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THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA
SPEAKER

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THE SENATE

Thursday, November 27, 2008

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

Prayers.

[Translation]

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

TRIBUTES

THE LATE HONOURABLE JOSEPH P. LANDRY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 22(1), the Leader of the Opposition has requested that the time provided for consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable Joseph Landry, who died on July 25, 2008.

I would remind honorable senators that, pursuant to our rules, each senator will be allowed only three minutes and may speak only once, for a maximum time for tributes of 15 minutes.

Before starting the tributes to our late colleague Joseph Landry, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of two of his sons, Roger Landry and Victor Landry.

Hon. Fernand Robichaud: Honourable senators, I wish to pay tribute to the honourable Joseph Gérard Lauri P. Landry, who retired from this chamber in September 1997, and who passed away on July 25, 2008. He was 86.

Senator Joseph Landry was a tireless builder who had many decades of remarkable success in the business world. He helped develop Cap-Pele and the entire southeastern region of New Brunswick.

[English]

Senator Joseph Landry was the perfect example of a self-made man.

[Translation]

His success in business was due to his keen intelligence, certainly, but above all to his hard work and his legendary determination.

He grew up in a modest home and got his business acumen from his father, whose own business did not survive the Great Depression of the 1930s. On his father's death, his sisters wanted him to stay in school past the eighth grade, but his speech impediment prevented him from continuing his education. Armed with unshakeable patience, perseverance and determination, he succeeded in overcoming his disability.

Honourable senators, Joseph Landry showed the same passion in his work. Early on, he would travel to Goose Bay to work as a carpenter for six months at a time in order to save money. His

career in construction ended when he was asked to go to work in Newfoundland, running a friend's plant. There he received a true education in how to manage a fish processing plant.

He turned into a seasoned businessman when he became the owner of a lobster packing plant, Cape Bald Packers, which initially had 30 employees but today has five facilities and employs more than 1,000 people.

In 1982, Joseph Landry founded Les Plastiques Downeast Plastics, with five employees. Today, the company has a workforce of over 100.

His business successes were recognized many times, most notably in 2001, when Senator Landry received the Ernst & Young Atlantic Entrepreneur of the Year Trophy.

On a more personal note, I want to say that Senator Landry was always very hospitable when I visited him, and I know he extended the same warm welcome to everyone who went to see him. Furthermore, Joe Landry was always very generous to his friends, his colleagues and his community. It was in his nature to be generous.

Just three months after his death, on October 18, his wife of 53 years, Lucie LeBlanc Landry, went to join him in the next world.

Honourable senators, I express my deepest sympathies and sincere condolences to their sons, Roger and Victor, who are here today, as well as to their other five children, their grandchildren and all the members of their family.

• (1340)

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool: Honourable senators, I, too, would like to pay tribute to a former colleague from New Brunswick, the Honourable Joseph Landry, who passed away on July 25.

Joe Landry did not sit in the Senate long — scarcely 16 months — but he left the indelible memory of a good and modest man who always acted in the best interest of his fellow citizens and who spent his life making southeastern New Brunswick an economic destination of choice. As Senator Robichaud said, it is thanks to Joe Landry that that part of our province can be so proud of two well-known companies that employ thousands of workers: Cape Bald Packers and Downeast Plastics.

Personally, I shall never forget the speech that Senator Landry delivered on the day before his last as a senator. It was April 24, 1997, and I remember it very clearly. That day, Senator Landry urged us to tackle a handicap he himself had always battled, a handicap that still affects hundreds of thousands of Canadians: stammering. I will never forget what he said, with considerable effort, about this handicap. One sentence in particular really made an impression on me, "How many potential Jim Carreys,

Céline Dions, John A. Macdonalds or Pierre Trudeaus did Canada lose because of the effects of untreated stammering?"

Our colleague was so human, so genuine. Farewell, Senator Landry, and thank you for having enriched our lives.

[English]

GENERAL RICK HILLIER (RETIRED)

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR—MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY—INSTALLATION AS CHANCELLOR

Hon. Ethel Cochrane: Honourable senators, I recently had the honour of attending fall convocation at Memorial University of Newfoundland. This event marked an especially important day for the university, as it included the official installation of its new chancellor, former Chief of the Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier. He was named Chief of the Defence Staff in February 2005. A master of the media sound bite and public relations, General Hillier served as Canada's top soldier until July 2 of this year. His appointment as chancellor became effective the very next day.

