



CANADA

Debates of the Senate

1st SESSION

•

38th PARLIAMENT

•

VOLUME 142

•

NUMBER 24

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, December 8, 2004



THE HONOURABLE SHIRLEY MAHEU
SPEAKER *PRO TEMPORE*

CONTENTS

(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

Debates and Publications: Chambers Building, Room 943, Tel. 996-0193

Published by the Senate
Available from PWGSC – Publishing and Depository Services, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5.
Also available on the Internet: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

THE SENATE

Wednesday, December 8, 2004

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker *pro tempore* in the chair.

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Honourable senators, I received a notice earlier today from the Leader of the Government in the Senate who requests, pursuant to rule 22(10), that the time provided for the consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable Senator Herbert O. Sparrow who will retire from the Senate on January 4, 2005.

I remind honourable senators that, pursuant to our rules, each senator will be allowed only three minutes and he or she may speak only once. We will continue our tribute to Senator Sparrow under Senators' Statements, and Senator Sparrow will hold his comments until the end of Senators' Statements. We will, therefore, have 30 minutes, not including the time allotted for Senator Sparrow's response.

Is that agreed?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

TRIBUTES

THE HONOURABLE HERBERT O. SPARROW

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, as our Speaker *pro tempore* has just said, our colleague the Honourable Herbert O. Sparrow will retire from the Senate on January 4, 2005. He is our dean, having been the longest serving senator in this chamber for a few years. Regretfully, his retirement is not by his own decision, but by the operation of law. He has served in the Senate of Canada for 37 years.

That is not quite a record, Senator Sparrow, but very impressive nonetheless.

Senator Sparrow is the only senator remaining who was summoned to the Senate by the Right Honourable Lester Pearson. He arrived here because he gave great leadership in Saskatchewan to business affairs and to politics. He made key contributions to the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan and in Canada. He was President of the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan during the 1960s, which coincided with the years of Mr. Pearson's government and the provincial government of Ross Thatcher.

Shortly after his appointment to the Senate in 1968, Senator Sparrow joined the Special Senate Committee on Poverty, which was chaired by Senator David Kroll, and he took a characteristically unconventional approach to that task. He

decided to inquire personally into the impact of poverty in the urban areas. He spent a week in areas of Vancouver that certainly reflected the problems that were being studied.

Senator Sparrow has been an active participant in Senate committee work, including being a longstanding member of the committees on National Finance, Foreign Affairs, Transport and Communications, and particularly the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry. It is difficult to overstate the role that Senator Sparrow has played on the Agriculture and Forestry Committee over the more than three decades that he has been in this chamber.

Honourable senators may recall the time, 20 years ago or more, when there was a looming crisis in the farming industry due to a series of droughts that caused extensive soil erosion in the Western provinces. The Senate committee, then called the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, under Senator Sparrow's leadership, conducted a thorough study of the problem and the ensuing report, *Soil at Risk — Canada's Eroding Future*, held far-reaching implications that ensured the future of farming in Canada. The report was tabled in June, 1984, and 25,000 copies were printed in that first year alone. It is a blockbuster report that, over time, has been requested by people and organizations from every corner of the world. Only recently, given the heavy droughts in Australia, there was a request for 400 copies to be shipped to that country.

Senator Sparrow himself has mentioned that the potential loss to Canada's farmland that would have been occasioned without this crucial report and its guidance has more than offset the costs of running this august chamber. He has even taken on the owners of golf courses in British Columbia, cautioning them against using agricultural land for recreation.

For official purposes, I am saying that I have not decided which side I am on in that debate. Senator Lawson had a clearer view.

Senator Sparrow has received many awards for his work, foremost among them an honorary doctorate from McGill University. He was founder and first president of the Soil Conservation Council of Canada, is an honorary lifetime member of the Agricultural Institute of Canada, and was inducted into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Senator Sparrow's reputation extends internationally. He is a recipient of the United Nations Environmental Leadership Medal Certificate of Distinction for soil conservation and has also received an honorary award from the Soil Conservation Society of America.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: I must inform Senator Austin that his time has expired.

• (1340)

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, being from Saskatchewan, I had heard of Senator Herbert Sparrow long before I had the privilege of meeting him, although I must say that when I first met him I thought he was Red Skeleton.

My wife and I have friends at Jackfish Lake where Senator Sparrow owns a cottage. At times we would stay overnight with our friends at their cottage which, I understand, had been owned by a gentleman by the name of Joe Young from Saskatoon, who started the first Kentucky Fried Chicken franchises in Saskatchewan. I have slept in the same bed that Colonel Sanders slept in. That is a small connection, and I am stretching it as best I can to show that there was a reason for our friendship.

When you meet someone so late in life, you regret the fact that you did not know him at a different time and in a different place, because you think that you would have had a lot of fun together.

Senator Sparrow and I got to know each other while flying on airplanes because, by that time Senator Sparrow had made certain political decisions that resulted in him not being a member of many committees. I usually meet Liberals and become friends with them at committees, but Senator Sparrow and I met on airplanes. We got to know each other at the Maple Leaf Lounge in Toronto. Some good does happen in Toronto. We share a lot in common.

As a Senate neophyte, I learned that, by the time I got to know him, he had served in the Senate for decades. I learned at his knee as he educated me on the history of this place. We became involved in the Pearson airport bill. That was a strange combination, Senator Sparrow and me. However, I learned a lot. There is no question that it must have been very difficult for him to vote with our side on November 22, 1995.

Senator Mercer: Not that you remember!

Senator Tkachuk: Senator Sparrow made a decision that we, on this side, saw as a brave decision, because it was a fiercely whipped vote and the pressure must have been immense. He did it once again on Bill C-68, the gun registration bill.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: I regret to inform Senator Tkachuk that his time has expired.

Hon. Pana Merchant: Honourable senators, Senator Sparrow has been a valued friend of my family for three generations. When I was appointed to the Senate, he offered me welcome advice and assistance through the benefit of his long experience. I am particularly grateful to him.

For over 40 years the senator has played a legendary role in the fortunes of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party. He sought election in 1964, when Ross Thatcher ended the 20-year reign of the CCF-NDP. He ran again in 1967. Recognizing Herb's talents and energy, the premier asked him to assume the presidency of the party. He was a hands-on president. He personally worked in every constituency and sometimes moved for weeks at a time into by-election areas. For many years his contribution was evident at Liberal gatherings. If he was not there himself, his Kentucky Fried Chicken buckets were. They were the collection plates.

What is Senator Sparrow's legacy in the life of our province? This energetic, caring man has received many honours from his own community: Junior Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Man of the Year Award, Vanier Young Man of the Year Award and Life Member of the Kinsmen Club. He has served as alderman on the city council of North Battleford, and he was a key player in developing mining and timber interests in the north of our province.

Few outside of the Prairie provinces will fully appreciate the magnitude of the senator's work on soil erosion. In provinces, in particular Saskatchewan, whose economy through Canada's history has been tied to the land, Senator Sparrow's studies and writings have been of inestimable value and were recognized by an honorary doctorate from McGill University.

Because of the impact of soil erosion on food production in the developing world, the senator's international contribution has been recognized by the UN, which bestowed upon him the Environmental Leadership Medal Certificate of Distinction.

Throughout his remarkable life, the senator has never abandoned the needs of his own city of North Battleford. He has personally sponsored a program that provides a free meal to school children who might otherwise go hungry, and he was the founding chair of the school for retarded children.

Saskatchewan is very proud of Herb Sparrow. I know this house will join with me in wishing our colleague many happy years of retirement as he leaves behind a distinguished career from his 37 years in the chamber.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: I regret to inform Senator Merchant that her time has expired.

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, the months since September have not been good months for me. I lost Senator Lawson, my humorous travel partner confidante and golf partner and now we face the departure of my good friend, Herb. They are both Liberals and both extremely valuable members to this institution and valuable members to my life.

Senator Sparrow, I will not speak to your many accomplishments in this place and your success as a businessman, because the record speaks for itself. I should like, instead, to speak to the characteristics that distinguish you as a unique and interesting person. Your sense of humour has been, and I am sure always will be, one characteristic that will keep you in good stead wherever your travels take you. For those of us who participated in Senator Lawson's toast and roast on November 27, we witnessed vintage Herb Sparrow — humorous with a classic degree of refinement that one could share in the company of all audiences. Herb, the feedback from the evening was that your delivery was without a doubt the very best: professional, decent and very well received by that British Columbia audience.

However, my friend, I believe your greatest assets have always been your common sense and good judgment. You have excellent political antenna, and you have always supported the side of logic, whether it was Pearson airport or the gun registry, just to name a couple of issues. You and Senator Lawson, I understand, were the only two who challenged the Charlottetown Accord in this place, obviously reading public opinion well in advance.

Herb, you have a tremendous partner in your long-term marriage to Lois. I hope retirement will not change that because my understanding is that the success of this marriage was based on your not being home too often.

I should like to close by saying that you are, sir, a class act. You have been a good friend and you have shared a lot of confidences over the past 11 years. As Senator Ed would say, "Herb can keep a secret; it is only the people he tells who cannot." All joking aside, Herb, I have never slept with you or with the Colonel, or in your bed or in his bed. I will miss you in this place; the agriculture community will miss you; and the entire country will miss you. You have served your country well. We wish you continued health and happiness. By the way, Herb, thank you for that thoughtful letter you sent on your retirement. God bless you!

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. David P. Smith: Honourable senators, to delve into ancient history briefly, I belong to a small group because I actually knew Herb Sparrow before he came Senator Herbert Sparrow. It is true.

