreme Court?

I know that very well because my Senate Liberal colleagues from Nova Scotia had already drafted a letter to the Prime Minister, and we were set to send it today. So there was a flurry of phone calls this morning that perhaps the letter wasn't necessary in light of the vote that took place last night in the house.

Senator Harder: I thank the honourable senator for her question. That was precisely the vote to which I referred in my comments. I would not comment on the appropriateness of any senator writing a letter to the Prime Minister, or any minister, to express their point of view. I was simply suggesting, in response to the question, that this chamber itself might wish to express itself as the other chamber has.

• (1440)

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: I certainly concur with the issue of the Supreme Court and the convention. Actually, over a month ago, my colleague Senator Wallace and I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice on that issue.

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, I want to follow up on the questions of Senator Doyle.

I go back to a comment that was made earlier this year that applicants from Newfoundland are not qualified because they don't speak French. I thought we had simultaneous translation in the Supreme Court, and maybe we don't, but I don't think that's right. I would like to have your view on that.

Senator Harder: It is not my view that counsels these matters. It's the views of the appointing authorities where the Prime Minister and his government have expressed a view with respect to language ability on the Supreme Court that will guide them in their consideration of candidates. But as far as I know, there are any number of candidates of distinction that could be considered for appointment that would meet the highest qualifications the Government of Canada has expressed.

Senator Moore: As I understand the opposition motion that was passed unanimously in the other place yesterday, by convention the Atlantic Canadian seat on the Supreme Court is to be filled by an Atlantic Canadian. I think the cut-off date for the filing of applications by persons interested was last Friday. The opposition motion was passed yesterday.

Should the process now be reopened so that persons from Atlantic Canada who might not have applied, thinking it will be open season and the whole country will be able to apply to fill our seat, can submit an application? Perhaps people from Newfoundland did not apply because of what was said earlier.

Would it not be appropriate for the process to be reopened or extended so that only persons interested from Atlantic Canada could submit their applications?

Senator Mockler: Good point.

Senator Harder: I thank the honourable senator for his question and suggestion. I do believe that there is any number of self-confident Atlantic Canadians with legal experience appropriate for consideration on the Supreme Court that wouldn't be prevented in their own mind from putting their name forward. I would assume that we have a number of such candidates before the government for consideration.

Senator Moore: If an application came forward from an Atlantic Canadian today, would it be considered? Or would he or she be disqualified because the application wasn't submitted in time for the cut-off date of last Friday? Do you think they would be considered?

An Hon. Senator: Hear, hear.

Senator Harder: Again, I thank the honourable senator for his question. With respect, I will take that on notice as I am not part of the decision-making process in this regard.

Senator Moore: Thank you.

Hon. Joan Fraser: If I may be permitted to demonstrate that members of the Senate Liberal caucus are indeed independent and not required to hold similar opinions, leader, I wonder if you would convey to the Minister of Justice that there are quite a few of us in this chamber who believe that it is of primordial importance that justices on the Supreme Court be competent in both official languages. If they are not, they cannot read the jurisprudence in both official languages and they cannot understand the arguments, except through interpretation. While I have infinite respect for interpreters, it is well-established that they cannot possibly capture every nuance of everything that is said. They cannot and do not.

Therefore, I have asked and ask again if the leader will convey to the minister the news that many senators agree with the government's policy on bilingualism at the Supreme Court.

Senator Harder: Yes, I will.

NATURAL RESOURCES

FORESTRY—SOFTWOOD LUMBER AGREEMENT

Hon. Percy Mockler: Honourable senators, thank you. I agree with Senator Black on the subject of natural resources, transparency and consultation.

[*Translation*]

That is why I want to talk about the Softwood Lumber Agreement with the United States. The Canadian forest industry employs 290,000 people across the country and represents an integrated value chain that is responsible for the production of seedlings and other retail products. It generates over $20 billion in economic activity across Canada and exports its products to 180 countries. In light of those facts and the concerns of Canadians, particularly in the Atlantic provinces, we are asking Canada and the United States to reach a new softwood lumber agreement that will ensure the continuous flow of Canadian softwood lumber products. In passing, that lumber comes from forests that are models of sustainable forest management.

My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

[*English*]

The Canadian forest industry accounts for almost 6 per cent of Canadian exports. Forest products are part of our economic backbone. Canada is also the world's second-largest producer of softwood lumber. As I'm speaking, the U.S. is considering countervailing duties on the forest products of Canada and the existing Softwood Lumber Agreement will be expiring in two weeks from now.

Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate assure this chamber immediately that his government will conclude a new softwood lumber agreement that protects Atlantic Canadians, not to say all Canadians from coast to coast to coast?

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the honourable senator for his question. It's a subject that he in his ministerial life has had direct responsibility for in

Atlantic Canada. It's an issue on which he has become an expert as a result of that and other experiences in the honourable senator's career. We all thank him for his attention to this important sector and the expertise he brings.

The honourable senator is absolutely correct in identifying the importance of this sector to the Canadian economy. The priority that it has in the responsible minister's agenda is high. The consultations with the Americans are intense. The sectoral consultations across Canada, which are part of these negotiations, as the senator will well know, are complex. As I indicated yesterday, the context of American political life is not without its interaction with actions in this area.

The minister has this subject as a high priority, and has given it his full attention. I am hopeful, as is the minister, that we can act in a fashion that protects and enhances Canadian industry from coast to coast to coast.

Senator Mockler: Honourable senators, my last question to the Honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate brings me to this one: The forestry sector is especially crucial — and I know you know this and we all know this — for the economy of Atlantic Canadians. That is why it is vitally important that the Maritime softwood lumber exception be maintained in this new agreement. Can the government leader verify that this exemption will be maintained in any new softwood lumber agreement with the U.S.?

• (1450)

Senator Harder: Again, I thank the honourable senator for his question and strong advocacy of the long-standing position of not only Atlantic producers but the Government of Canada. In the negotiations that are under way, I'm absolutely certain the minister will advance Canada's interests, as they have been advanced historically, to secure the best deal possible for this important sector.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Ghislain Maltais: Honourable senators, the negotiations between the American and Canadian governments have stalled. The axe will fall in 15 days when U.S. regulations come into force, significantly impacting Eastern Canada's forestry companies and their workers. Is it not time the Canadian government requested that the application of these regulations be suspended for a period of 30 days while the negotiations continue?

My question is for the Leader of the Senate Liberals. To show that the senators in this chamber are serious, I am asking him to join with all senators to urge the Prime Minister, on behalf of forestry companies and the thousands of workers in the industry, to reach a decision as quickly as possible.

[*English*]

Senator Harder: I believe the question was addressed to my colleague Senator Day, and, without agreeing with the proposition that I am the representative of the Liberal caucus in this house, I will answer as no deputy is available.