As honourable senators may know, the chancellor is the titular head of the university's highest-ranking volunteer position. In announcing the appointment, the acting president, Dr. Eddy Campbell, said of him:

He has always been a tireless supporter of Memorial and he brings his immense experience, energy and enthusiasm to our university community.

In his first address as chancellor, General Hillier spoke of the recent federal election and the unfortunately low voter turnout. While, federally, slightly less than 60 per cent of voters turned out on election day, that figure was even lower in Newfoundland and Labrador with barely 48 per cent of eligible voters casting ballots.

General Hillier called upon his memories as a soldier stationed abroad. He spoke of seeing African villagers walk more than eight hours to reach their polling stations, only to turn around a few short months later to make the same trek again for another election when the unstable government fell. General Hillier said, "The right to vote is something not afforded everyone. It's a privilege no one should take for granted."

Honourable senators, I could not agree more and I would like to thank General Hillier for his unwavering support of our troops, for his dogged determination and for his remarkable contribution in the service of Canada throughout his accomplished 35-year military career.

I invite all honourable senators to join me in congratulating General Hillier on his installation as chancellor of Memorial University. I am sure he will continue to make a tremendous contribution to the university, to the students and to Canada as a whole.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS MONTH

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, as the month of November draws to a close, I remind honourable senators that this month is Special Olympics Month in Canada. The Special Olympics is an international movement that provides

opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities to train and compete in athletic events.

• (1345)

Next February 6 to 13, 81 of Canada's best athletes will compete in the 2009 Special Olympics Winter Games in Boise, Idaho. They will give their all to bring home gold, silver or bronze in such events as alpine and cross-country skiing, figure skating, floor hockey, snowshoeing and speed skating.

[Translation]

More than 3,000 athletes from 85 countries will meet in Boise. And I will be there too, proud to represent Canada and our athletes at these games.

[English]

I will be representing Canada at these games, but I will also be attending to pay tribute to the memory of my own Special Olympian, Timothy James Alexander Munson. Timmy was born almost 40 years ago, our little boy. He was born with Down's syndrome and like many people with Down's syndrome, he had other health problems and passed away before his first birthday.

Timmy was born into a family full of love and acceptance, but as many honourable senators may remember, a generation ago our society was not so accepting of people with intellectual disabilities. There was a sense of shame and stigma surrounding all disabilities, but especially intellectual disabilities — and those words were not the ones used in those days.

We have come a long way since then and I think the Special Olympics movement deserves much of the credit. By involving people in sport and giving them opportunities to compete and to win at the international level, they are opening doors and minds.

For Special Olympics Month, I urge all honourable senators to become involved. You can be a coach, a volunteer to take an athlete to practice or contribute financially to the movement. By supporting the Special Olympics, honourable senators, you will help to break down the barriers that still exist for people with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics athletes have a motto, "Winning at Life"; and in their oath they say: "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

By supporting Special Olympics, you will make Canada more inclusive and the world a better place.

Hon. Janis G. Johnson: Honourable senators, I, too, rise to speak about Special Olympics Month. I congratulate my colleague, Senator Munson. I know how much work he has done in this area.

I, too, spent 25 years as a Special Olympics volunteer and board member. I suggest to anyone who wants to make a contribution, that this organization is certainly an excellent one with which to be involved.

[Senator Losier-Cool]

I want to introduce honourable senators to some exemplary and inspiring Canadian athletes who are involved with Special Olympics: figure skater Jessica Young, from Mississauga; rhythmic gymnast Christina Campbell, from Chesterville; figure skater Zane Salera-Nasra, from Montreal; alpine skier, hockey player, as well as track and field athlete Troy Ford-King, of Mississauga; and floor hockey, soccer and softball player Arthur Rea, of Caledon East.

These young people embody the determination and discipline required of all athletes to push their physical and mental limits and perform to the best of their abilities.

Jessica and Zane competed in Quebec City last February for the right to represent Canada at the 2009 Special Olympics World Games in Boise, Idaho this February, and have been training full out in preparation.

Troy, on the other hand, was the first Canadian member of the Final Leg team, a group of athletes representing 82 Special Olympics and Law Enforcement Torch Run programs who ran along the Great Wall of China prior to the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games opening ceremony in Shanghai, China. In addition to his athletic abilities, Arthur serves as the athletic representative on the board of directors of Special Olympics Canada.

Honourable senators may have seen a poster of Christina at Staples stores, where she was featured as part of their campaign to raise funds to support community and national sport programs for Canadians with an intellectual disability. By the way, Christina also works at a local branch of this store only a few blocks away from this chamber.