Hon. Senators: Oh, oh!

• (1350)

Senator Smith: In 1964, I was the National Youth Director of the Liberal Party. Mr. Pearson took me with him to the Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon. He said, "You have to meet this guy. He is Mr. Kentucky Fried Chicken up there." He became President of the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan. I regard things like that as a badge of honour. Members of this house like Senator LeBreton, Senator Murray, Senator Mercer and Senator Milne have made democracy and the parliamentary party system work. Herb Sparrow is in that category.

I am a Toronto boy and my wife was born in Toronto. Another odd coincidence is that Herb lives on Walker Drive, which is named after my wife's grandfather. Her grandfather was Scott Walker, a lawyer and a former mayor, and Herb's street is named after him.

For 40 years, whenever I would hear Ethel Waters sing, "His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me," I thought, "Brother Sparrow needs to have an eye on him. Lord, thank you; you are watching me and Herb, too."

Seriously, Herb, you will be missed. You are special. You are a patriarch around here. There are only a handful. We will look

into beatifying you while you are still with us. You will be missed. Saskatchewan has been very well served by you. God bless you, Herb!

Hon. Leonard J. Gustafson: Honourable senators, in anticipation of the retirement of the good senator, I rise to pay tribute to him.

I feel honoured to have served in this chamber with Senator Sparrow. His razor sharp mind and his wit have endeared him to colleagues on both sides of the chamber.

On that point, I have often told Senator Sparrow that he should have been a Conservative. He acted like one most of the time; but for that, he was to be admired because he was always his own man. If he did not believe in something, he told you; if he did, he told you as well.

He was always full of great advice. When I first came to the Senate, Senator Sparrow had already spent nearly 30 years here. If I needed some good advice in this chamber, I went to Senator Sparrow. He will be truly missed.

He has won many accolades. Being inducted into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame was something that he well merited because he came up with the term "soil at risk" when the prairies were blowing away. That period of time, in which he was chairman of the Agriculture Committee, stood Saskatchewan in good stead because we went to continuous cropping. Senator Sparrow's input into that report was of great importance. For that, he is known around the world.

When the Agriculture Committee studied farmers at risk, we borrowed a little from Soil at Risk, and that was attributed to Senator Sparrow.

I want to say to Herb, his family, to Lois and to all of those who know him so well: Have a happy retirement and may God richly bless you in your endeavours in the future.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Lapointe: Honourable senators, I have become very fond of Senator Sparrow as time has gone by. I have come to know him in these past three years as a brilliant, sincere and upright man. I have discovered his unique and unpredictable sense of humour. I do not know how he comes up with his quips, but they are always unexpected and always go over with a bang. There are plenty of comedians who would love to have that talent.

When I was growing up in the village, people said "Don't go by appearances. Never underestimate farm boys, never try to put one over on them. Appearances don't count; they are crazy like a fox." Honourable senators, Senator Sparrow is one of those farm boys, and I hope he will think of me from time to time when he is out on his tractor next spring. I will certainly be thinking of him and missing him.

[English]

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Honourable senators, I rise today to join in paying tribute to my dear friend and esteemed colleague Senator Sparrow, whom I have been honoured to know and to serve with. Senator Sparrow and I were involved in many wars that are now part of the history in this place. We fought well.

It seems like yesterday, when, in February 2003, we celebrated Senator Sparrow's thirty-fifth anniversary in this place. At that time, I said that I was pleased that we could pay such a tribute while he still had time left to serve with us. It seems that time has flown. Ecclesiastes, verse 3:19 tells us:

To everything there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

The time has come to say farewell to our dear friend and colleague Senator Sparrow. I would like, in a personal way, to thank him for his friendship and for his support. I thank him for having the nerve and the strength to vote as he did on the Pearson airport bill, and Senator Sparrow knows where I stood on that question. I will treasure his friendship forever.

Senator Sparrow's achievements in the field of agriculture, the Soil at Risk report and related areas are well known. What is not so well known are his charitable activities in his community of North Battleford. I would like to thank him for that as well.

In closing, I wish him and his wife, Lois, and his family a very happy retirement. I hope that they will now have the time with this man to do all the things that they have been waiting to do. I would also say to them, in a very special way, that Senator Sparrow is a classic — a hunter and a farmer, but first and foremost, he is a family man who loves his family passionately. I know that because he has told me on many occasions.

In saying farewell, this for me is a very special ending because Senator Sparrow represents the last connection to a body of senators to whom I was very close, Senators Bonnell, McElman and a host of others.

I would like to close by citing an ancient Irish blessing. It is often read but I always think it is better to let the poets speak:

May the road rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields and,
Until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn: Honourable senators, Canadians often are encouraged to make the assumption that members of the Senate of Canada are here from their provinces as partners in the national legislative process but do not share the obligation of direct representation in their regions like the members of the House of Commons who are elected in specific constituencies. Well, no one told Herb Sparrow that when he was appointed to

the Senate in 1968. Indeed, he has spent the last 37 years bringing the needs, the hopes, the sorrows and the triumphs of the people in the province of Saskatchewan and in his area of the Battlefords to the floor of this chamber and its committees.

• (1400)

He has been called the "champion of the little guy" and the "lone wolf senator," and he is the dad of the feed-the-schools program in North Battleford. His voice of agriculture for this whole country is one that, through the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, produced what is probably the most renowned report in Canada and internationally that our Parliament has ever known. Called Soil at Risk, the report cut into a critical issue far before its time in using the Canadian example as a warning to countries around the world about the advancement of soil degradation, which could create the nightmare of farmers being unable to farm.

Our Herb has received every possible honour for his work here at home and around the world. When I became a senator 20 years ago, one of the first responses I received in Lethbridge and the surrounding rural area was not, "Congratulations and good luck;" rather, it was, "Do you know Herb Sparrow?" I was happy to say that I did.

In summary, Herb is one of a kind. He is smart, outspoken, shy, funny, kind and tough as nails. During our long association we have laughed a lot, although we did lock horns from time to time, most spectacularly when Herb single-handedly voted down the Pearson airport development legislation while I was the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Was that the end of a friendship? No, not at all. Through highs and lows we remained supporters of each other. He is my friend. We do not shake hands but we do give a ceremonial wink. I will miss him and agriculture will miss him. He takes with him a ton of respect, good wishes and affection from this old friend.

Lois and the family finally have you back, Herb, tall in the saddle on the land you love. God bless you.

Hon. Ione Christensen: Honourable senators, I think Senator Fairbairn missed the description of how handsome Senator Sparrow is. When I arrived in the Senate in 1999, as all senators do, I looked at the bulletin board outside the chamber and found my name at the very bottom. However, at the top of that list was the name Sparrow. I was 100 names behind. Today I looked at that board again and Sparrow is still at the top. I have been able to move up to number 63, which is only 41 behind the dean, but still a long way off. No matter how far I am behind on that list, there is only one senior senator. While he may disappear from that board, he will never disappear from our hearts.

Herb, you are very much the quintessential senator. Your expertise and independence, as well as your wisdom and your great memory for this place, will be a loss that cannot be replaced. It is a loss for us, a loss for Parliament and a loss for Canada. May you move into the next stage of your life with all of the wisdom and commitment that you have brought to us. I will miss you; we shall miss you; but we wish you happiness and long years to enjoy your home and family.

Hon. Lorna Milne: Honourable senators, I come from downtown Toronto. When I was appointed to this place nine years ago, I had no idea who Herb Sparrow was nor knew anything about him; but I had the common sense to marry a farmer's son. After the first few weeks here, I went home and, among the stories I had to share with my husband, Ross, one was about this senator who seemed friendly enough but clearly walked to the beat of his own drum. I just could not figure Herb out. Let me share with you what Ross said about Senator Herb Sparrow. He said: "This man has done more to improve the ecology of the entire world than any single person in history. His report, the report of the Senate Agricultural Committee called Soil at Risk, changed completely the way that farming is done in the deep, dry soils of the Canadian Prairies, the American Midwest, the Pampas of Argentina and the Steppes of Russia and Ukraine. Herb has made a difference, a difference that has transformed agriculture forever."

Herb, you have continued to be true to the beat of your own drum. You have continued to be true to your own values and ideas, and you truly have left a very large legacy. I admire you and I want to thank your family and friends for sharing you with us for so long.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: I regret to say, honourable senators, that the 30 minutes for tributes to Senator Sparrow have now expired. I have six senators still on the list.

I recognize Senator Sparrow.

Hon. Herbert O. Sparrow: Honourable senators, I want to thank each and every one of you, particularly those who spoke today. I appreciate your remarks very much. I was afraid that someone would start telling the truth, but fortunately that did not come out. In a few days I will be replaced by Senator Jack Austin as dean of the Senate and his name will go to the top of the list.

I want to mention that Paul Bélisle, Clerk of the Senate, has been here almost as long as I. In fact, he and I are the longest-serving people in the Senate, Paul being just two years short of my time here. If Paul were a senator, he would become the new dean.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Sparrow: I would be remiss if I did not mention the staff of the Senate. The security and maintenance people have been very kind to me and treated me well throughout the years. I want them to know that I appreciate all that they have done for the Senate and, in particular, for me. They have been so kind and looked after me so very well. To those staff members, please accept my special thanks.

My family is with me today but not quite all of them. I was introduced not long ago at a meeting as being married and having six children. A fellow sitting next to me said, "You have six children," and I said, yes. He said, "Gosh, I wish I had six children." I asked him why he would want six children, and he replied, "Because I have ten!"