Let me simply assure the honourable senator that the Government of Canada takes this issue very seriously. It's high on the agenda, and it would be inappropriate for me to get into the details of the negotiation at this time, except to express to you and, through you, to Canadians and back to the government itself the importance that this chamber places on this important sector.

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

SENATE BUDGET 2016-17

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: Honourable senators, my question is for the chair of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration. On February 25, you tabled the Senate budget for the year 2016-17, which consisted of two pages and an executive summary.

I've asked, since March 9, the entire Senate, all senators who will be required to vote on this very needed budget, because, essentially, the Senate has been functioning now for six months without senators having the full budget or having the opportunity to say yea or nay.

So Senator Housakos, can you tell this chamber when you will table the full Senate budget so that we can study it before we have an opportunity to vote on it?

Hon. Leo Housakos: I'd like to thank the honourable senator for the question. I want to remind her, Your Honour, that Senator Ringuette has been a member of this chamber far longer than I have been. I also want to remind her that the behaviour of the Internal Economy Committee, in this particular instance of tabling the sub-estimate report, is consistent with what's been happening here for decades. She doesn't seem to have had any difficulty with that process since her arrival in this chamber up until February this year. So maybe she can elaborate on what it is particularly in the sub-estimates that has created concern for her. Furthermore, the budget of the Senate and all the proceedings of Internal Economy in the Senate have been made public ever since I became chair of Internal Economy.

All senators are welcome to participate at committee meetings, so, again, if there's something in terms of the way we've been operating with the sub-estimates, in this particular instance, that has changed from previous years, I'd like her to point that out.

Senator Ringuette: I would like to answer.

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Ringuette, time for Question Period has expired, so you'll have to save it for tomorrow.

Senator Ringuette: I would like to continue the question tomorrow, as long as the honourable senator, chair of the Internal Economy Committee, will be present in this chamber.

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, further to my presentation of delayed answers yesterday, I have the honour to table the following

answers to oral questions raised by Senator Carignan on May 11, 2016, concerning electoral reform; by Senator Carignan on May 18, 2016, concerning the dairy industry on the issue of diafiltered milk; by Senator Carignan on May 18, 2016, concerning diafiltered milk; by Senator Martin on May 18, 2016, concerning Veterans Affairs' funding; by Senator Plett on May 19, 2016, concerning Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea Virus; by Senator Boisvenu on May 19, 2016, concerning the exploitation and trafficking in persons; by Senator Martin on May 19, 2016, concerning foreign ownership investment, homeownership; by Senator Lang on May 31, 2016, concerning FINTRAC referrals; by Senator Lang on June 3, 2016, concerning terrorism financing; by Senator Moore on June 3, 2016, concerning Russia, the Sergei Magnitsky matter; by Senator Ngo on June 3, 2016, concerning Canada-China relations; by Senator Plett, on June 7, 2016, concerning trade contractors, the prompt payment issue; by Senator Lang on June 8, 2016, concerning dual citizens, radicalization of terrorists; by Senator Lang on June 8, 2016, concerning dual citizenship; by Senator Ataullahjan on June 8, 2016, concerning the waiting period for child tax benefits for refugees; by Senator Munson on June 8, 2016, concerning mental health support for refugees; by Senator Jaffer on June 8, 2016, concerning judicial vacancies; by Senator Raine on June 9, 2016, concerning Marine Protected Areas, compensation for fishermen; by Senator Patterson on June 9, 2016, concerning Russia, the dumping of toxic chemicals, the Arctic sovereignty issue that was raised at that time; and by Senator Martin on June 16, 2016, concerning small business.

I table these for the information of all senators. There are more to follow.

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

ELECTORAL REFORM

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Claude Carignan on May 11, 2016)

The Senate will have an opportunity to independently review any electoral reform legislation referred to it by the House of Commons.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

DAIRY INDUSTRY—DIAFILTERED MILK

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Claude Carignan on May 18, 2016)

The Government is very aware of the concerns that have been expressed by dairy producers with respect to the increasing use of diafiltered milk in cheese making.

The Government fully supports supply management and is working with dairy farmers and processors to reach sustainable solutions for the benefit of the whole Canadian dairy sector, including in connection with diafiltered milk. Close collaboration between the Government and the industry is necessary to help the sector meet its current challenges and seize opportunities.

Following the commitment the Government made in early May, Minister MacAulay and Government officials have been meeting with members of the dairy industry and continue to listen to their views in order to find long-term, sustainable solutions to industry challenges such as those related to the projected impacts following the anticipated ratification of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the use of diafiltered milk.

These consultations have been very cooperative, productive and constructive, and the Government remains attentive to the needs of industry.

The government intends to use these consultations to inform its decisions going forward.

DAIRY INDUSTRY—DIAFILTERED MILK

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VETERANS AFFAIRS

FUNDING

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Yonah Martin on May 18, 2016)

Veterans Affairs is currently contributing to care, support and services provided to more than 6,600 Veterans in approximately 1,500 long term care facilities across the country, including the George Derby Centre in Burnaby, British Columbia.

On January 11, 1996, a tripartite agreement regarding the 300 priority access beds at George Derby Center was signed by the Government of Canada, represented by the then Minister of Veterans Affairs, the Government of the Province of British Columbia, represented by the Minister of Health, and the President of the George Derby Long Term Care Society.

The George Derby Centre is operated and governed under the authority of the British Columbia Ministry of Health and provides long term care to Veterans and other

elderly Canadians. The George Derby Centre's day-to-day operations and health services for residents of the facility are funded primarily by the BC Ministry of Health, through the Fraser Health Authority.

Veterans Affairs' agreements with the province and the facility ensure eligible War Veterans are given priority access. In addition, although the provincial government is responsible for, and the primary funder of, health care services, Veterans Affairs contributes to the cost of special programs and services offered to War Veteran residents, including rehabilitation therapy, creative arts, spiritual care, recreation, and music therapy.

With the decline in the number of War Veterans, there are fewer Veterans at the George Derby Centre. Today, approximately half of the residents in this 300-bed facility are War Veterans. More specifically, as of May 31, 2016, there were 151 War Veterans in contract beds, 18 Veterans in community beds and 131 non-Veteran residents. The facility estimates an average occupancy in 2016-2017 of 130 War Veterans.

Veterans Affairs places the highest priority on making sure our Veterans have the support they need, when and where they need it. Departmental officials are engaged with the facility and provincial health authority and are actively monitoring.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

PORCINE EPIDEMIC DIARRHEA VIRUS

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Donald Neil Plett on May 19, 2016)

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is committed to protecting animal health in Canada.

The requirements for cleaning and disinfecting of certain swine trucks in the United States, prior to their entry into Canada, have been in place since the mid-1990s. The requirements have helped Canada remain free of several diseases of concern that are present in the United States.