Special Olympics Canada is not only about supporting elite athletes but also sports and recreation for all Canadians with intellectual disabilities. I am proud to say that Canada has been involved since 1968, when a floor hockey team from Toronto represented our nation in the first international Special Olympics Games, held at Soldier Field in Chicago.

Currently, 32,000 Canadians, starting as young as five years of age, are registered with Special Olympics Canada and are supported by a network of 13,000 volunteers and 10,000 certified coaches.

The impact of this involvement on people who are marginalized in our sometimes less-than-inclusive society is profound. A recent study showed that, just like typical athletes, our Special Olympics athletes are serious about their sports, enjoy the social experience that comes with participating, and are spurred into further physical activity. Furthermore, over half of adults who are Special Olympians are employed.

• (1350)

Honourable senators, I am inspired by the work of these incredible athletes, volunteers and workers who are a vital part of Canada's sports community. Whether they are competing for Canada or for themselves in our communities, they are the living proof of the life-enriching difference of the Special Olympics.

[Translation]

THE LATE HONOURABLE MARIO BEAULIEU

REMARKS ON TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF PASSING

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: Honourable senators, October 12, 2008, marked the tenth anniversary of the death of one of our own, the Honourable Mario Beaulieu, who represented the senatorial division of De la Durantaye. At this time I ask you to join me in remembering this great French-Canadian. We dearly miss his political experience and the wisdom of his words in this time of significant turbulence within our institutions.

Born in Plantagenet, Ontario, he studied in Montreal at the École Saint-Jean-de-Brébœuf, Collège Saint-Ignace, Collège Sainte-Marie and at the Université de Montréal. He earned his law degree in 1955 and was admitted to the Chambre des notaires du Québec in 1956. He founded two notary's offices over the years, first Esposito-Beaulieu and then Beauregard-Beaulieu. He was involved in many commercial enterprises, the last of which, but certainly not the least, was in his role as chairman of the board of Simard-Beaudry.

In provincial politics, he ran for the Union Nationale in the Montreal riding of Montréal-Laurier in 1962 and was defeated by one René Lévesque, who was a Liberal candidate at the time. He also served as coordinator for the Union Nationale's general assembly in 1965 and, in 1966, was the chairman of the Union Nationale's electoral campaign.

He served as chief of staff to Premier Daniel Johnson Sr. from 1966 to 1968, and was also the director general of the Union Nationale in 1968. He was elected in the riding of Dorion in a by-election on March 3, 1969, and was a member of Jean-Jacques Bertrand's government. He served successively as Minister of Immigration, Minister of Financial Institutions, Companies and Cooperatives, and finally, Minister of Finance. He was defeated in the 1970 election. He ran unsuccessfully for the leadership of the Union Nationale in 1971.

In federal politics, he was co-chairman of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada's Quebec campaign in the 1984 general election and chairman of the electoral campaign in 1988. He was appointed to the Senate by the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney on August 30, 1990, and left this place on June 21, 1991.

Mario was a mentor for many young Progressive Conservatives. Always generous, he consistently respected the authority of his leader and was unfailingly loyal. It meant something when Mario gave his word. He would follow through and we could count on it. He had an incredible network of contacts. He could count on any number of friends at any given moment, which meant he could take on any task, no matter how difficult or complicated.

To his wife and children, I would like to express my profound respect for the life's work of Mario Beaulieu. Unfortunately, we have lost an extraordinary Canadian.

THE LATE COLONEL KAREN RITCHIE

TRIBUTE

Hon. Lucie Pépin: Honourable senators, Colonel Karen Ritchie died as the result of an automobile accident on October 13, 2008. At that time, she was commander of 5 Area Support Group in Quebec. She was 45 years old. The Canadian Forces and Canada have lost a devoted officer, a woman and leader who had much to offer.

I had the pleasure of meeting Colonel Ritchie on several occasions. Each time I was impressed by her vitality. She was an extraordinarily tough woman who was also deeply human. She served Canada for 28 years at various levels.

Karen Ritchie entered the Royal Military College in Kingston at the age of 17. She was the first female graduate of the college to reach the rank of colonel.

• (1355)

She dreamed of becoming a pilot, but the regulations did not permit women to enter that profession. She joined the army where she found her way and specialized in electrical and mechanical engineering.

She was promoted to captain in 1988. Transferred to Germany, she served as a support officer, platoon commander and maintenance officer.

When she returned to Canada in 1991, she served with the Land Force Command Headquarters G4 Staff. She was subsequently assigned to Gagetown.