My family was young when I first came to the Senate. While here, away from home, the children would fight over who would sleep with their mother. This fighting over who would sleep with their mother while I was away had to stop, so I asked them to not request that they sleep with their mother while I was away. Upon my return, they came to the airport to meet me. I had just gotten off the plane and was in the arrivals area when one of my little guys hollered, "Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, no one slept with Mommy while you were away!"

• (1410)

Senator Smith talked about Walker Drive, which was named after his wife's grandfather. I live on that street. Walker Drive is well known in North Battleford. Honourable senators, I want you to know that the City of North Battleford is naming a street after me. I was very proud of that until I found it was a dead-end street going nowhere.

So many people have helped me along the way that I could not mention them all. One chap in particular asked me to go fishing. He said, "You need to have a holiday. A few of us fellows are going fishing for a week. How about coming with us to relax?" I told him that I did not think that I could go because I did not know how to fish. He said, "All it takes to be a great fisherman is to be able to lie a little bit." I responded by saying that I did not think I would be able to do that because I was a politician.

An honourable senator mentioned a turn at Kentucky Fried Chicken. It certainly was an important part of my life, and Colonel Sanders was an important part of my life. It reminds me of a statement by President Herbert Hoover who talked about a chicken in every pot. It spurred me on to try to help out in society a little bit, and the concept of a chicken in every pot stuck with me. When I got in the Kentucky Fried Chicken business, I started to feed the chickens marijuana, so now we have pot in every chicken!

No matter how important you think you are, there is always someone who brings you down a little bit. In the restaurant that I frequent occasionally for breakfast when I am in Ottawa, a waiter, who did not know who I was by name or position, would talk to me once in a while. One morning when I came in, he stood by my table and he said, "Who do you think is the most famous Canadian?" I thought for a few seconds and I said, "I think that would be Senator Sparrow from Saskatchewan." He thought for a couple of minutes and said, "I don't seem to recognize that name." It does not take much to bring you back to the level where you belong.

Senator Austin, who was very kind in his remarks, said that my doctorate was from the University of Saskatchewan. It was not. It was from McGill University. I believe Senator Merchant mentioned it.

I have told some of you this story before. I was introduced at a meeting as Senator Swallow from Alberta who was in the oil business and had made \$250,000 the previous year. When I rose to speak, I had to correct that. I said, "I am not Senator Swallow; I am Senator Sparrow. I am not from Alberta; I am from Saskatchewan. I am not in the oil business; I am a farmer. I did not make \$250,000 last year; I lost \$250,000."

To my family and friends, thank you very much for being here today.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Sparrow: They have been most supportive throughout the years, and I appreciate that.

Honourable senators, I thank you all for your support today and in the past. Thank you all very much.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry be authorized to sit at 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, December 14, 2004, even though the Senate may then be sitting, and that rule 95(4) be suspended in relation thereto.

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO URGE GOVERNMENT TO CONDEMN AND INITIATE MEASURES AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF BURMA FOR ITS UNDEMOCRATIC ACTIONS

Hon. Mac Harb: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Government of Canada vigorously condemn the Burmese military junta's extension of pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi's term of house arrest and call for it immediately to revoke this measure, to introduce democratic reforms and to abide by its human rights obligations, and further

That the Government of Canada, as an international leader in the defence of human rights and democratic institutions, make it an urgent priority to take action in the form of: implementation of effective economic measures against the military regime; increased diplomatic sanctions, including the exclusion of active participation of the Burmese military junta from trade and investment promotion events in Canada; and increased assistance to Burmese refugees in border regions of adjacent countries as well as those in need within Burma through accountable non-governmental organizations and UN agencies.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Hon. Peter A. Stollery: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs have power to sit at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 15, 2004, even though the Senate may be then sitting, and that rule 95(4) be suspended in relation thereto.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Joan Fraser: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That, pursuant to rule 95(3)(a), the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications be authorized to meet until Thursday, December 16, 2004 as part of its study of the Canadian news media, even though the Senate may then be adjourned for a period exceeding one week.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Joan Fraser: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That, pursuant to rule 95(3)(a), the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications be authorized to meet during the week beginning Monday, January 31, 2005 as part of its study of the Canadian news media, even though the Senate may then be adjourned for a period exceeding one week.

• (1420)

QUESTION PERIOD

NATIONAL DEFENCE

LOCATION OF NEW HEADQUARTERS

Hon. J. Michael Forrestall: Honourable senators, I have a brief question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate and a brief supplementary. Can the honourable leader confirm that the Crown is in discussions with Pierre Bourque for the purchase of approximately 15 acres of land across from the casino in Gatineau?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have no information on that subject.

Senator Forrestall: Does the government leader have any information on the location of National Defence Headquarters? Perchance, might it happen to be earmarked for that piece of property? If the government leader does not know, perhaps he can find out and report verbally tomorrow.

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, I always do my best to answer Senator Forrestall's questions promptly.

Senator Forrestall: Does that mean the leader knows nothing about the relocation of National Defence Headquarters?

Senator Austin: Senator Forrestall is correct. I know nothing about the relocation of National Defence Headquarters, but I will pursue his questions and hope to answer promptly.

Senator Forrestall: Has it never been discussed in cabinet?

Senator Austin: What can I tell you?

Senator Forrestall: That you love us and care for us.

Senator Austin: Absolutely.

TROOPS ON ASSIGNMENT IN FOREIGN THEATRES

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino: Honourable senators, during a CNN interview this past weekend, the Prime Minister was pressed by the interviewer on whether Canada would send troops to Iraq to help secure the election that is scheduled for January. "1,000 troops," said the interviewer, "surely Canada can spare that number." Mr. Martin demurred, saying that Canada was stretched too thin, with troops in places like Afghanistan and Haiti and prospectively in Africa. He did, however, say that Canada was in the process of increasing our overall troop level substantially.

Could the Leader of the Government in the Senate please tell us how many troops Canada currently has deployed in Haiti, how many advisers we are sending to Africa, and whether we are increasing our troop level in Afghanistan?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the question is a detailed one, not directly seeking a policy statement. I will take the question as notice to provide the facts that have been requested.

INCREASE IN TROOPS

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino: The Prime Minister noted during the interview that the process of increasing our overall troop level is getting underway. Can the Leader of the Government tell us how far this has progressed and, once completed, would the issue of sending troops to Iraq be revisited?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the last question with respect to troops to Iraq is hypothetical.

On the first part of the question, the government intends to increase the regular forces by 5,000 and the reserves by 3,000 people. The questions of funding and the manner of so doing are under study in the Department of National Defence.

Senator Di Nino: Do I take it that the decision to commence the process has not yet begun, other than a policy statement?

Senator Austin: My answer indicates that the decision has been made, and the officials in the Department of National Defence are now studying the implementation process.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

SECURITY AGENCIES—FUNDING OF NATIONAL SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, on Saturday, the *Ottawa Citizen* reported that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police do not have enough funds to counter a terrorist attack. It seems that 70 per cent of the RCMP's national security investigations have financial elements, and only 17 positions have been created nationally to deal with them.

Quoting from a realignment report for the RCMP's Anti-Terrorist Financing Group, the *Citizen* stated that:

...the majority of units have a limited or non-existent capacity to conduct investigations of a financial nature....This in itself nullifies the financial intelligence program's ability to meet its mandate of gathering intelligence.

Clearly, if we do not support our security agencies, they cannot do their job and Canadians are left unprotected.

Wesley Wark, a national security expert with the University of Toronto's Munk Centre for International Studies, was also quoted in the *Citizen* as stating:

There are a lot of different parts of government bidding for a small pool, so it's a sellers market.

I do not think Canadians care whose market it is and which part of the government is bidding. They just want to know they are safe.

What is being done to ensure that funds are available to deal with the financial elements of national security investigations?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the subject matter of Senator Tkachuk's question is being reviewed. It is obvious that the RCMP needs to be in a position to carry out its so-called white collar investigations. If there is a deficiency in the program, the government intends to correct it.

Senator Tkachuk: Honourable senators, without any intelligence and without information about what is going on, Canadians are left in a dangerous situation. The realignment report went on to say:

It is not a matter of “if” but “when” an incident will occur whereby the RCMP will be in possession of a piece of information and/or intelligence that could have been used to disrupt or prevent a terrorist act but could not act upon it because we were inadequately resourced to properly deal with it.

All our security agencies then, not just the financial investigators, are being asked to take on a job without being given the funds to do it. When will this government support our security agencies by ensuring that they have enough money to do the job that we have asked them to do?

Senator Austin: I believe I responded to the supplementary question when I answered the first question. There is no way of knowing what the timeline would be.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

SALE OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, last week it was reported that the military is in the process of selling off surplus equipment, including armoured personnel carriers, tanks and heavy machine guns. Perhaps the government will sell off the used submarines as well. My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Under what terms will this equipment be sold to other countries? Is there a “buyer beware” policy attached to the sale, as some officials in Britain argued was attached to the sale of the Victoria-class submarines to Canada?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I do not have the government’s policy statement at hand, but I will take this question as notice and supply an answer shortly.

Senator Stratton: How big is the leader’s briefing book?

Senator Austin: My ability to guess your questions has a very low percentage.

Senator Stratton: The equipment can only be sold to approved foreign governments. What restrictions are in place to prevent those countries reselling the equipment to a third party?

Senator Austin: I will provide that information.