In early 2014, emergency measures were put in place at the Manitoba/ United States border until industry's concerns related to Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) could be evaluated. Following a scientific review, the CFIA determined that there is no evidence that the emergency measures are needed.

As a result, the CFIA made a decision to discontinue the emergency measures. As of October 1, 2015, the requirements were reinstated for the Manitoba border crossings. The CFIA established a transition period until May 2, 2016 to allow industry time to adjust to the reinstatement of the regular requirements.

JUSTICE

EXPLOITATION AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu on May 19, 2016)

Our government takes human trafficking and the exploitation of women and girls very seriously and we are committed to strengthening our efforts to combat this problem, so that some of society's most vulnerable members will be better protected.

Accordingly, we are examining whether and how the reforms in Bill C-452, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (exploitation and trafficking in persons)*, can be brought into force. We are committed to achieving Bill C-452's important objectives, but we must do so responsibly — in a way that reflects our values and respects the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

It is important to note that existing criminal law already provides significant penalties for human trafficking-related conduct, including lengthy mandatory minimum penalties.

FINANCE

FOREIGN INVESTMENT—HOME OWNERSHIP

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Yonah Martin on May 19, 2016)

The primary concern of the federal government is ensuring the longer term financial and economic stability of Canada's overall housing market.

In this context, and given the pressures in the Vancouver and Toronto markets, one of the first actions taken by the government was the announcement of a series of coordinated and prudent measures to address borrower vulnerabilities and reinforce market discipline on lenders. These measures included changes to the rules for government-backed mortgage insurance to require a 10 per cent borrower down payment on the proportion of a house above $500,000.

As well, Budget 2016 announced funding to Statistics Canada to develop methods for gathering data on purchases of Canadian housing by foreign buyers. This initiative could involve collaboration with the provinces, such as British Columbia, which recently announced its intention to have homebuyers disclose whether they are citizens or permanent residents of Canada or another country. Acquiring better data on foreign homebuyers will allow the government to more fully understand some of the dynamics driving the Canadian housing market.

The Government is also taking steps to reduce money laundering and the use of the proceeds of crime. The core elements of Canada's Anti-Money laundering and

Anti-Terrorist Financing (AML/ATF) Regime are set out in the *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act* (PCMLTFA) and its regulations. The Act requires financial institutions and intermediaries, including realtors, to identify their clients, keep records, report suspicious and prescribed transactions and have an internal compliance program in place.

The Financial Transaction Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) carries out its responsibilities through the issuance of guidance, outreach activities, compliance examinations and, when appropriate, enforcement actions to prevent the use of illicit funds entering into the housing market.

FINTRAC continues to work closely with the Canadian Real Estate Association and members of the real estate sector to support understanding and meeting their compliance requirements.

Overall, the Government promotes long-term stability and balanced economic growth in Canada's housing market through continued monitoring of the housing market, and acts as needed, to help ensure it remains healthy, competitive and stable for new and existing homeowners.

NATIONAL REVENUE

FINTRAC REFERRALS—INVESTIGATION OF TERRORISM FINANCING THROUGH CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Daniel Lang on May 31, 2016)

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) regularly receives information from the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) identifying potential risks of terrorist financing related to organizations that are registered charities or likely to apply. The CRA reviews all information received from FINTRAC to determine its relevance to active files and to identify new areas of risk. Information that is relevant to active files is used, in conjunction with information from other sources, to support the CRA's ability to assess the level of risk posed by applicant or registered charities and may contribute to its decision to take preventative action. The CRA also considers information received from FINTRAC to guide its determination to monitor particular organizations. While the CRA may determine that immediate action is not necessary, information remains accessible should concerns arise. The confidentiality provisions of the *Income Tax Act* prevent the CRA from discussing the affairs of a particular organization.

TERRORISM FINANCING

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Daniel Lang on June 3, 2016)

As noted in our previous response to questions raised on May 31, 2016, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) regularly receives information from the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) identifying potential risks of terrorist financing related to organizations that are registered charities or likely to apply. The CRA reviews all information received from FINTRAC to determine its relevance to active files and to identify new areas of risk. Information that is relevant to active files is used, in conjunction with information from other sources, to support the CRA's ability to assess the level of risk posed by applicant or registered charities and may contribute to its decision to take preventative action. The CRA also considers information received from FINTRAC to guide its determination to monitor particular organizations. While the CRA may determine that immediate action is not necessary, information remains accessible should concerns arise. The confidentiality provisions of the Income Tax Act prevent the CRA from discussing the affairs of a particular organization.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

RUSSIA—SERGEI MAGNITSKY

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Wilfred P. Moore on June 3, 2016)

We have made clear the unacceptable behaviour by Russia on many fronts and will continue to defend human rights issues.

Since we have formed government we have already shown a willingness to hold Russia to account. We have increased sanctions, adding new individuals and companies to the sanctions list, in coordination with our allies.

Currently, the Government of Canada has the ability to prevent individuals from entering Canada under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*.

With regard to further sanctions, on 14 April, 2016, the House of Commons tasked the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development to conduct a comprehensive review of the provisions and operation of the *Freezing Assets of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act* (FACFOA) and the *Special Economic Measures Act*, in accordance with Section 20 of the FACFOA. In this review the Committee will give due regard to the circumstances of Sergei Magnitsky, among others, in its consideration of potential measures to respond to violations of internationally recognized human rights. A report with recommendations will then be presented to the government. The Committee is scheduled to commence its study in the fall of 2016.

CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS—REQUEST FOR APOLOGY

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Thanh Hai Ngo on June 3, 2016)

The Government of Canada stands up for human rights and takes a principled position on freedom of the press. The Minister of Foreign Affairs clearly stated in his meeting and

joint press conference with the Chinese Foreign Affairs Minister that Canada champions the values of pluralism, democracy, inclusive and accountable governance, and respect for diversity and universal human rights.

As the Prime Minister has publicly stated, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and officials from Global Affairs Canada have expressed Canada's dissatisfaction to the Chinese side with the manner in which Minister Wang treated our journalist.

Canada will continue to call on the Government of China to respect the human rights of its citizens and to ensure that freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, values that define this country, are enjoyed around the world.

SMALL BUSINESS AND TOURISM

TRADE CONTRACTORS—PROMPT PAYMENT

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Donald Neil Plett on June 7, 2016)

The Government is currently analyzing the Bill in the context of existing legislation and policy instruments to determine its overall impacts. Public Services and Procurement Canada has set-up a government-industry working group with the Canadian Construction Association to identify and build consensus on possible prompt payment improvements. Engagement with industry through this working group has already begun with a series of workshops and meetings involving other industry representatives. Following consultation with Industry, the Government will provide a formal position on Bill S-224 in Fall 2016.