After earning a master's degree in logistics, she was promoted to the rank of major. She was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel in 2000. In 2002 she was deployed to the Persian Gulf as Deputy Commanding Officer of the Operation Apollo National Support Unit.

Upon her return to Canada, she assumed command of Area Support Unit Toronto. In 2003, she was reassigned to G4, Land Force Central Area Headquarters, and was responsible for the logistical support of all Army elements in Ontario. She was promoted to the rank of colonel in June 2004 and, as I mentioned earlier, was the first female colonel. Colonel Ritchie managed several projects at Headquarters in Ottawa.

Gender integration in the armed forces was very important to Colonel Ritchie. Her experience in the Canadian Forces showed her that women could aspire without reserve to the same positions as men. To that end, she participated in the advancement of the gender integration program of the Canadian Forces and was a member of a NATO committee that looked at the issue of gender equality.

Colonel Ritchie was a role model for female soldiers and also for members of the Girl Guides of Canada, who she helped become leaders in their communities.

Colonel Ritchie was taken from us prematurely, but she will be remembered forever by all Canadians who knew her.

[English]

HMCS CHARLOTTETOWN

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, last month, the HMCS *Charlottetown* came into port in her namesake city. As the ship's sponsor, I am always pleased when the HMCS *Charlottetown* returns home. It was also a wonderful occasion for people across the province — Islanders are very proud of their affiliation with this impressive ship and its remarkable crew.

I was honoured and privileged to attend, with the Lieutenant-Governor and many other Islanders, an afternoon sail on the Northumberland Strait. The HMCS *Charlottetown*, engaged in manoeuvres, fired its .50-calibre big guns, and demonstrated its immense capabilities and skills. This ship is considered to be one of the most advanced general-purpose frigates in the world.

HMCS *Charlottetown* was home after a recent long deployment overseas. In November 2007, the ship joined the USS *Harry S. Truman* Carrier Strike Group to go to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea as part of Operation ALTAIR, which is Canada's maritime contribution to the campaign against terrorism. They were deployed in the Middle East for six months.

During that time, the HMCS *Charlottetown* came to the assistance of three vessels in distress and saved the lives of 25 sailors. She tracked five boats that were engaged in human smuggling, stopped one act of piracy and conducted surveillance on another boat after it was taken by pirates. In addition to the direct protection of human lives, the ship also intercepted more than six tonnes of narcotics and 2,000 smuggled cases of alcohol.

Honourable senators, Operation ALTAIR was a long and demanding mission, but this crew performed with honour and distinction. They met their challenges in the same way they always do — with dedication, courage and professionalism.

In addition to their duties, the crew has been involved in works of charity on Prince Edward Island. Every summer for the past five years, crew members have travelled to the province and conducted the "Run 4 Wishes" fundraising event for the Children's Wish Foundation. They run across the province raising money, and towns and communities hold events along the way. This past summer, they raised more than \$61,000.

I thank the HMCS *Charlottetown*'s Commanding Officer, Commander Steven Waddell, for his graciousness and hospitality during the ship's visit to the province. I also thank the commander and his crew for their continued service to this country and its people. Each and every crew member of the HMCS *Charlottetown* is an integral part of Canada's long-standing commitment to peace and security in the world. They all have our grateful appreciation.

• (1400)

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(h), I move:

That when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, December 2, 2008, at 2 p.m.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, is leave granted?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

[English]

PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore presented Bill S-215, An Act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (vacancies).

Bill read first time.

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

On motion of Senator Moore, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Raúl de la Nuez Ramírez, Minister of Foreign Trade of the Republic of Cuba. The minister and his delegation are the guests of the Honourable Senator Munson.

On behalf of all honourable senators, we welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

FEDERAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACT AUDITOR GENERAL ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Tommy Banks presented Bill S-216, An Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act and the Auditor General Act (Involvement of Parliament).

Bill read first time.

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

On motion of Senator Banks, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.

[Translation]

INCOME TAX ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Grant Mitchell presented Bill S-217, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (carbon offset tax credit).

Bill read first time.

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

On motion of Senator Mitchell, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.

L'ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

FRANCE-CANADA SYMPOSIUM—MARCH 7-8, 2008— REPORT TABLED

Hon. Pierre De Bané: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 23(6), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation to the France-Canada Symposium, “The Legacy of France in Canada over 400 years” of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, held March 7 and 8, 2008, in Paris, France.

PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE— MAY 6-7, 2008—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Pierre De Bané: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 23(6), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation to the meeting of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, held May 6 and 7, 2008, in Andorre la Vieille, Principality of Andorra.

[English]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

NOTICE OF MOTION INSTRUCTING COMMITTEE TO MEET AND REPORT

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I give notice, pursuant to rule 58(1), that at the next sitting of the Senate I shall move:

That it be an order of the Senate to the Committee of Selection that it meet on the first day the Senate sits after the adoption of this motion and that it then present its report nominating the Senators to serve on the several select committees, except the Committee on Conflict of Interest for Senators, no later than the second day the Senate sits following the adoption of this motion.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY ACCESSIBILITY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology be authorized to examine and report on the accessibility of post-secondary education in Canada, including but not limited to:

- (a) analysis of the current barriers in post-secondary education, such as geography, family income levels, means of financing for students, debt levels and challenges faced specifically by Aboriginal students;
- (b) evaluation of the current mechanisms for students to fund post-secondary education, such as Canada Student Loans Program, Canada Student Grants Program, Canada Access Grants, funding for Aboriginal students, Canada Learning Bonds, and Registered Education Savings Plans;
- (c) examination of the current federal/provincial transfer mechanism for post-secondary education;
- (d) evaluation of the potential establishment of a dedicated transfer for post-secondary education; and
- (e) any other matters related to the study; and

That the Committee submit its final report no later than June 30, 2010, and that the Committee retain until December 31, 2010, all powers necessary to publicize its findings.

TREATY ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 57(2), I give notice that two days hence:

I shall call the attention of the Senate to the Treaty on Cluster Munitions.

• (1410)

QUESTION PERIOD

FINANCE

ECONOMIC DOWNTURN—GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, while the Canadian people watch in disbelief as their incomes, their retirement incomes and their jobs literally dissolve, no one can understand how this Prime Minister can possibly stand by and do nothing

while this is happening to their futures. Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell us whether the Prime Minister's inaction is based upon the fact that he is simply confused about what to do?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, the Prime Minister has made it clear that he, as well as the government, is well aware of the severity of this unprecedented worldwide economic crisis. The Minister of Finance will be making a statement this afternoon at four o'clock to give Canadians and parliamentarians an economic update as to the situation as it presently stands.

Yesterday, I reminded honourable senators of the stimulus package the government began last year. Those tax changes were structural and permanent. The International Monetary Fund stated in April that our package of tax cuts provided a timely fiscal stimulus. That is one of the reasons Canada is in a better position — not a great position, obviously — than all of the other countries in the G7.

Senator Mitchell: How is it that tax cuts stimulate an economy when neither citizens nor companies are making any money?

Senator LeBreton: Senator Mitchell's statement is broadly based. There are still segments of the economy that are doing as well as can be expected. The picture that the honourable senator and his colleagues paint is more a reflection of what is happening across the border. Of course, we are not immune; Canada is not an island. We are very much affected by the American economy but, as Statistics Canada reported just last week, we are doing marginally better than any of the other countries in the G7.

Senator Mitchell: Speaking of the United States, how can the Prime Minister continue to hang on to the idea, and state it from time to time, that the fundamentals of the Canadian economy are strong when the most important fundamental of the Canadian economy, the U.S. economy, is, in the leader's own words, not very strong?

Senator LeBreton: The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance have reported that the fundamentals of the Canadian economy are strong because they are. That is not them talking; that is the OECD and the International Monetary Fund.

[Translation]

HERITAGE

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION— COMMUNICATION FROM MINISTER

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Can the government tell us its position regarding the public broadcaster, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation? Does the government support this Crown corporation that allows the influence of culture, knowledge, information and opinions to extend all over the country?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): I do not understand the premise of the honourable senator's question. We have just sworn in a new

Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages in the person of James Moore. There have been many stories in the newspaper about the CBC, and the CBC has been in a constant battle with the various newspaper organizations who question the CBC. However, as far as I know, I have not seen or heard anything in the last while about the status of the CBC.

• (1415)

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: Will the government continue to support our public broadcaster or does it intend to privatize it?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, that is a hypothetical question. I have seen no evidence of privatizing the CBC. The prudent thing to do would be to await any comments or any policy changes — if they are proposed at all — from the Minister of Heritage and Official Languages, Mr. Moore.

The honourable senator will know that as a result of a newspaper story on expenses in the CBC, Mr. Moore wrote to the CBC and suggested that they be more prudent in their spending. That is the only reference I have seen in the last few months to the CBC.