TRANSPORT

AIRPORT SECURITY—LOSS OF UNIFORMS

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, my question is also to the Leader of the Government and concerns the fact that more than 1,000 uniforms and security badges from federal airport screeners have been lost or stolen during the first nine months of 2004. According to the CBC, some of the items have been discovered on eBay, an on-line auction site. What measures are being contemplated by the government to address this issue, short of changing the uniforms of all airport security screeners?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, something in the order of 1,700 items from the uniform inventory have not been accounted for, and the Minister of

Transport has authorized a detailed analysis of what has taken place and why it has taken place. There has also been, as I am sure Senator St. Germain knows, a loss of badges attached to the uniforms with Velcro.

The Minister of Transport has made clear that there is no enhanced security risk as a result of these missing items, some of which obviously have been mislaid, if not many of them. It is a problem which is endemic with uniforms, whether it be airport security, the military or other uniformed personnel.

Senator St. Germain: Did I hear the leader say that the security is not enhanced?

Senator Austin: Impaired.

Senator St. Germain: Impaired, rather? You do not feel it is impaired?

The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority investigation says the disappearance of these uniforms and uniform parts is nothing serious to worry about, which is basically what the senator is saying. “Lost airport uniforms not a ‘serious risk’: No chance of access to secure areas,” reports *the Ottawa Citizen* of December 6, 2004. Nothing serious to worry about?

• (1430)

This really boggles the mind, honourable senators. In fact, considering the report was slapped together in a few days, it gives the impression of being a hollow communications exercise rather than a sincere attempt to get to the bottom of this problem.

If these uniforms got into the wrong hands, I find it questionable as to whether this would not impede security operations.

Is the government saying that it is content with the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority’s response that there is no danger that anything could happen?

Senator Austin: As I said in response to the first question asked by the honourable senator, we take it to be a matter of real concern. The Minister of Transport has commenced an audit to determine what is missing and how that material came to be missing.

Honourable senators must put this whole story in its proper context. Approximately 75,000 uniforms are issued and, up to this time, only one complete uniform has been reported as missing, and that was traced to a house fire where a uniform was burned. Only 78 shirts are missing out of 20,000 bearing the CATSA logo. Other information of that kind has already come to hand.

Obviously, we do not want a situation to occur where uniforms that are issued to people who have security clearance are lost and could be used by criminal elements. Therefore, there will be a complete reworking of the way in which CATSA’s uniforms are issued. That is now under way.

Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is to the Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence.

In light of the answer we just heard from the honourable minister, and in light of the excellent report that was tabled here yesterday — and I have only had it since yesterday — I have a question for the chair of the committee. Contrary to what the minister has told us, was it the conclusion of the committee that the problems at our airports, whether they have to do with uniforms or people working in baggage and other areas, are serious security problems?

Hon. Colin Kenny: Honourable senators, I thank the honourable senator for that question.

I shall deal with it in two parts. The Leader of the Government in the Senate is accurate, in my view, about the uniform question with CATSA. Missing uniforms is a matter with which the committee has been seized for a long time. Pilots' uniforms, customs officials uniforms and police uniforms have all been reported missing. It is difficult to keep track of those items.

In this instance there were only a small number of complete sets.

A missing uniform puts increased pressure on inspecting photo IDs. It is the view of the committee — and it is reflected in the report before you — that the identification badges are inadequate. They lack a biometric identifier. They also lack something that is referred to as “geofencing” that limits individuals from going from one location to another when they are not entitled to have access to a certain area.

We also have real concerns regarding the list that is used when badges are inspected. It is a list of missing or cancelled badges. In as much as the badges that are currently prepared and issued can be replicated fairly easily at a print shop or, in fact, in the honourable senator's office, we do not think it is appropriate that the lists be checked against cancelled badges. They should be checked against a list of active badges, and we are quite critical of that procedure.

Our final concern is that the random searching of airside personnel is inappropriate. At shift changes, the first person through is stopped, but then 20 or 30 people will be allowed to go airside without having their sports bags or their lunch pails inspected. These people move freely about the tarmac and aircraft that are being loaded with baggage, fuel and food. The committee does have concerns in that regard.

Senator St. Germain: I have a supplementary question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In view of what the chair of the committee has said — and, obviously, the committee has comprehensively studied this matter — I suggest that various smatterings of certain materials can be made into a complete uniform. I feel the government is being remiss in that it is just spinning the control of this issue.

Is the government prepared to bring in the RCMP if it is suspected or proven that thefts of these particular items are taking place? I think this does pose a serious threat to security and is of particular concern to people, such as senators and our staff, who continually use airports and airlines. That concern may even extend to international flights.

Senator Austin: I thank the honourable senator for the supplementary question.

I want to correct the number that I used. I said that approximately 1,700 uniform items had gone missing. In actual fact, 1,127 uniform items, including identification badges belonging to CATSA contract airport security screeners, have gone missing over the last nine months.

In answering the honourable senator's question I would say that Minister Lapierre issued a news release on December 4, 2004 that stated he directed CATSA's President and Chief Executive Officer, Jacques Duchesneau, to provide him with a full report on this issue on an urgent basis. When that report is received, then we will be at the point where we will make a decision about what further action is required.

DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to present a delayed response to an oral question raised in the Senate on December 1, 2004, by Senator St. Germain, regarding bovine spongiform encephalopathy and aid to the cattle industry.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY— AID TO CATTLE INDUSTRY

(Response to question raised by Hon. Gerry St. Germain on December 1, 2004)

The Government of Canada recognizes that producers' incomes continue to be negatively affected by the impacts of border closures related to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Since May 2003, federal and provincial governments have committed up to \$2.5 billion for BSE-related industry support initiatives above and beyond existing business risk management programming.

On September 10th, a national strategy, with measures totalling \$488 million in federal funding, was introduced to help reposition the Canadian cattle and beef industry to ensure its long-term viability and profitability, whether or not borders open.

Since the September 10 announcement, there has been important progress made in implementing the national *Repositioning the Livestock Industry Strategy*. Specifically, measures to increase capacity and to sustain the industry are in place and efforts to reopen the U.S. border and to further expand export markets continue.

Many requests for additional assistance have been made and many creative solutions proposed. These are all being analyzed, in the context of the repositioning strategy and of the anticipated publication of a U.S. rule governing the importation of live ruminants and their products.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CANADA EDUCATION SAVINGS BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore moved second reading of Bill C-5, to provide financial assistance for post-secondary education savings.

He said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to participate in second reading debate on Bill C-5 the proposed Canada Education Savings Act. This legislation will help thousands of low- and middle-income Canadian families to now commence saving for the post-secondary education of their children.

There is no doubt that education is a key investment in the future. It opens the door to prosperity and growth for both individuals and Canada as a whole.

This bill is an important step forward in the government's workplace skills strategy aimed at creating a 21st century economy and ensuring that Canadians have the education and skills needed to participate fully in that knowledge-based economy.

• (1440)

Bill C-5 is an important step in this direction. If we look ahead five years, 70 per cent of all new jobs in Canada will require some form of post-secondary education, and at least 25 per cent of these new jobs will require a university degree. Therefore, it is not surprising that a recent study found that 93 per cent of parents want their children to pursue post-secondary education.

Helping low-income families save for their children's post-secondary education is a key feature of the legislation now before us. This bill proposes that children born as of January 1, 2004 into families entitled to the National Child Benefit Supplement will be eligible for a one-time grant, called a learning bond, of \$500 once their parents open a Registered Education Savings Plan for them, and as their children grow older so will that learning bond grow. Up to and including age 15 years, these children will receive an annual \$100 instalment for each year that their family qualifies for the National Child Benefit Supplement.

The annual instalment payments will encourage parents to continue to save and contribute to asset growth. It is estimated that this could provide as much as \$3,000 by the time the student is ready to pursue post-secondary education.

The government estimates that this year alone more than 120,000 newborn Canadian children could benefit from the Canada Learning Bond. Even if parents do not open a Registered Education Savings Plan, children will not be penalized because, at the end of the day, the learning bond belongs to them. When these children reach the age of majority, they can open their own RESP account and claim their learning bond entitlement between the ages of 18 and 21 years. That bond will be deposited into their RESP account.

Savings accruing from the learning bond may be applied to any designated post-secondary learning institution recognized by the Government of Canada, including universities, community colleges and trade schools.

Another benefit of saving in RESPs is that the money is not restricted to just paying for tuition fees. Students may use the funds to pay for other education-related expenses such as textbooks, rent or computers.

The learning bond is an important aspect of the proposed Canada Education Savings Act, but it is not the only one. The bill also contains improvements to the Canada Education Savings Grant program. Families with a net income of \$35,000 or less would receive a match rate of 40 per cent on their first \$500 of RESP contributions each year. This is double the existing rate of 20 per cent. Middle-income families earning more than \$35,000 but not exceeding \$70,000 per year would see the match rate rise from 20 to 30 per cent on the first \$500 of RESP contributions. It is estimated that 4.5 million children could benefit from the enhanced Canada Education Savings Grant program this year alone.

With the enhanced CESG rates proposed by this legislation, a family contributing \$10 a month to their child's RESP could see it grow to \$7,000 in savings in 18 years, just in time for the child to begin his or her post-secondary education. This sends a strong message to modest-income parents that just a little saving on their part will go a long way toward helping their children realize their dreams of pursuing post-secondary education.

Of course, helping parents save for their children's post-secondary education was the government's objective when it launched the CESG. That program was proved to be a solid success. Since the CESG was launched in 1998, private contributions to RESPs have increased considerably and now total nearly \$13 billion. During that same period, the government has provided more than \$2 billion in CESGs, and today 2 million children under 18 years of age benefit from the CESG program.