PUBLIC SAFETY

DUAL CITIZENSHIP—RADICALIZED TERRORISTS

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Daniel Lang on June 8, 2016)

While the Government is unable to comment on specific operational matters pertaining to national security, combating the phenomenon of Canadians participating in terrorist activities overseas is a key priority for the Government and for Canada's national security agencies.

Canadians can be assured that our national security agencies carefully monitor individuals suspected of involvement in terrorist activities and use a number of tools to deal with these individuals, including the revocation of passports, the Passenger Protect Program, and potential criminal charges.

To complement these efforts, more work is needed to counter radicalization to violence. The Government is committed to making Canada a world leader in counter-radicalization, and we know that the most effective means of prevention begins in the community and involves working with community leaders to develop early intervention programs. As such, Budget 2016 includes an investment of $35 million over the next five years, with $10 million per year ongoing, to establish an office for counter-radicalization and community outreach.

The Government of Canada and Canada's national security agencies will continue working with communities; with provinces, territories, and municipalities; and with international partners in order to combat terrorism in Canada and around the world.

DUAL CITIZENSHIP—RADICALIZED TERRORISTS

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Daniel Lang on June 8, 2016)

A National Post article published on June 8, 2016 identified Tamim Chowdhury, a former resident of Southwestern Ontario as a leader of a terrorist group.

Due to privacy concerns, IRCC is unable to comment without consent from the person concerned.

FINANCE

WAITING PERIOD FOR CHILD TAX BENEFIT—REFUGEES

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Salma Ataullahjan on June 8, 2016)

There is no three month waiting period to apply for, or receive, benefits. An individual can apply for benefits as soon as he or she enter Canada and he or she meets all the following eligibility conditions:

- They must live with the child;
- They must be primarily responsible for the care and upbringing of the child;
- They must be a resident of Canada for tax purposes;
- They or their spouse must have a valid citizenship or immigration status in Canada;

As the Syrian Refugees entered Canada as Permanent Residents, they were eligible for benefits starting the month after they entered the country.

Complete applications are usually processed within 5-10 days of being received at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and payments are then issued monthly on the next available system payment date. Overall, clients should receive their first payment within 30 to 45 days.

The CRA worked closely with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to ensure that these refugees would receive their benefits as soon as possible. It

also provided information to IRCC for them to share with their stakeholders, and offered to assist with cases that might be brought to their attention as being problematic.

HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Jim Munson on June 8, 2016)

The Department, through the Settlement Program, provides support and services to newcomers to assist in their long-term integration in Canada. There are over 700 contribution agreements with over 500 service provider organizations in over 400 communities across Canada.

While health care is under provincial/territorial jurisdiction, IRCC does fund a number of complementary health and mental health activities for newcomers, and builds partnerships with stakeholders in the health sector to identify the best methods to assist immigrants as they settle in Canada.

Mental health programming for newcomers focuses on prevention, health promotion, recovery and community integration of persons with mental health (including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety) and/or addiction challenges. Programming also includes capacity building and training of settlement workers so that they are able to identify mental health issues and make the appropriate referrals.

Settlement programming is complemented by the recently restored Interim Federal Health Program, which provides temporary coverage for counselling sessions with psychologists or psychiatrists.

Recognizing the gap in mental health support for all Canadians, the Minister of Health will be advancing, with provinces and territories, the mandate priority to make high quality mental health services more available to Canadians who need them.

JUSTICE

JUDICIAL VACANCIES

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Mobina S. B. Jaffer on June 8, 2016)

As promised, our government has moved forward to fill pressing judicial vacancies by drawing on existing lists of recommended candidates. On June 17, 2016, the government announced fifteen judicial appointments across the country, and two were in the province of British Columbia.

The government is committed to applying a more rigorous and transparent approach to appointments generally, as already reflected in a new process applicable to most non-judicial appointments.

We are considering ways to strengthen the judicial appointments process, guided by the same principles of openness, transparency, and merit. We are also committed to ensuring that Canada's judiciary truly reflects the face of Canada.

Significant reforms of the judicial appointments process will take time, and require appropriate consultations, including with the judiciary, the legal community and the general public. We have already received helpful suggestions in this regard. We look forward to further engagement as we move forward with our examination of how best to achieve transparency, accountability, and diversity in the judicial appointments process.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS—COMPENSATION FOR FISHERMEN

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Nancy Greene Raine on June 9, 2016)

Since former Minister Hunter Tootoo's April 12, 2016 appearance in the Senate, during which he discussed the Government's plan to meet its marine conservation targets (MCT) of 5 per cent by 2017 and 10 per cent by 2020, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has held meetings across Canada with provinces, territories, Indigenous groups and a full range of stakeholders. Discussions have been held during regular working group, advisory committee and bilateral meetings.

The Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers' (CCFAM) Oceans Task Group, co-chaired by DFO and the Province of Newfoundland, was formed in January 2016 to guide implementation of its "National Framework for Canada's Network of Marine Protected Areas" in support of the targets. This group has also begun its work.

In general, there is strong support for achieving the conservation targets, with concern on how proposed protected areas may affect economic activities and Indigenous interests.

On World Oceans Day, June 8, 2016, Minister LeBlanc announced the approach to be taken to meet the MCT. Further consultations are planned on the approach, additional in-depth discussions will be held, and opportunities for public consultation provided, as new areas proposed for protection advance.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

RUSSIA—DUMPING OF TOXIC CHEMICALS—ARCTIC SOVEREIGNTY

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Dennis Glen Patterson on June 9, 2016)

The Government of Canada is committed to keeping provinces and territories, including Nunavut, informed of potential hazards to the safety of their people and the environment. The Government closely monitors the trajectory and re-entry of rocket launches and space debris through the Canadian Space Operations Centre (via NORAD), the Government Operations Centre, NAV Canada and Transport Canada.

When made aware of the planned launch, the Government of Canada demarched the Russian ambassador and asked Russia why Canada did not receive more notice. In doing so, Canada stressed to the Government of Russia the importance of taking necessary precautions to protect the environment, as well as the need for greater advance notice of planned launches to ensure that all potential risks, particularly those relating to environmental impacts in the Arctic, can be appropriately addressed. Canada has also informed the Russian government that we expect them to make every effort to ensure that debris does not land within Canadian territory.

With the prevalence of satellite launches and cooperation in space, it is not uncommon for there to be space debris. This issue is governed by a number of international treaties, which require member states to refrain from intentionally causing damage to other countries when conducting outer space activities. Canada expects Russia to fully comply with its obligations in this regard.