Hon. Joan Fraser: Further to the question of prudent spending by the CBC, I do not know whether the leader is aware of the CBC's statement that the expenses in question by Mr. Sylvain Lafrance have not been fully reported. That is to say, they were reported out of context. In particular, certain trips to Paris, which had been reported in unflattering terms, were undertaken because Mr. Lafrance was representing the Government of Canada at international broadcasting organizations. During at least one of those trips he stayed in a Best Western Hotel which, the last time I checked, was hardly lavish accommodation.

If the leader was not aware of that position from the CBC, I would ask her if she is willing to check it out and forward it to her colleague, the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages.

Senator LeBreton: I have seen the CBC's response and the letters written in defence of the position of their executives. I have also seen the response of the news organization that revealed these figures in the first place.

I do not need to clip the article and forward it to my colleague, James Moore. He is a bright and diligent minister, and I am sure he is on top of all of these issues.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO QUEBEC CONCERNS

Hon. Yoine Goldstein: Honourable senators, the Prime Minister and this government have asserted that they have made great strides in softening nationalist sentiment in Quebec and encouraging the identification of Quebecers with and within the rest of Canada.

Five elements of the Speech from the Throne belie this assertion. First, the national securities regulator legislation, although it may envisage an opting in or an opting out, is nevertheless an affront to Quebec which, as honourable senators know, fiercely opposes a national securities regulator.

That opposition is based on two aspects: First, securities regulation is probably a matter of provincial jurisdiction; and second, the creation of a national securities regulator — even if Quebec is permitted to opt out — would have the effect of severely and adversely affecting the ability of medium-sized businesses in Quebec to raise money through a public issue. It would subject Quebec companies wanting to raise money through public offerings to dual or multiple securities filings rather than the current streamlined de facto national system. More importantly, it would isolate Quebec yet again and make Quebecers feel they are on the outside of the financial market in Canada rather than a part of it.

Second, Quebecers remain concerned about cuts to cultural programs, with more to come.

Third, Quebecers remain hostile to the severe penalties proposed for juvenile offenders. One would have thought the government party would have learned a lesson about this as a result of its rather meagre showings in Quebec in the last election. This does not appear to be the case.

Fourth, as honourable senators are aware, reform of Canada's Senate, as conceived by this government, is radically opposed by Quebecers, is probably unconstitutional, and flies in the face of the unanimous resolution of the Assemblée nationale du Québec.

• (1420)

Last, the Conservative government has announced its intention to reintroduce the bill to increase the number of seats in Ontario, Alberta and B.C. While there is legitimate reason to justify this measure given the increased population of these provinces, the consistent refusal of this government to assure Quebec, through legislation, that its proportion of seats in the other place will remain the same, yet again, shows Quebecers that the Conservative government does not really care about them.

Will the leader please take back to the cabinet, which regrettably does not appear to have any articulate spokespeople for or from Quebec within its ranks, the fact that Quebecers are becoming increasingly alarmed by the disinterest of the federal government in regard to the concerns of Quebec and that the continuation of this kind of attitude will wreak havoc in Quebec by increasing nationalist and separatist sentiment?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I must take issue with the honourable senator's notion that there are no articulate spokespersons amongst my cabinet colleagues from Quebec. That is the height of hypocrisy and arrogance.

The honourable senator cites the national securities regulator. It is well known that the Province of Quebec does not support this proposal. The honourable senator also mentioned the "opting out" provision. We are well aware that the Quebec government's position on the national securities regulator is not a view shared by other provinces in the country.

With regard to what this government is doing to reach out and ensure that Quebec is recognized in its proper place in the Canadian fabric, I need only remind senators of the words of the Premier of Quebec, Jean Charest, in the debate the other night, when he outlined his position in several areas, as well as the position of the federal government in the interests of Quebec, including those of recognizing Quebec as a nation and the issue of fiscal imbalance.

With regard to the cuts in areas of culture, the honourable senator is flat wrong there. We have not cut funds for culture; we have increased funds for culture. With regard to young offenders, he is falling into the trap of the Bloc Québécois who completely misrepresented that position about 14-year-olds. The proposed policy gives the judge the discretion, when dealing with murderers and rapists, to name the young offenders.

Senator Goldstein: This is what the press has to say about the Conservative government's attitude, and I quote from an editorial by Bernard Descôteaux, a highly respected columnist in Quebec who reflects the opinion of opinion makers and opinion leaders in Quebec:

[Translation]

Quebec will come to several crossroads in its relations with the federal government in the next two or three years. Prime Minister Stephen Harper is steadfast in his desire to reform the Senate of Canada to have its members elected, to redraw the electoral map, and to create a national securities commission, despite Quebec's stated opposition. Similarly, he is ignoring Quebec's claims with respect to the fiscal imbalance.