While it is true that all of these measures have been successful, the following facts face us: At present, only 26 per cent of families earning \$25,000 or less are saving for their children's education, and only 8 per cent of families in this income group invest in an RESP. This means that the vast majority of low-income families are not benefiting from the Canada Education Savings Grant program, in some cases because they do not know it exists. That is why the bill before us today proposes to enhance the CESG program and create a new Canada Learning Bond. This legislation builds on a highly successful program, and it includes a measure to communicate these benefits to eligible families across Canada so that they will be aware that assistance is available.

When parents become aware of these measures and the government's efforts to help them save for their children's post-secondary education, they will hopefully be eager to take advantage of the opportunity. This is equally true for low-income families.

It is incorrect to suggest that low-income citizens do not save; they do. As the recent Survey of Approaches to Educational Planning showed, although family income affects the ability to save, parents from low- and moderate-income families accumulate a significant amount of savings for their children's

education. Of the 26 per cent of families with incomes less than \$25,000 who were saving for post-secondary education, the median amount saved was \$2,400, which represents a little more than one third of the amount of the highest income group.

A further study indicates that asset building, which is what post-secondary education savings represents, is as important to both economic and social well-being as having income. Asset-based approaches such as those underlying Bill C-5 recognize that low-income people not only need income support for current expenses but also for building assets for their future. Having a nest egg creates stability in one's life and creates hope. This is good news because individuals who have assets are 50 per cent more likely to attend post-secondary institutions than those without assets.

Canada is justly proud of its position as third in the world in helping its citizens increase access to post-secondary education for low-income families. Canada places great importance on the value of education and our investment in post-secondary education as a percentage of GDP ranks us second among all other countries. The legislation before us can only further our international standing in this area.

Honourable senators, as I conclude, I want to share with you my concern about comments I have heard with respect to Bill C-5, comments that, in fact, have no relevance to this bill at all. Much of the criticism being levelled at this bill is about other issues that people have about post-secondary education in Canada, such as how it is financed. Some people say this bill does nothing to reduce the high costs of tuition or to put money into the pockets of students right away. And I agree; it does not. However, that is not what this bill is about.

It is important to keep in mind that Bill C-5 seeks to meet three key objectives. It complements the many other ways this government is working to ensure that students who need help with meeting the costs of post-secondary education are able to get it. It will assist and encourage families to save for their children's education by making it easier for them to build the assets their children will need in later years, and it follows through on the commitment in the Speech from the Throne to increase access to post-secondary education, particularly for low-income families.

As such, the proposed Canada Education Savings Act is but one part, albeit an important one, of the government's approach to improving access to post-secondary education for all Canadians. The proposed Canada Learning Bond and enhanced Canada Education Savings Grant contained in Bill C-5 build on the new grant announced in this year's federal budget for students from low-income families to cover a portion of the tuition cost — up to \$3,000 during their first year of post-secondary education, effective August 2005. As well, it builds on the government's important investments in post-secondary education through the Canada Student Loans Program, the Millennium Scholarships, the Canada Study Grants and the Trudeau Graduate Scholarships, to name but a few.

• (1450)

If we are to meet the challenges of the 21st century global economy, we must ensure that all of our citizens have access to post-secondary education and the opportunity to contribute more fully to our economy and society. Bill C-5 is an important step forward in achieving that goal. I therefore ask for senators' support on Bill C-5.

Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise to participate in the debate at second reading of Bill C-5. I support the principle of the bill, but I consider it to be a small step. I take the caution of Senator Moore such that when we have a bill before us, we are supposed to focus on it and not look at the larger question.

I accept that admonition because I consider this bill to be such a small step. I do not want to be misunderstood. Although I support this bill and the step that it represents, it is a small step in Canada where we face what I consider to be a national disgrace — namely, the high level of financial burden of our students.

We have talked about this issue for a long period of time. It does not seem to me that we have been able to find the right model for funding higher education in Canada. Perhaps the time has come to re-examine whether the current stakeholders have to go back to square one to examine a higher approach to post-secondary education. So many studies are being done by the same people, whether it be the university presidents or the federation of students. Perhaps we need to analyze how we are funding post-secondary education.

The reality is that the model we have been using has failed because students are incurring totally unacceptable financial burdens. Upon graduation the indebtedness they have incurred keeps students out of the housing market and many other areas of the economy.

We should approach this kind of bill within the context of what Canada's obligation is to post-secondary education. The Government of Canada has a specific, legally binding international obligation that it assumed when Canada deposited the instruments of ratification on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at the United Nations. Under international treaty law, we assume certain legally binding obligations.

Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stipulates that states parties — Canada — will be taking steps progressively to make post-secondary education freer. Canada ratified that convention in 1976. We have not been making post-secondary education freer since 1976. We have gone in the other direction. If a social audit were performed, we would not pass but would fail miserably, in my judgment.

While I support the intentions of Bill C-5, as Canadians we must address the manner in which the model of funding post-secondary education is developed. We belong to the G8. The problem is not that we do not have the means, because we are not putting a great deal of financial resources into post-secondary education; rather, the problem is the way in which we are doing it. We ought not to be harnessing students with this unacceptable,

immoral debt load upon graduation. Access to education, from kindergarten on up, is continuous throughout life, but the post-secondary years are critically important in terms of the economic, social and cultural benefits to the country.

I accept Senator Moore's admonishment and will try to limit my sense of being disconcerted with the model under which we currently operate in terms of funding higher education. I want to deal specifically with Bill C-5, which purports to make higher learning more easily accessible to a greater number of Canadians.

As Senator Moore explained, the bill was created to encourage the financing of children's post-secondary education through savings from early childhood and Registered Education Savings Plans. For families earning less than \$35,000 per year, the match rate of the Canada Education Savings Grant would climb to 40 per cent on the first \$500 of RESP savings. That is good because it doubles the existing match rate.

For families earning between \$35,000 and \$70,000, the match rate will increase to 30 per cent on the first \$500, while the total Canada savings grant that a beneficiary can receive remains capped at \$7,200. It is hoped that these new rates will help more people to save more money for post-secondary studies.

Primary among the innovations of Bill C-5 is the Canada Learning Bond. I would be remiss if I did not mention that the learning bond was part of the Conservative Party of Canada's platform in the last election.

For the purposes of the bill before us, honourable senators, the bond will only be made available to children born since January 1, 2004. In order to qualify for the CLB, beneficiaries must qualify for either the National Child Benefit Supplement or, in the case of a child placed in care, for allowances paid under the Children's Special Allowances Act.

Essentially, under this initiative there is an initial federal contribution of \$500, which is subsequently augmented each year by \$100 if the beneficiary remains entitled to the National Child Benefit Supplement. This \$100 contribution can be made once per year for each of the next 15 years. It is estimated that the Canada Learning Bond alone will be worth \$3,000 by the time the beneficiary reaches 18 years of age.

Honourable senators, the bill was born of best intentions, and I commend the government for beginning to address a problem that increased exponentially in this last decade or so. Although I have raised my concerns in a general way, I must raise my concern with this bill in a specific way.

Bill C-5 was drafted in an attempt to offer assistance to those Canadians for whom a post-secondary education is becoming less and less affordable. In my opinion, it falls short of the mark. The government is saying that it wants to achieve one thing, but it is not implementing means that are specific enough to achieve that end. Consider, for example, the pressure that families and social assistance in the provinces of Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec may face in light of this bill. In those three provinces, the social assistance programs, regulations and rules dictate that education savings are to be included in a person's financial

assets when they apply for social assistance. As a result, by contributing to the learning bond, these families may place their provincial benefits for social assistance at risk. There must be more cooperation with those provinces in this regard.

• (1500)

We also have seen the gap between government intentions and action in other earlier attempts to address the financial issues surrounding post-secondary education. The Canada Education Savings Grant is a good example. The federal government launched this program five years ago. What began as an effort to assist students from low-income families has seen most of the benefits go directly into the pockets of affluent families.

The RESP has many detractors as well who note that the program rewards those Canadians who are in the least need of help instead of those who face the greatest economic obstacles in pursuit of higher learning. The Canadian Federation of Students has called this program "a national system of indirect grants."

Under the RESP, contributions are not tax deductible. The organization contends that because the income generated by the RESP has accumulated tax free, the forgone tax revenue is tantamount to a grant payable only to RESP investors.

In a similar scenario with regard to the overall financial assistance system for students, a recent study by TD Economics, entitled "Time to Wise Up on Post-Secondary Education in Canada," found that the program is failing those from low-income backgrounds. The report noted:

In Canada, the student financial assistance regime is a bewildering hodgepodge of federal and provincial programs featuring loans, grants and tax incentives. In 2000-2001, it carried an annual price tag in the neighbourhood of \$4.7 billion. But it does not effectively target funding at lower-income groups. And, despite considerable money being added in recent years, the situation has not improved much.

Others have also observed a difference between the government's words and the government's actions. Last month, the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation released an extensive study entitled "The Price of Knowledge 2004: Access and Student Finance in Canada." Sean Junor, a senior policy and research officer at the foundation, observed that "governments now spend more on assistance delivered through the tax system than they do on need-based loans and grants."

According to the study, between 1990 and 2004, the proportion of government funding of need-based student assistance declined from about 65 per cent down to 40 per cent. With the data, the picture becomes very clear at a time when grants and loans to students with the greatest financial need remained constant. The amount spent on education tax credits, credits which are available to anyone regardless of need, have increased dramatically.