In the hypothetical scenario of space debris landing within Canadian territory, the Government of Canada would engage with the appropriate Province or Territory to explore options for recovery.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

MINISTER'S VISIT TO SOUTH KOREA

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Yonah Martin on June 16, 2016)

The Government of Canada understands the critical role that small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) have in driving the Canadian economy and creating jobs for Canadians. The Government is committed to creating an environment that will help small businesses thrive and prosper, in which taxation is just one of the many important components.

The Government of Canada realizes there is great diversity amongst SMEs in Canada. Currently, 99.7 percent of businesses in Canada are classified as small (1-99 employees) or medium-size (100-499 employees). In fact, 54.1 percent of businesses are considered micro-enterprises (one to four employees). The Government's policies and programs are tailored to support all businesses across Canada.

The Government of Canada has recently launched the Innovation Agenda, which will make innovation a national priority. This inclusive approach will focus on key areas like promoting an entrepreneurial and creative society and improving ease of doing business. The Government will be engaging Canadians to ensure the Innovation Agenda will deliver results that impact all sectors across the economy.

• (1500)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

NATIONAL SICKLE CELL AWARENESS DAY BILL

SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Cordy, seconded by the Honourable Senator Baker, P.C., for the second reading of Bill S-211, An Act respecting National Sickle Cell Awareness Day.

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Question.

The Hon. the Speaker: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Cordy, seconded by the Honourable Senator Baker, that this bill be read the second time.

Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time.)

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read a third time?

(On motion of Senator Cordy, bill referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology.)

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF CORRUPT FOREIGN OFFICIALS BILL (SERGEI MAGNITSKY LAW)

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—
DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk moved second reading of Bill S-226, An Act to provide for the taking of restrictive measures in respect of foreign nationals responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights and to make related amendments to the Special Economic Measures Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

She said: Honourable senators, I had prepared my presentation with respect to this bill during the summer, and I am now trying to update it. I propose to speak to it in full next week. So I propose to adjourn the rest of my debate time for the next sitting.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Andreychuk, debate adjourned.)

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

> Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Stewart Olsen, seconded by the Honourable Senator Johnson, for the second reading of Bill S-214, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (cruelty-free cosmetics).

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, this is currently at day 15, so I would like to adjourn for the balance of my time.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE PROTECTION ACT CIVIL MARRIAGE ACT CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND A BILL TO AMEND—
SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

> Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Jaffer, seconded by the Honourable Senator Baker, P.C., for the second reading of Bill S-210, An Act to amend An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Civil Marriage Act and the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, this too being at day 15, I move to adjourn this for the balance of my time.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL CORRIDOR IN CANADA AS A MEANS OF ENHANCING AND FACILITATING COMMERCE AND INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Hon. David Tkachuk, pursuant to notice of September 27, 2016, moved:

> That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce be authorized to study and report on the development of a national corridor in Canada as a means of enhancing and facilitating commerce and internal trade.
>
> That the committee submit its final report no later than Tuesday, February 28, 2017, and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

The Hon. the Speaker: On debate, Senator Tkachuk.

Senator Tkachuk: Honourable senators, this was a decision reached by the steering committee over the summer months and then in an email distributed to all members of the committee.

It seems to me it was unanimous that we would be doing this study, so I took it upon myself to inform members that I would be moving the resolution here in the Senate so that we can begin work as soon as possible. That's what the resolution is, and it's on a national transportation corridor. It was an interesting proposition put forward by a number of witnesses that we had on interprovincial trade, so we wanted to follow it up and do further study on it.

Hon. Joan Fraser: Would Senator Tkachuk accept a question?

Senator Tkachuk: Of course.

Senator Fraser: How much are we talking about? What kind of travel?

Senator Tkachuk: I'm not sure, Senator Fraser. My assumption is there will be some travel because it is a national corridor, but we haven't met as a committee yet. We will be meeting tomorrow, and a budget will be presented to the Senate Chamber as soon as possible.

Senator Fraser: It sounds to me like a very interesting study. On the other hand, it might be nice if the committee had a chance to make a few plans before we actually endorse it. If the committee is meeting tomorrow, if it's a morning meeting, we can vote on it tomorrow afternoon.

Senator Tkachuk: I'm just following usual procedure. This is what I've done with previous motions. We've gone to committee and then presented a budget afterwards, when asked by Senator Fraser or other senators. I'm at your disposal, honourable senators.

The Hon. the Speaker: Are senators ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Senators: Agreed.

An Hon. Senator: On division.

(Motion agreed to, on division.)

• (1510)

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY THE OPERATION AND PRACTICES OF THE COPYRIGHT BOARD

Hon. David Tkachuk, pursuant to notice of September 27, 2016, moved:

> That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce be authorized to study, and make recommendations on, the operation and practices of the Copyright Board of Canada.
>
> That the committee submit its final report no later than Wednesday, November 30, 2016, and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

He said: Honourable senators, to get this out of the way, there will be no travel on this matter. The House of Commons is charged with reviewing the legislation on the copyright bill that was passed a number of years ago. We have had a number of presentations from businesses that said that the Copyright Board itself should be subject to review. We have decided as a committee that we would then ask them to come forward to us over the next couple of day to see what the problem is. If there is, we will make a recommendation to the House of Commons that they not only study the bill but specifically include the Copyright Board, which is excluded from the process.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

SENATE MODERNIZATION

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO DEPOSIT FIRST REPORT WITH CLERK DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Tom McInnis, pursuant to notice of September 27, 2016, moved:

> That the Special Senate Committee on Senate Modernization be permitted, notwithstanding usual practices, to deposit with the Clerk of the Senate its first report, if the Senate is not then sitting and that the report be deemed to have been tabled in the Chamber.

He said: Honourable senators, I wish to provide you with a short explanation on the purpose of this motion.

The Special Senate Committee on Senate Modernization has completed its first report containing numerous recommendations and proposals to manage the change currently under way in this chamber. Due to the public interest in our report and the success of some recent report releases by other committees, it was recommended that the special committee seek the Senate's permission to deposit its first interim report with the Clerk of the Senate, and that it will be deemed to be tabled in the Senate instead of the normal practice. This option is permitted under rule 12-31.

This action will permit a timely morning news conference to publicly release our recommendations and inform Canadians of our plans to modernize our institution. This plan is in step with the new communications strategy suggested by the Internal Economy Committee and our communications team.

It is our intention to circulate a copy of the report, once it is deposited with the Clerk, to all senators to provide them with an opportunity to read our report as it becomes public.

Hon. Joseph A. Day (Leader of the Senate Liberals): Could the honourable senator let us know if he has a target date for release?

Senator McInnis: Yes, next Tuesday, and I believe that's October 4. The press conference will be at 9:30 in the morning.

Senator Day: Thank you.

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: If you table the report at 9:30 and we allow this motion to move forward, at what time will senators who are not members of the committee have the report in their hands?