[English]

Without entering into what someone may or may not have said during the course of an electoral debate, and we know exactly what kind of value those declarations have because we just experienced them from the government's Minister of Finance and Prime Minister, could the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell us what she will do to try to assuage Quebec public opinion with respect to the attitude of the federal government towards Quebecers?

Senator LeBreton: It is clear that our government is well represented from the province of Quebec. We increased our percentage of votes there, although people do not realize that. We won 10 seats in the last election and 10 seats in this election.

• (1425)

Obviously, it is not in the best interests of anyone from either side of the house to create difficulties with any of the provinces in this country. The Prime Minister has reached out from the moment he was elected leader of our party and from the moment he was made Prime Minister. He is cognizant of the difficulties between the provinces on a number of issues.

I do not think it is responsible for any of us to take the views of a columnist or anyone, and use them as a means of trying to make problems worse than perhaps they may be, or to keep wounds open when we are trying to heal them.

Senator Cordy: Can you say "Atlantic accord"?

[Senator LeBreton]

STATUS OF WOMEN

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Hon. Sandra Lovelace Nicholas: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

November 25 was the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Not much has been done about this epidemic. Five hundred and ten Aboriginal girls and women have vanished or have been murdered since 1980, and still nothing has been done.

What is the government doing to end violence against women and towards protecting women's rights in Canada?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): The honourable senator says nothing has been done when a significant amount has been done. She then asks me to let her know what has been done, and I am happy to do.

Violence against women is a serious matter and continues to be a serious matter. This is the first time there has been a Minister of State responsible for the Status of Women. The minister, the Honourable Helena Guergis, recently signed on to the United Nations campaign entitled "Say NO to Violence against Women." The federal government is working to improve the situation of Aboriginal women and to address violence against them. At their meeting in September, the federal-provincial-territorial ministers of justice discussed the serious issue of missing persons, which is a troubling matter. They recognized the particular concerns related to missing Aboriginal women. The ministers directed the establishment of a working group of senior criminal justice officials to review the response of the criminal justice system to cases involving killers who target vulnerable women.

Our government is funding the building of five new women's shelters for First Nations communities. We have passed into law changes to the Canadian Human Rights Act to provide First Nations people with the same legal protection against discrimination that other Canadians enjoy.

In the previous Parliament, we introduced legislation to address on-reserve matrimonial real property rights.

Hon. Lorna Milne: Honourable senators, I have a supplementary question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Where are these three shelters to be located?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I said "five shelters." I will take that question as notice and provide the honourable senator with the locations.

Hon. Grant Mitchell: I have a supplementary question. If the government is so concerned about violence against women and, as the leader says, seems to be doing so much in that regard, why would they campaign with a major policy of putting 14-year-old children into jail for life rather than campaigning on what they would do to help reduce criminal violence against women which, as my colleague across the way stated, is an epidemic in this society?

• (1430)

Senator LeBreton: Clearly, the honourable senator has not read the policy. The policy was very clear with regard to the Youth Criminal Justice Act. It deals with young offenders who have committed serious crimes like murder and rape.

Therefore, the honourable senator is quite mistaken that we had a policy that would put 14-year-olds in prison.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, on May 30, 2008, 107 participating states at the Dublin conference on cluster munitions agreed to adopt the text of the new Convention on Cluster Munitions. By doing so, they fulfilled their commitment made in the Oslo Declaration in February 2007, to:

Conclude by 2008 a legally binding international instrument that prohibits the use and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians and secure adequate provision of care and rehabilitation to survivors and clearance of contaminated areas.

The new convention will be opened for signature at a signing conference in Oslo on December 3, 2008. Who will Canada send as members of the delegation for the signing of this new convention?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): I thank the honourable senator for her question. I am aware of the signing in Oslo in December and I will attempt to obtain the names of the delegation.

Senator Hubley: Canada was a leader in the Ottawa process to ban landmines and has been a participant throughout this process on banning cluster munitions. Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell us if Canada will resume its leadership role in this field and continue to advocate for even more stringent measures than the ones included in the current convention?

Senator LeBreton: As I think I reported when the honourable senator asked the question before, Canada has continued to take a leading role on this issue. I will be happy to provide any updated information about where we go from here.