Honourable senators, my concern is not the government's reliance on the use of education tax credits, but rather that these initiatives do next to nothing to assist those Canadians facing the most severe financial need. With examples such as these, it is not surprising that the data point to surprising differences in the

participation rates of children from high-income families versus those from low-income backgrounds. According to the data from the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, "Youth from high-income families are twice as likely to attend university as youth from low-income families."

Honourable senators, returning to my initial proposition that all Canadians have a right to post-secondary education, we have an obligation as a society to make that post-secondary education freer. We are not meeting that obligation.

However, I do support this bill. It is a piece of legislation that is moving in the right direction. For those reasons, I hope that we will attend to the social economic justice goals that I am sure all honourable senators share.

Hon. Madeleine Plamondon: Honourable senators, I did not prepare a speech, but I want to say that I will vote for the bill. I agree with Senator Kinsella.

I would like to offer a few thoughts about enriching the bill, having spent all my life in budget counselling. Some families that earn \$35,000 a year never have any savings. When we ask them to save \$10 a week, the aggressive publicity may make them spend this \$10.

If the government would support the budget-counselling community, it would find the \$10 very easily. Even if people are indebted, budget counsellors would find a way to help these people pay their debts and, once the debt is paid, to reach the goal of financing post-secondary education.

When saving money becomes a goal, the parent who saves the \$10 will look after their children's education. Savings, even if only a small amount, are the equivalent of getting the family involved in overseeing education. This is encouraging.

One cannot save for something and at the same time do nothing on the other side. It is like saving for a trip. One saves money, but at the same time the entire family prepares mentally for the trip.

There should be a mechanism so that the low-income families can find the \$10. Once they find the \$10, they will be able to set goals and to save for other purposes. We might then see lower-income families saving instead of being indebted.

Honourable senators, I think this is a very good bill, but I would like it to go further.

Senator Moore: Honourable senators —

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: I would like to advise honourable senators that if Senator Moore speaks at this time, it will have the effect of closing the debate.

Senator Moore: Honourable senators, the comments made by Senators Kinsella and Plamondon are most valid. We have two inquiries under way in the Senate, led by our colleagues Senators Callbeck and Hubley.

Perhaps it is time that we did take a full and complete look at the funding of post-secondary education in our country. Those inquiries may lead to a full study by one of our standing committees, which would be a useful and timely exercise.

If no other senator wishes to speak, I would move that Bill C-5 be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Are honourable senators ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question!

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Moore, seconded by the Honourable Senator Day, that this bill be read the second time.

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

Motion agreed to and bill read second time.

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

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

On motion of Senator Moore bill referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce.

• (1510)

TAX CONVENTIONS IMPLEMENTATION BILL, 2004

THIRD READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Harb, seconded by the Honourable Senator Lavigne, for the third reading of Bill S-17, to implement an agreement, conventions and protocols concluded between Canada and Gabon, Ireland, Armenia, Oman and Azerbaijan for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Is the house ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question!

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Harb, seconded by the Honourable Senator Lavigne, that this bill be read the third time.

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

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

THE ESTIMATES, 2004-05

REPORT OF NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE ON SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (A) ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the second report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance (Supplementary Estimates (A) 2004-2005) presented in the Senate on December 7, 2004.

Hon. Donald H. Oliver: As honourable senators know, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance was created in 1919 and has generally been interested in government spending as expressed in the estimates document and related bills. For many years it has been the practice in the Senate to refer the government spending estimates and supplementary estimates to this committee. It has also become a convention that the Senate does not proceed with the appropriation based on those estimates until it has a report from the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance on its review of the estimates. What is now before honourable senators is the report on Supplementary Estimates (A) 2004-05.

Honourable senators, the Supplementary Estimates (A) for the fiscal year 2004-05 add a net amount of \$2.7 billion to the \$186.3 billion already approved by Parliament in the Main Estimates. The total amount of the estimates to date is approximately \$189 billion for the year 2004-05.

The details of these proposed expenditures are well explained in the report which follows upon two meetings, one with the Honourable Reg Alcock, President of the Treasury Board, on November 30, and one with the officials from the Treasury Board Secretariat on November 23. I believe that this report will ease the Senate's consideration of the interim supply bill, which I presume will be along shortly. I will not take much of your time, honourable senators, but I will draw to your attention several items in our report.

Honourable senators, Mr. Alcock told us that the government is now implementing a number of new and, indeed, exciting initiatives that will alter the way the government is managed in the foreseeable future. In part, this will involve new practices such as what is called the expenditure review exercise, improved oversight activities such as the revitalization of the Comptroller General's office in the Treasury Board Secretariat, and improvements in the process by which government reports to Parliament.

Allow me, honourable senators, to illustrate one aspect of these changes being introduced at this time, namely, the improvement of government reports to Parliament and parliamentary committees. You may be aware that Parliament receives hundreds of statutory reports from over 200 government organizations on matters as diverse as privacy, sustainable development, employment equity, alternative fuels and others. The list of these reports alone exceeds 100 pages.

As honourable senators are aware, the detailed information provided to Parliament does not guarantee clarity or understanding. For some time, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance has requested simpler, more integrated information on the government's plans and activities as they are reported in the estimates document.

At his appearance before the committee, the President of the Treasury Board explained how the government has begun to deliver on its earlier assurances that it would introduce improvements in its process of reporting to Parliament. For example, he noted that all departmental Reports on Plans and Priorities and performance reports are now available electronically. Coupled with further standardization of the presentation of these reports, it should become easier for readers to find information in the departmental reports.

Honourable senators, the committee was immediately able to observe some of this new reporting to Parliament. The Treasury Board Secretariat has begun to provide more detailed information in supplementary estimates themselves. These changes to the format of the supplementary estimates will provide greater transparency and consistency of information in all estimate documents.

Some of the new estimates information that I should like to highlight for honourable senators includes a ministry summary table preceding each ministry in the document, an explanation of the gross funding requirements, an explanation of funds available to offset new spending requirements, a reconciliation of planned spending to total estimates to date, an overview of the major items being requested in these supplementary estimates, a standard object of expenditure summary, a summary of horizontal initiatives, a summary of one dollar items included in these supplementary estimates and a summary of changes reflected in the supplementary estimates since the tabling of the Main Estimates.

The President of the Treasury Board indicated that further changes are in the works, and he hopes that the National Finance Committee will assist in allowing the Treasury Board Secretariat to consult the committee on proposed changes. I assure all honourable senators that it is the intention of the committee to accept this kind invitation.

As honourable senators will recall, this is not the first occasion on which the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance has been called upon to comment on proposed changes to the practices and the policies at the Treasury Board Secretariat. A past discussion that reoccurs in this report concerns the status of the National Finance Committee's earlier work on what is called Treasury Board vote 5, Government Contingencies. Allow me to remind honourable senators that funding provided to government departments and agencies under the Treasury Board vote 5 is either for pay-list shortfalls, such as severance pay and parental benefits, which cannot be predetermined, or for what is called miscellaneous, minor and unforeseen expenditures that were not provided for in the Main Estimates and which are required before supplementary estimates are tabled. You can recognize from that language alone that that opens the door unless it is more clearly defined, and that is what the committee has attempted to do over many years.

The manner in which contingency funds are used under Treasury Board vote 5 has been a recurring concern for the committee. In fact, on June 6, 2002, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance tabled a report containing nine recommendations regarding the working and the implementation of Treasury Board vote 5 funding of departments. Since that

time, the committee has had ongoing discussions with the officials of the Treasury Board Secretariat about the committee's recommendations and possible changes that should follow for the Treasury Board's policy on the use of Treasury Board vote 5, on the wording of the vote and on the guidelines used by its analysts in the determination of eligibility for funding.

The President of the Treasury Board told the committee, as recently as last week, that he is now considering the following: changes to the wording in the introduction of the Main Estimates to provide better context around the use of the government's vote 5; alterations to the wording of the vote reflecting some of the suggestions included in the Senate National Finance Committee's June 2002 report; an approved framework governing the use of vote 5; and, finally, a set of Treasury Board approved guidelines or criteria to accompany the framework.

The president explained that he is currently considering a draft paper and consulting with other parliamentarians and with the Auditor General of Canada on this issue. He stated that it is his intention to release the report on this before the end of December this year.

Let me assure honourable senators that the committee intends to follow up on this matter when it resumes its hearings after the holiday season. The potential for the misuse of Treasury Board funding is too great to allow the matter to rest without a response to the committee's earlier recommendations.

• (1520)

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I rise simply to thank Senator Oliver, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, and the committee itself for the work that they have done and for the report we have just received.

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: I have a few questions, if Senator Oliver is ready to answer questions.

On Treasury Board vote 5, I go specifically to page 7 of the committee's report that deals with a request from the Old Port of Montreal Corporation and Marine Atlantic Inc. If one compares the argument raised by Marine Atlantic, they are asking for \$35 million to cover a cash shortage resulting from falling revenue due to a decrease in traffic, which was unforeseeable, and rising costs associated with fuel, which was also unforeseeable. I think it is justified to allow the \$35 million.

With respect to the Old Port of Montreal Corporation, the only explanation is that they need more money to cover salary costs and contractual obligations. Does the honourable senator have more information than that one sentence in the report to support the request to authorize \$16 million?

Senator Oliver: We did not have more information come before us at the committee. That is why there was extensive debate into the use of vote 5. We want more guidelines and more details because this is the one contingency discretionary area where the sky is the limit and when hundreds of millions of dollars can be slipped through. It is an excellent question and hopefully when we

get the minister's revised report with new guidelines and rules, we will see a tightening of the process so that this will not happen in the future. However, the answer is no.