Senator McInnis: All senators will have the report. It is my understanding that it will be tabled with the Clerk around nine o'clock and dispersed immediately. It will be circulated to all senators as soon as practically possible.

Senator Cowan: And on the website?

Senator McInnis: Yes.

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Senator McInnis, this rule was used in the past when we had a break in a session. If I recall, it was started for the long summer and Christmas recesses. Therefore, it would perhaps outdate the reports if we had to wait from June to September to file them. So this mechanism came into being for the sake of efficiency.

The under-arching responsibility of a senator is to know what's going on in the Senate. No senator can sit in all committees all of the time, so we delegate to our colleagues the responsibility of examining issues and reporting on them. But at the end of the day, it is the responsibility of each and every senator to know what's in a report and to come to a conclusion about whether they support that report or not. We then have a debate here and it's formally adopted or not. Some reports are not adopted.

This would be the first time I've heard of — and perhaps I didn't understand you well — where we're using it to maximize something in the press. My concern is that we follow the rules and that we care about our responsibilities within the rules, practices and conventions of this place. This seems to me a way of starting to change where we may ultimately want to get to, but we are doing it by not following fully the intent of the rules we have now.

Perhaps I'm misunderstanding you, but I'm somewhat worried about this practice of going to the press and to the public before the Senate can exercise its responsibility. Can you assure me that this is not a new precedent and that we are not now developing rules on the fly rather than thoughtfully making amendments to our Rules?

Senator McInnis: Actually, this is within rule 12-31.

Senator, I had the same concern. I really did. There's a new communication plan, and they're attempting to get maximum coverage for our institution and the recommendations that are being put forward.

The way that this will be laid out is that it will be presented by me as a whole, but individual senators on the committee will present the respective recommendations; and, of course, there will be a full hearing and full debate on each of the recommendations, of which there are something like 22.

I share your concern. I'm advised by the communication experts that if we present it in the Senate at, say, two o'clock in the afternoon or 2:30 and then have a press conference at three o'clock, we will not get the so-called dinner crowd, which is the crowd we will want to hit with our presentation. We want to present it in the morning at 9:30 so that it will get full coverage. The press will all be there and it will be done in an organized fashion. The steering committee will be there in the press theatre, doing it.

We have a number of different rollouts that we will be doing in the next two to three weeks to make sure this gets good coverage.

But I share your concern. It is a practice that is relatively new, but it has been used apparently by other committees.

Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie: Would the honourable senator accept another question?

Senator McInnis: Certainly.

Senator Ogilvie: It is my understanding that you are introducing the report into the Senate through the procedure that is allowed, as you've described, at roughly the same time that you will be calling the press conference. The press conference is designed to draw attention to a report that you are introducing in the Senate, where it will be fully debated in the context of your recommendations coming forward. What you are attempting to do is draw attention to an important work of the Senate, such that there could be considerable public interest in the debate in the Senate as your report goes through the normal process. Do I understand that correctly?

• (1520)

Senator McInnis: You've captured it better than I did. Thank you.

Senator Andreychuk: I have a supplementary. I'm not part of Internal Economy or the communications, but I know the Senate is very concerned about getting to the public to express our good work. I'm not sure I had heard it was to maximize the press.

I'm equally concerned that we are not just interested in proving to the next public opinion poll on what we're doing that we are doing our constitutional and parliamentary duties and that we have the thoughtful debate and understanding of the issues to ultimately, in the parliamentary, Westminster system, come to some consensus. If it goes to the public, and if we are talking about the public reaction, we're starting to act like the House of Commons. I thought we were different.

If you've reflected on that and feel comfortable that going down that route is the right way, I have yet to be persuaded. I hope that we do not act and react to the opinions of the day, because this is a place where the long-term opinions are extremely important.

Senator McInnis: I concur with that, but having been in public life for some time, in the past I have seen where presentations are made in the assembly, and the media do the story. They don't hear from the steering committee. They don't hear first-hand and have the opportunity to ask questions of us and for us to convey the message. That is the difference.

As I said earlier, I appreciate it. I questioned it immediately and said, "Look, what are we doing? We're back-dooring this presentation." On the other hand, it is important that the correct story be told from coast to coast. That's the whole intent of this. It's new, but we do want to get, as I say, the accurate story out there.

Hon. Nicole Eaton: Senator McInnis, are you not worried with having this press conference, and then perhaps we get to read it later, that you will be overpromising the public what is actually going on in the Senate? When the Senate has debated the whole concept of what we're going to do for modernization, and it has

been decided, then we're telling the public exactly what to expect. It's like giving them a big birthday cake with candles, but there's nothing under the icing. That really worries me.

Senator McInnis: These recommendations are just that, and that will be made clear —

Senator Eaton: Icing without a cake?

Senator McInnis: No. There will be some context to what we say at the press conference, and obviously we will be questioned, probably more extensively on some than on others. It's not the icing without the cake. It is our report.

We will also be making it clear that these are not, as I say, approved by the Senate. They will be discussed and debated in the Senate and could be amended, and senators may want to make amendments as we go through. That will all be made perfectly clear.

Hon. Elaine McCoy: I keep hearing that we shouldn't share this report with the public. This report, as soon as it is presented to the Senate, whether it's presented through the Clerk five hours before the Senate sits that day, and in fact four and a half hours before senators have a copy in their office, and in fact four and three quarters before they can find it on the website, it will be public once you present it in the Senate. At which point there will be public response, and I dare say all these intelligent independent senators, 86 of us at the moment, will be able to make up their own minds on these points of view and recommendations that have been brought forward and will be debated at great length, I hope.

Senator McInnis: Absolutely. That is exactly what will take place.

Hon. Murray Sinclair: Senator, would you take a question related to an earlier comment you made?

Senator McInnis: Yes.

Senator Sinclair: Thank you. I heard comment earlier on about setting a precedent, and that too concerns me. I've heard references here in the Senate by some senators saying, "Well, we did it before, so let's keep doing it." My concern is that now you're going to be presenting a document to the public with very little time for senators to have a chance to review it before we start getting phone calls from the media asking us to respond to the document.

From what I heard you say, you're holding a press conference at 9:30 and you're giving us the document at nine o'clock. That's not enough time for us to prepare any kind of intelligent response to any media questions we get. I can assure you that as independents, this is a question that they're going to come to us about.

What I ask of you is whether you can direct your clerk to give us a copy of the report well before nine o'clock that morning and, in fact, the night before would be fine, on the understanding, of course, that we will embargo it until the press conference is held or until the release occurs.

The important thing is we should be given some respect and allowed to have the document so that we can respond to what you say in the press conference before it goes public, and we can add to the public dialogue that's going to occur at the time that the document makes it to the media.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator McInnis: Well, look, part of the difficulty, of course, is that there must be a mechanism we can put in place to ensure that there's confidentiality with respect to this report.