Hon. Yoine Goldstein: Honourable senators, the Canadian Red Cross has told us that Canada does not use cluster munitions, but we store them for other countries. For that reason, Canada is contributing to the problem.

What is the leader's comment with respect to that issue?

Senator LeBreton: I have not seen the report of the Canadian Red Cross. As I stated with regard to the issue of cluster munitions, this conference is coming up in Oslo, and rather than misinform the Senate, I would prefer to provide a delayed answer on the exact position of the government.

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

INFRASTRUCTURE CANADA PROGRAM

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. I am rather unclear on the leader's answers in the last few days about the stimulus package the government embarked upon last year. In it, the honourable senator indicated that a number of measures were taken to anticipate the meltdown in the economy. Therefore, the approach seems to be one of "steady as she goes" when everyone else appears to be stimulating substantially.

Somewhere in the budget, I believe two years ago, was an allocation of approximately \$33 billion for urban infrastructure. As I recall, that \$33 billion was to be spent over a seven-year period.

• (1435)

Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell us how much of that \$33 billion has been spent?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): As the honourable senator is aware, Minister Baird has been meeting with the head of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, who I believe is the Mayor of Sherbrooke, Quebec. Minister Baird says he is pleased with the progress that has been made between the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the federal government. He has stepped up his activities with the provinces and the municipalities to push these monies out the door and put the shovels in the ground.

I will find out for the honourable senator the exact figure of how much is out the door, how much is about to go out the door and how much is left of the \$33 billion.

Senator Grafstein: My understanding is that Toronto has not received a penny in two years.

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

APPOINTMENTS TO SENATE

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, it is confusing when the Leader of the Government in the Senate talks about the economy and talks about playing politics. The question is really about people. It is interesting to observe the political games.

The leader should be a bit worried. When even my old friend, Bob Fife, describes the Conservative approach as "mean-spirited," I think she might become a little nervous.

We are becoming used to the Conservative government's attacks on democratic institutions. We have seen disrespect of independent regulatory authorities, disrespect of Elections Canada and resignations of officers of Parliament who are weary of harassment by this government. We now learn that these attacks were a prelude to the full frontal attack this government is planning on the democratic institutions of the political parties that represent the people of Canada.

My feeling is that this attack is beyond bullying and harassment. Will the Leader of the Government in the Senate please tell us when her government will respect the traditions and institutions that make this country so great?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, we do respect the institutions that make this country so great. I believe we have been up front about the programs we have announced. The issue of Senate reform — if that is what the honourable senator refers to — is again in our platform. Legislation will be tabled, and this house and the other place will have a full opportunity to debate the legislation when the Minister of State for Democratic Reform, the Honourable Steven Fletcher, does so.

Senator Munson: Will the Leader of the Government in the Senate give us a heads-up when the Prime Minister will fulfill his constitutional obligation of naming senators? Will that happen soon — in January, perhaps?

Senator LeBreton: As much as I know that the honourable senator would love me to answer that question, I believe that the Prime Minister has indicated — and it is clear in our election platform — that we still believe that senators should go through a selection process. That is the position we took in the platform.

Legislation will be drawn up to that effect, the legislation will be duly presented to Parliament and we will have a great debate about it. Hopefully, the legislation will pass and we will be able to deal especially with those provinces that have indicated that they intend to run Senate elections. We will see where it proceeds from there.

• (1440)

The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, December 2, 2008, at 2 p.m.

THE SENATE OF CANADA

PROGRESS OF LEGISLATION

*(indicates the status of a bill by showing the date on which each stage has been **completed**)*

(1st Session, 40th Parliament)

Thursday, November 27, 2008

*(*Where royal assent is signified by written declaration, the Act is deemed to be assented to on the day on which the two Houses of Parliament have been notified of the declaration.)*

GOVERNMENT BILLS (SENATE)

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.

GOVERNMENT BILLS (HOUSE OF COMMONS)

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.

COMMONS PUBLIC BILLS

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.

SENATE PUBLIC BILLS

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.
S-201	An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (student loans) (Sen. Goldstein)	08/11/20							
S-202	An Act respecting commercial electronic messages (Sen. Goldstein)	08/11/20							
S-203	An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (foreign postings) (Sen. Carstairs, P.C.)	08/11/20							
S-204	An Act to amend the Library and Archives of Canada Act (National Portrait Gallery) (Sen. Grafstein)	08/11/20							
S-205	An Act to amend the Criminal Code (suicide bombings) (Sen. Grafstein)	08/11/20							
S-206	An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (clean drinking water) (Sen. Grafstein)	08/11/20							

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