Senator Nolin: That is too bad. I may have to vote again on that part.

Hon. Lowell Murray: Honourable senators, I intend to say a few words about this report. I do not know whether I can shed any light on the question that was asked by Senator Nolin, but I do recall that when the supplementary estimates were before us at the committee, and the list of purposes to which vote 5 had been put was before us, I asked the officials specifically about the Old Port of Montreal. I asked two questions. What was the date on which the government had recourse to vote 5 for this purpose? It turns out that the date was sometime in May. I said, "During the election campaign," and the official said, "Well, it was before the election." I said, "Yes, of course." However, he did undertake to go back and get some further information as to the need that was put forward by the officials of the Old Port of Montreal, the purpose for which the government in effect had recourse to vote 5. When that information comes forward, I will be glad to share it with my honourable friend.

Honourable senators, I want to say by way of comment on the speech we have just heard by the chairman of the committee and on the report that was tabled here yesterday that the committee is off to a very good start. We have already heard twice from the President of the Treasury Board and once from the Minister of National Revenue. We have also heard from the Auditor General and from the President of the Public Service Commission, among others. Tonight, at five o'clock, we are to hear from the Minister of Public Works and Government Services. I have every reason for confidence that the committee will make a substantive contribution, if not to good governance, at least to the debate on good governance and, in particular, to the question of government's accountability to Parliament in the spending of public money.

Senator Oliver quite properly highlighted some of the matters that are touched on in the report. In particular, he expressed the appreciation of the committee — with which I certainly concur — to the Treasury Board Secretariat for their efforts in improving the reporting to Parliament of the government's spending plans.

If honourable senators are some day leafing through the supplementary estimates, I would draw your attention to the tables between pages 45 and 52. They report on the implementation of \$1 billion in government-wide reallocation that had been announced by the former finance minister, Mr. Manley, in his budget of February 2003. The reallocation announced in 2003 is not to be confused with the old program review over which Marcel Massé presided in the mid 1990s, nor is it to be confused with the \$3 billion per year that the government says it will save and reallocate to other purposes for the next four or five years. Those are three different exercises.

With regard to the \$1 billion reallocation announced by Mr. Manley in 2003, honourable senators can see by looking at the table that most of the reallocation seems to have taken place within a particular department rather than from one department to another, as departments were encouraged to take money away

from lower priorities and devote it to matters of higher priority to the government and the department. Thus, the Department of National Defence in the supplementary estimates is asking for \$502 million originally. The next column shows that they have "saved" \$89 million in their department in the reallocation process. I am talking now of vote 1, the department itself. They "saved" another million somewhere else, so that they have saved \$90 million of the \$502 million in supplementary funding that they want. Therefore, they are coming in for a net of \$412 million.

Seeing this, I was brash enough to ask the officials whether they did not think there was less to this exercise than met the eye and to wonder aloud whether departments were manipulating the Treasury Board in some way by reporting some fancy ostensible savings in order to improve their chances of receiving the supplementary funding that they were seeking. The reductions, the so-called savings, are not from any amount that was to be found in the Main Estimates, but rather in the "reference levels" of the departments that are really documents that are internal to the government.

I will say that the officials of Treasury Board assured us that the savings are for real, that they are from planned expenditures, and that the exercise is carefully monitored by the central agencies to make sure that the numbers we have here are indeed for real.

I join with the chairman and others on the committee in taking some satisfaction in the improved reporting of government spending plans and in the increased transparency, but I want to mention again how difficult it sometimes is to track government monies intended for a particular purpose. I went from that committee last week to another committee that I recently have become a member of, the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, on last Monday night.

[Translation]

We heard from Mr. George Arès, President of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada.

• (1530)

Mr. Arès spoke about the sums of money allocated for the development of minority language communities across the country. He told us that these amounts always fell short of the communities' needs — not surprisingly. He added, though, that in the Official Languages Action Plan announced by the Privy Council President at the time, Mr. Stéphane Dion, the sum of \$19 million was earmarked for Canadian Heritage. This amount was intended for the development of official language minority communities across the country. Mr. Arès emphasized that the problem for these communities is that they have not seen anything of this \$19 million since the announcement. There is a real problem of transparency.

Mr. Arès's statement reads as follows:

In addition, there is a problem of transparency with respect to the funds transferred to Canadian Heritage under the Action Plan. It has been two years since the department has obtained this sum of \$19 million set aside specifically for culture, community radios, and community centres. While

resources for the promotion of cultural activities are terribly meagre, and while the national network of community radio stations is in the process of shutting down its satellite link because of a lack of funds, and while a large number of local communities are still waiting to build their community centres, it is still impossible to obtain information on how Canadian Heritage intends to use or has used the \$19 million. During the appearance of the minister before your committee and that of the House of Commons, no clarification on this subject was forthcoming.

Senator Corbin, chair of the committee, asked several questions about this. In particular, he asked how the \$19 million had been used. Mr. Arès replied:

We would like to know. As far as we know, this money is not yet spent. Two years ago, Canadian Heritage received a portion of this amount. However, we do not know if it has been spent.

Nineteen million dollars is not much compared to a budget of \$186 billion. In fact, it is a trifling amount in the context of \$2-billion supplementary estimates. Nevertheless, it is of great significance to these communities, as Mr. Arès has said.

[English]

I looked in the action plan and found it in supplementary funding under Canadian Heritage: Support to minority communities, \$19 million over five years. Mr. Arès has told us that they cannot find it; they have seen nothing of it; their radio and television stations are closing down; and the satellite links are being closed down. Where is the money? The Commissioner of Official Languages does not seem to know; the Minister of Heritage Canada has nothing to tell us on the subject and everyone is in the dark.

Many questions arise in the testimony of Mr. Arès, questions that will be the subject of later debates about official languages. I raise this simply to make the point that tracing government monies intended for a particular purpose is sometimes a difficult exercise. The official languages communities across the country, in particular, depend on those relatively modest sums for purposes of their development, indeed, their survival as minority language communities.

I hope it will not be necessary for the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance to recall the Treasury Board officials, or the Department of Canadian Heritage representatives, to give an accounting, but this money has gone missing. Perhaps it has gone missing because it has been used for other purposes. I hope not. Perhaps there is too great an element of discretion in a matter of this kind. Mr. Dion gave Canadian Heritage \$19 million for community development. Where did it go? I thought for a while that it might have been a victim of the reallocation process but, when I looked in the Supplementary Estimates, there was no evidence that that was the case. In 2004-05 there was plenty of money set aside for what I assumed to be the action plan.

The question remains: Where is the money they need?

[Senator Murray]

I had not seen Mr. Arès in a long time and, when I last encountered him he was not the president of the national federation but the spokesman for or the president of the Alberta francophone association. I took the occasion the other night, with the indulgence of the chair, to ask him how he thought things were going for francophones and francophone communities in his own province.

[Translation]

Some of what he had to say was fairly positive.

[English]

He told us that, in the last 20 years, the situation had improved considerably. Naturally, he mentioned schools, the management of schools and that sort of thing, which is no more than their constitutional right, as we know. However, he also said that the attitude of the francophones themselves in many of those communities had become much more positive.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: I regret to inform the honourable senator that his speaking time has expired.

Are you asking for leave to continue, Senator Murray?

Senator Murray: Yes, just for another minute or two.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Is that agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Murray: He said that the attitudes of the governments, not restricting this to Alberta but extending it to the governments of all the Western provinces, had become much more helpful.

An interesting point he made was that some of the anglophones who had been through the immersion courses in the late 1960s and 1970s are now in positions of influence in the private sector and in government and have a much more positive attitude toward minority language matters and towards the equality of our official languages than existed many years previously. His words were rather encouraging.

Against that, however, because of the exodus from the rural to the urban communities and a number of other factors, they need more than the \$19 million supplement Mr. Dion was giving to Heritage Canada to encourage development of minority communities. While listening to Mr. Arès, I was struck by the thought that, for a fairly modest sum of money, in the context of \$186 billion, a lot could be done to keep the momentum going in those communities with great benefit to them, those provinces and the country as a whole. A province like Alberta might even be able to scrape up a few dollars out of its own meagre resources for some partnering in these matters.

• (1540)

Honourable senators, transparency is definitely improving at the global level when the Main Estimates and the supplementary estimates are reviewed, and that is all to the good. However, a problem still exists on the ground — sometimes with relatively small sums, but important to those who are affected — in ensuring that the intentions of Parliament in voting this money

are respected and that the voted amount is put to the purposes for which it was intended.

I hope we will have answers to that before too long in the specific case that I have raised.

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

Hon. Senators: Question!

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

Motion agreed to and report adopted.

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: I would draw the attention of honourable senators to the presence in our gallery of former Honourable Senator Raymond Setlakwe.

Welcome.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE GOVERNMENT TO URGE CHINA TO RESOLVE TIBET ISSUE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Leave having been given to proceed to Item No. 66:

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino, pursuant to notice of December 2, 2004, moved:

That, as a follow up to the goodwill generated by the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Ottawa last April, the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to use its friendly relations with China to urge it to enter into meaningful negotiations, without preconditions, with representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to peacefully resolve the issue of Tibet.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise to speak to this time sensitive motion dealing with the Prime Minister's visit to China next month. The house will likely recess in the next few days and I was hoping to gain your support for this motion.