But let's go back and say that we were not going to release it at 9:30 and we were going to do it in the normal fashion —

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator McInnis, your time has expired. Are you asking for an additional five minutes?

Senator McInnis: Yes.

The Hon. the Speaker: Granted, colleagues?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator McInnis: If we presume we were going to do it in the normal fashion, and if that's the wish of the Senate, that's what we will do. Then what time will you have to read it? It will be public then. I don't understand getting it the evening before, or if we do it in the normal fashion, you would get it when it was tabled or presented in the Senate. You would still have no time to peruse or read it.

Senator Sinclair: May I ask a supplementary?

The Hon. the Speaker: Yes.

Senator Sinclair: Thank you. I gather from your answer that the answer is no, you will not direct the clerk or any official with the committee to give us a copy of the report before your press conference or before the nine o'clock time that you've indicated? Am I correct?

Senator McInnis: Look, what I said was if it's the wish of the Senate. It's not Senator McInnis that's dictating. I bring a motion here, and we're having questions and answers on it. That is up to you, up to the Senate.

The reason this request and this motion are before you is to try to get the maximum benefit from a report that we've spent 16 meetings discussing and coming up with recommendations, and they're good recommendations. That's the purpose of it, and that's the communication. Others other than me have had that discussion and debate and have come up with a communication plan. I suspect that all groups in the Senate have participated in that.

• (1530)

That's all we're doing. As I said, we're trying to get the best coverage we possibly can. That's important.

Senator Sinclair: Having asked for the report three times in my office and not received it, I assume again that the answer to my question from you is that you will not direct the staff to release a copy of the report to us before the announced time that you've indicated to this chamber earlier on this afternoon.

Senator McInnis: My motion is what it is. The motion is clear. We weren't giving the report out to anyone other than the committee. We were making changes right up to a week or two weeks ago. This is not something that we were giving out to all senators. In any event, we didn't want to send it out to 105 or whatever number of senators we have in here, all over the place. Then where would it be?

Hon. Serge Joyal: If I recall, the only rules whereby there is an exception to the tabling of the report in the Senate when the Senate is not sitting is in the *Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators*, whereby the Senate Ethics Officer, when he or she has concluded his or her investigation, considering the importance for the reputation of the senator who might be the object of the report, is authorized to table his or her report when the Senate is not sitting. This is in order to protect, as I say, the capacity and the rights of that senator to state his or her position in relation to the report.

There is no doubt that there is a lot of interest in the media around the recommendations — and I'm addressing myself to the chair of the committee. I was really surprised I think it was a week ago when I received a call from a journalist asking me to comment or inform him about the report. I refused to answer the question, but I read in the paper comments made by senators who are members of the committee on some of the potential recommendations of the report. I was very surprised at that, because I thought that it's a practice that is well-shared among senators that there is an embargo; it's even covered by the privilege. Because as Senator Andreychuk said, we are here lifting the privilege of senators to be the first ones to be informed about the content of a report. This report, especially, deals with the status of senators themselves, so if there is a subject about which they are entitled to be aware, it's certainly this one.

We have to state it very clearly on the matter of principles so that, as Senator Andreychuk has said, we're not creating a precedent whereby we are lifting our privilege as senators to be first and foremost informed of the content of the reports that are tabled here in this chamber.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, Senator McInnis's time has once again expired, but a number of senators wish to participate in this debate. We have a number of choices: Senator McInnis can ask for extended time; somebody can adjourn debate until tomorrow and we can continue it; or another senator who wishes to speak may speak today.

I'll go first to the first option. Senator McInnis, are you asking for more time?

Senator McInnis: Yes, please.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is another five minutes granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator McInnis: Pursuant to Senator Joyal's comment, I too had requests from media, and no comment was made. I heard that some senators did make comments, and that's unfortunate because we shouldn't operate that way. A lot of work has gone into this, and as I say some of the recommendations were not really solidified or completed until about two or three weeks ago.

The other point, and it is important that it be made to the media, is that we don't know what the end result of any of the recommendations will be when they finish in here. We do not know. I've already been told that some senators will be making amendments. If they're for the better, that's great. I think we should.

But it is important that the accuracy of the report be conveyed to the media, to the extent that we can. That is extremely important. If it's just sent out the door and they take it, goodness knows what we're going to see in the headlines.

That's the purpose.

Hon. Jane Cordy: Thank you very much, Senator McInnis, for answering the questions. Earlier, Senator Ogilvie spoke about the obesity report that was tabled during break week, which was a tremendous report. I'd like to thank Senator Ogilvie and the Social Affairs Committee for the work that they did.

But many times in my 16 years in the Senate these wonderful reports have been buried under a rock, and nobody knows what's going on. This past summer when I was in Nova Scotia, I was asked to meet with somebody because they were wondering when senators were going to start publishing their expenses online. I was very pleased to tell her that in fact we have been doing it since 2013. I actually met with her just to go over the changes that have been made because she wasn't aware of all the work that had been done.

It's extremely important that we communicate to the public the good things that we're doing. Somebody said earlier that we can't turn into the House of Commons. No, I think we've got to be better than the House of Commons. We've got to get our message out. Our communications team has done a superlative job over the past year. I am the deputy chair of subcommittee on communications, which is chaired by Senator Housakos, and which has worked extremely hard, but I give full credit to the Communications Directorate, which has gone above and beyond in ensuring that the good stories of the Senate are communicated to the public. If we don't communicate them to the public, the public doesn't know. It's as simple as that.

If we have a press conference at three o'clock in the afternoon from a committee that has worked extremely hard over the past few months, then what's the point? Why don't they just distribute the copies to us and we'll live happily ever after because we followed all the rules? I think we can follow the rules and allow for some flexibility by ensuring that senators are getting the reports but allowing for prime coverage.

I'd be interested in hearing how many people actually read the Social Affairs Committee report when it came out beforehand. I didn't; I was away, so I didn't. But I sure followed the press

releases and the press coverage of the committee report that came out, and it was excellent. I know that with this committee, chaired by Senator McInnis, the same things would happen.

Sixteen years ago when I was first in the Senate, we got paper copies of everything. Times have changed.

An Hon. Senator: Is there a question?

Senator Cordy: We have to be willing to change in order to tell our good-news stories.

I guess I have to ask you a question, Senator McInnis. Somebody spoke earlier about long-term opinions. Do you not believe that long-term opinions are important — most certainly important — but if we don't tell the good-news stories then there will be no good long-term opinions? Because if the public is not aware of what we are doing and what we continue to do, then people just won't know about our excellent work.

So do you not agree that we have great good-news stories that we have to continue to tell?