The motion speaks to the great concern that I and many others have about the situation in Tibet. It is truly a tragic situation that spans some five decades and has resulted in great suffering for the Tibetan people. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is committed to a peaceful solution to the conflict in Tibet. His tireless efforts, thus far unsuccessful, have not only earned him the Nobel Peace Prize but also won him the respect, admiration and support of people worldwide, including the people of Canada.

Yet, despite repeated overtures from the Dalai Lama, Beijing has thus far refused to enter into a meaningful dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives. Therefore, the future of the Tibetan people and their culture remain in peril.

Honourable senators, China is galloping toward the 21st century and will have to, at some time, adopt the world's practice of rights, values and freedoms. I believe strongly that the Chinese people, when free to do so, will embrace these values. We have seen that many times, particularly in this country. During his visit to Canada last April, His Holiness stressed the need to engage the Chinese leadership in a conciliatory and non-aggressive manner. I respect his wishes and leadership.

Prime Minister Martin has indicated that he intends to put the human rights issue on the agenda when visiting our trading partners. His scheduled visit to China in January 2005 will provide an opportunity to highlight Canada's international reputation as a peacemaker and defender of human rights. Moreover, with our special relationship with China, we are in a unique position to step forward and make a difference. I hope that the Prime Minister will use his visit to China as an opportunity to firmly present the case for meaningful negotiations between the Chinese government and representatives of His Holiness.

This motion is a plea to our Prime Minister to put the item on the agenda when he meets with China's leaders. The moral weight that the passage of this motion carries will provide our Prime Minister with additional ammunition and support for intervention with the Chinese leadership on behalf of a just cause.

I urge senators to support this motion, which I hope can be disposed of today.

On motion of Senator Rompkey, debate adjourned.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY MATTERS RELATING TO AFRICA

Leave having been given to proceed to Item No. 67:

Hon. Peter A. Stollery, pursuant to notice of December 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs be authorized to examine and report on the development and security challenges facing Africa; the response of the international community to enhance that continent's development and political stability; Canadian foreign policy as it relates to Africa; and other related matters; and

That the Committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than June 30, 2006.

He said: Honourable senators, I yield to Senator Stratton.

Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Perhaps Senator Stollery can tell us, with respect to the committee's proposed study, if the budget has been approved by Internal Economy. If so, what is that budget? Is travel involved? Is there anything else pertinent to this study that is unusual?

Senator Stollery: Honourable senators, a budget has not been approved. We are preparing a budget for this fiscal year, but we do not contemplate travel before the end of this fiscal year. As

honourable senators are aware, our expenses in Ottawa are minimal. To date, we have been working with our emergency budget, and anything contemplated by this motion will not be dealt with in this fiscal year.

Senator Stratton: Is it correct to say that the approval of the budget for this study is being sought in the next fiscal year, and that has yet to be approved?

Senator Stollery: Yes. I would not want to mislead anyone. The committee has agreed to this motion. Any costs will not be incurred in the current fiscal year.

Senator Stratton: Thank you.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Is the house ready for the question?

An Hon. Senator: Question!

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

Motion agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I request leave to revert to Senate Public Bills and proceed with the Order Paper.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

THE SENATE

RULES OF THE SENATE— MOTION TO CHANGE RULE 135—OATH OF ALLEGIANCE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Lavigne, seconded by the Honourable Senator Robichaud, P.C.:

That the *Rules of the Senate* be amended by adding after rule 135 the following:

135.1 Every Senator shall, after taking his or her Seat, take and subscribe an oath of allegiance to Canada, in the following form, before the Speaker or a person authorized to take the oath:

I, (*full name of the Senator*), do swear (*or solemnly affirm*) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Canada. —(*Honourable Senator Robichaud, P.C.*)

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: Honourable senators, I thank Senator Robichaud for letting me speak on this motion standing in his name. I listened with great interest to the speech Senator Lavigne made when he presented his motion. I have fresh in mind the circumstances surrounding his being sworn in as a senator. There is no doubt that what he did on that occasion needed to be corrected. He did so very gracefully. This open-mindedness on his part has to be recognized.

We must understand his motivation behind presenting this motion. I support this motion, and I will tell you why. Twice in Canada's history — some of you served with me in the trenches then — we have had, as Quebecers, to show our allegiance to Canada. Twice we succeeded. I think that it is right and proper for new senators to swear allegiance to Canada upon their appointment.

I have heard it said that Senator Lavigne wants to change the Constitution of Canada. That is not the case for neither the Constitution nor its schedules. Yes, the oath we take upon becoming senators is found in the schedules to the British North America Act.

Senator Lavigne is moving an amendment to the *Rules of the Senate* by adding a second oath, the oath of allegiance to Canada. Honourable senators, I ask you to support this measure. I think it would be reasonable. Some might wonder how it is that we do not already have such an oath. I consider it just and reasonable to support Senator Lavigne's request.

On motion of Senator Robichaud, debate adjourned.

FLAWS IN DELIVERY OF GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Downe calling the attention of the Senate to the

basic flaws in the delivery of the Guaranteed Income Supplement program for low-income seniors.—(*Honourable Senator Ferretti Barth*).

Honourable Eymard G. Corbin: Honourable senators, our dedicated and assiduous colleague Senator Ferretti Barth is well known for her keen interest in people in need, particularly low-income seniors. As you know, her work in the community is exemplary. Our colleague will unfortunately be absent from the Senate for some time. With your permission, I would like to remind her of our friendship and offer her our best wishes.

She had offered to speak shortly. This proved impossible under the circumstances. Having been duly authorized by our colleague, I move today that the debate on the inquiry of Senator Downe be adjourned in the name of Senator Ferretti Barth.

On motion of Senator Corbin, for Senator Ferretti Barth, debate adjourned.

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: It is approaching four o'clock, honourable senators.

Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government): I was about to move the adjournment, but if honourable senators want to see the clock, that is fine. I would very much like to move that the Senate do now adjourn.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Senate adjourned until Thursday, December 9, 2004, at 1:30 p.m.

CONTENTS

Wednesday, December 8, 2004

	PAGE		PAGE
SENATORS' STATEMENTS		National Defence	
Tributes		Sale of Surplus Equipment.	
The Honourable Herbert O. Sparrow.		Hon. Terry Stratton 448	
Hon. Jack Austin	441	Hon. Jack Austin 448	
Hon. David Tkachuk	441	Transport	
Hon. Pana Merchant	442	Airport Security—Loss of Uniforms.	
Hon. Gerry St. Germain	442	Hon. Gerry St. Germain 448	
Hon. David P. Smith	443	Hon. Jack Austin 448	
Hon. Leonard J. Gustafson	443	Hon. Noël A. Kinsella 449	
Hon. Jean Lapointe	443	Hon. Colin Kenny 449	
Hon. Anne C. Cools	444	Delayed Answer to Oral Question	
Hon. Joyce Fairbairn	444	Hon. Bill Rompkey 449	
Hon. Ione Christensen	444	Agriculture and Agri-food	
Hon. Lorna Milne	445	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy—Aid to Cattle Industry.	
Hon. Herbert O. Sparrow	445	Question by Senator St. Germain.	
		Hon. Bill Rompkey (Delayed Answer) 449	
<hr/>		<hr/>	
ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS		ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Agriculture and Forestry		Canada Education Savings Bill (Bill C-5)	
Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Meet During Sitting		Second Reading.	
of the Senate.		Hon. Wilfred P. Moore 450	
Hon. Joyce Fairbairn	446	Hon. Noël A. Kinsella 451	
The Senate		Hon. Madeleine Plamondon 453	
Notice of Motion to Urge Government to Condemn and Initiate		Referred to Committee 453	
Measures Against the Government of Burma for Its		Tax Conventions Implementation Bill, 2004 (Bill S-17)	
Undemocratic Actions.		Third Reading 453	
Hon. Mac Harb	446	The Estimates, 2004-05	
Foreign Affairs		Report of National Finance Committee on Supplementary	
Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Meet During Sitting		Estimates (A) Adopted.	
of the Senate.		Hon. Donald H. Oliver 454	
Hon. Peter A. Stollery	446	Hon. Jack Austin 455	
Transport and Communications		Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin 455	
Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Meet During		Hon. Lowell Murray 455	
Adjournment of the Senate.		Visitor in the Gallery	
Hon. Joan Fraser	446	The Hon. the Speaker <i>pro tempore</i> 457	
Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Meet During		The Senate	
Adjournment of the Senate.		Motion to Urge Government to Urge China to Resolve Tibet Issue—	
Hon. Joan Fraser	446	Debate Adjourned.	
		Hon. Consiglio Di Nino 457	
<hr/>		Foreign Affairs	
QUESTION PERIOD		Committee Authorized to Study Matters Relating to Africa.	
National Defence		Hon. Peter A. Stollery 458	
Location of New Headquarters.		Hon. Terry Stratton 458	
Hon. J. Michael Forrestall	446	Business of the Senate	
Hon. Jack Austin	446	Hon. Bill Rompkey 458	
Troops on Assignment in Foreign Theatres.		The Senate	
Hon. Consiglio Di Nino	447	Rules of the Senate—Motion to Change Rule 135—	
Hon. Jack Austin	447	Oath of Allegiance—Debate Continued.	
Increase in Troops.		Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin 459	
Hon. Consiglio Di Nino	447	Flaws in Delivery of Guaranteed Income Supplement Program	
Hon. Jack Austin	447	Inquiry—Debate Continued.	
Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness		Honourable Eymard G. Corbin 459	
Security Agencies—Funding of National Security Investigations.		Business of the Senate	
Hon. David Tkachuk	447	Hon. Bill Rompkey 459	
Hon. Jack Austin	447		



If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Publishing and Depository Services
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5