Senator McInnis: Yes, and it is a very good question. You're absolutely correct. My experience over many years of dealing with the media is that most of them are very well intended, but quite often they simply don't comprehend as well as we do in terms of our vested interest, particularly the members of the committee who have put so much time into this. You can just ask Senator Eggleton; when we dealt with one of the recommendations, I think it went on for two or three meetings. At the end, it was a wonderful result.

Unless it's properly explained to the media in a reasonable fashion, I'm not sure that it will be comprehended and that the message will go out the way that we would want it to. That's the important thing about it, and that will be the long term. Setting the table and getting the report out in a reasonable and constructive manner, in the way that we want to, I think is very important. Each recommendation will be presented, hopefully by a different member of the committee, and each one on its own will be debated. The entire report will not be voted upon; it will be each recommendation. You'll hopefully be able to approve them all, but if you wanted to turn one down, you're not turning down the entire report.

• (1540)

I think a lot of time went into this. I would be encouraged if we were able to get it out to the public in an orderly and organized fashion.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the time has again expired. All of you who are standing, I have you on the list of questioners. There are some seven to eight more senators who wish to ask questions.

We do have options. We can go back to Senator McInnis and ask for a further extension. We must adjourn at 4:00. Any senator who wishes can move adjournment of the debate; however, should you do so, when debate resumes tomorrow, the questions will be to the new speaker on the motion, not to Senator McInnis. So bear that in mind.

I will return to Senator McInnis first and ask him if he wishes to ask for more time. If he does, we can perhaps go for another 10 minutes if he wishes, and try to get in as many senators as possible. In order to do so, please make your questions succinct. If you have preambles, save them for a possible adjournment of the debate and speak on the motion; lay out whatever you want to highlight in your preamble. If you have a question, keep it short so we can get in as many senators as possible. This is a very important topic and a very important debate.

Senator McInnis, did you wish to ask for more time?

Senator McInnis: Yes, please.

The Hon. the Speaker: Ten more minutes, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Thank you, Your Honour. I don't know if I can follow the suggestion or instructions on the preamble, but I'll try to be as brief as I can.

I thank Senator McInnis for his patience with all the questions. I share the concerns that others have expressed. In most of our committee reports we're making recommendations to government and so on, and we're waiting for a response from them. In this report we're making recommendations to ourselves.

I'm not on the committee. I have no idea what the recommendations are. I'm going to receive the report at nine o'clock in the morning. At 9:30 or 10:00, the P.E.I. media calls me. I glance at them and I think half of them are insane, crazy, and I would never agree to them. That's the type of coverage we're going to get.

I have to say that none of this has been agreed to; they're just proposals. I'm not sure we want to do that. I respect the comments about the great job the communications department is doing, but they don't run the Senate; the Senate runs communications.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Downe: Their advice about the timing I accept, but maybe an option would be that on days like this we sit at nine o'clock in the morning; we change our hours to accommodate the communications that are so important. However, I'm very hesitant about a report being made public that nobody other than the committee members has discussed and that we have not even voted on, and may never accept half of them; we may accept them all.

I think we're raising expectations. The amendments to the motions, whatever they may be — there are always some — will muddy the waters so much. I'm no expert in communications, but I can see story after story that Senate refuses to move forward,

there's resistance to change, there are divisions. To what end? I'm not sure why we would have a press conference and recommendations. Let's trust the media to do their job. If they have questions, they can ask you or other members of the committee. When we make the changes that we all want to make, then we have a press conference to inform Canadians.

Again, thank you for your patience. I'm just wondering if you share any of those concerns.

Senator McInnis: Yes, I do. This is a discussion, if not a debate, on the policy of communication here. Others have made a decision as to how the communication system would work, the new "getting the message out." That's the debate, and this is a debate that I presumed or I hoped would have taken place at that time. This is not Senator McInnis here trying to slip something through, a thought that emanated out of my office, at all. This is following the communication system that they are trying out, I presume, and that's why it's happening.

Following proper protocol has always been my path. Don't try to get yourself in a knot over something that you're trying to circumvent or to do in a circuitous way something that's not proper and is untoward vis-à-vis senators.

I'd like to have this matter concluded one way or the other today, if at all possible. As Senator Sinclair — and now you, Senator Downe — are talking about getting this and having an opportunity to read it, maybe we could change the press conference to 10:30 or 11:00. I don't know; I'm not that in tune with how the media communicate today, but that might be one way to accommodate everyone. The concern I had heard early on when they set up this system for me was that having a press conference at 3 p.m. does not get the so-called dinner crowd, and that's what you want to get.

There may be a mechanism here, and I'm unable to think of what the problem would be with having it at 10:30 or perhaps 11:00 in the morning, as opposed to the 9:30 time. That may be a way to do it.

Hon. Michael Duffy: I have a question for Senator McInnis. As an experienced person in public life, in your past life have you not seen on budgets and Throne Speeches a thing we call in the media a "lock-up"? Why wouldn't the committee consider inviting the media in to a locked room downstairs, give the media a briefing on what the committee believes its report means, and they would be allowed out? At the same time they're in the lock-up, members of the Senate would be given a copy of the same report. And then, when the Senate sits at its usual time, the media would be allowed out and there would be no breach of parliamentary privilege and everyone would be operating from an informed database.

Senator McInnis: I'm not sure what time the lock-up would be. I know full well what you're talking about. That's exactly what happens with the budgets. But I'm not sure. You don't want to miss the noontime crowd either, apparently. It's amazing what I'm learning with respect to communication and media after dealing with this.

That may be an idea, Senator Duffy. I will have to leave here and go talk to the communication team; I can see that. Let me put it this way: We will do everything we can, as Senator Andreychuk and several others have mentioned, to try to get it to you and to allow you time to consume the recommendations and read the report.

I don't know where that leaves me, Your Honour, with the motion that I have —

Perhaps what I would do is adjourn and come back tomorrow, if that's possible. That will give me an opportunity to speak to the communication people and then make the presentation tomorrow.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, Senator McInnis has suggested an adjournment for the balance of his time, which right now would be three minutes. However, should you agree to the adjournment, then obviously tomorrow that can be extended to whatever amount of time you desire or feel you will need.

I should add, honourable senators, that I do already have a list of senators for questions. I will read those names out. In the event that there are more tomorrow, you can let the chair know. The following senators are on the list: Senators Eggleton, Ringuette, Omidvar, Lankin, Campbell, Fraser, Wallace and Wallin.

Thank you, honourable senators.

It is moved by the Honourable Senator McInnis, seconded by the Honourable Senator Wells, that further debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

(On motion of Senator McInnis, debate adjourned.)

(The Senate adjourned until Thursday, September 29, 2016, at 1:30 p.m.)

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