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(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, December 2, 2008**



THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA  
SPEAKER

This issue contains the latest listing of Senators, Officers of the Senate, the Ministry, and Senators serving on Standing, Special and Joint Committees.

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## THE SENATE

Tuesday, December 2, 2008

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

Prayers.

### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

#### INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**Hon. Elizabeth Hubley:** Honourable senators, November 25 marked International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. In 1999, the United Nations designated November 25 each year as a day to organize activities to raise public awareness of the problem of violence against women.

Violence against women is a global issue. Worldwide, at least one out of every three women has been a victim of abuse in her lifetime. Violence against women is perpetuated in public and at home, by strangers and family members. In Canada, in 2006, women made up 87 per cent of the victims of partner assaults that required police intervention. In 2003, a report by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that the cost of intimate partner violence in the U.S. alone exceeds \$5.8 billion each year. This pandemic devastates lives, families and communities at an enormous cost.

Violence against women is a pervasive violation of human rights and impedes women's opportunities to achieve legal, social, political and economic equality in society. On November 25, we raise awareness for an issue that we must continue to address each day.

• (1405)

#### THE HONOURABLE SERGE JOYAL, P.C.

##### CONGRATULATIONS ON INVESTITURE AS OFFICER OF THE FRENCH LEGION OF HONOUR

**Hon. Tommy Banks:** Honourable senators, I wish that I was brave enough to say this in the language in which it would be more appropriate, but I am not.

The Legion of Honour of France is that country's highest honour. It was established in 1802 by Napoleon and it is the only order that has survived since that time. It has strictly limited membership.

Senator Serge Joyal was made a Knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honour in 1995. Promotions in the legion are made only in recognition of continued and even greater service and contributions than that which merited the initial induction. Elevation to higher rank is determined by the Grand Master, who is the President of France.

We learned yesterday that our esteemed colleague was elevated to the rank of Officer in the National Order of the Legion of Honour.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

**Senator Banks:** Senator Joyal, you bring honour and lustre to this institution through your continued service and contributions and by the recognition given to you not only by our country but also, in this case, by France. I know all honourable senators join me in extending sincere congratulations to you on this singular honour.

[Translation]

#### CANADIAN CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

**Hon. Lucie Pépin:** Honourable senators, I would like to remind you that the Canadian Centre for International Justice is holding a meeting this afternoon. With the Honourable Louise Arbour, Maher Arar, the Honourable Flora MacDonald and Alex Neve in attendance, the meeting promises to be a very interesting one.

I therefore invite all of you to come and hear these leaders talk about Canada's role in the international effort to prevent torture, genocide and other atrocities. The meeting will take place from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in room 200 of the West Block.

[English]

#### MISSING SISTERS WALK

**Hon. Lillian Eva Dyck:** Honourable senators, today we honour the memory of a beautiful Aboriginal woman, Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego), who went missing from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on May 18, 2004. Daleen was a member of the Onion Lake Cree Nation and was attending the University of Saskatchewan, studying to become, a teacher at the time of her disappearance.

After Daleen went missing, her parents, Herb and Pauline Muskego, organized the Missing Sisters Walk dedicated to their missing daughter.

This past summer, I attended the fourth and final Onion Lake Missing Sisters Walk to raise awareness about Daleen's disappearance and to bring attention to the 500-plus unsolved cases of missing and/or murdered Aboriginal women across Canada.

The Missing Sisters Walk has been a pillar of strength for Herb and Pauline Muskego in dealing with their grief over the loss of their daughter Daleen. Sadly, in August 2008, her remains were found 10 miles north of Saskatoon near Martensville, Saskatchewan. The perpetrator has been charged with first degree murder and committing an indignity to a human body.

In Canada, First Nations women are highly overrepresented in missing women cases. Currently, there are over 500 unsolved cases that need to be reviewed and responded to. The process in dealing with missing women cases requires the urgent

commitment and cooperation of Canada's police service and law enforcement authorities in solving cases and helping to prevent the disappearance and deaths of Aboriginal women.

Honourable senators, Canadians need to be made aware of these 500-plus unsolved cases of missing First Nations women. Canadian governments and authorities must establish effective mechanisms and protocols in order to protect First Nations women from racist and sexist acts of violence. If we do not, even more Aboriginal women will go missing.

For decades, not enough attention has been paid when Aboriginal girls go missing in Canada. The mentality of "it's just another Indian girl" must change. Aboriginal women are not products for consumption or waste. We are human beings and life givers who deserve respect and dignity.

Honourable senators, our women, our grandmothers, our sisters and our mothers must be valued. We owe it to Daleen, our daughters and granddaughters.

### INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver:** Honourable senators, December 2 is a special day. Almost 60 years ago, the United Nations General Assembly recognized December 2 as the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery. Since then, people from around the world have been honouring people like Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, John Simcoe, William Garrison, Abraham Lincoln and Nelson Mandela, who stood up against the common practice of slavery and fought for equal rights for all persons from all corners of the world, regardless of skin colour.

These notable figures led the fight against slavery and have become heroes and heroines for Blacks, children, women and all others who have been under the yoke of slavery like thousands of Black Nova Scotians in the 18th and 19th centuries.

• (1410)

It was not until 1833 that slavery was formally abolished throughout the British Empire, including Canada where it replaced the 1793 Act Against Slavery. This year we celebrate the one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Slavery Abolition Act by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. This act, also known as the Emancipation Act, is considered a historic law that saw the liberation of millions of Black children, men and women from serfdom. Since then, slavery has been abolished and made illegal throughout the world thanks to the passage of treaties, laws and covenants by governments and international organizations, such as the United Nations.

The 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states:

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

All persons have the inherent right to freedom and dignity. However, slavery still exists today in different, contemporary forms; human trafficking, sexual exploitation and forced labour are practiced commonly in the 21st century. In 2008, some 27 million people are still living in a state of servitude, most of

whom are women and children. The Council of Europe also states that human trafficking has reached epidemic proportions over the past decade with an annual global market of about \$42.5 billion.

Honourable senators, as we commemorate the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, I ask you to join me and others who have signed an online petition organized by the Frederick Douglass Family Foundation with the hope to end the practice of slavery and human trafficking throughout the world. We must be constantly vigilant to extinguish every spark that indicates slavery is with us again. We must remind our children and grandchildren to honour the determination and courage of the men and women in our history who stood up for equality and justice by defending the rights of those who knew some form of exploitation and servitude.

### NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

**Hon. Joseph A. Day:** Honourable senators, I draw to your attention the important and significant role played by Canada in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. As honourable senators will know, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly provides an opportunity for parliamentarians to understand and influence the direction of the diplomatic and governmental activities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO will celebrate its sixtieth anniversary on April 4, 2009. Canada, as one of the founding members of NATO, has played an important leadership role throughout the history of NATO and continues to do so through involvement in several activities, most notably Canada's role in Afghanistan. Canadian parliamentarians, in particular, members of this chamber, are making a significant contribution to the work of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly is governed by a president, five vice-presidents, a treasurer and five separate committees. Our colleague, Senator Raynell Andreychuk, is the rapporteur for the political committee of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and, in that capacity, presented a report to our recent annual meeting.

[Translation]

We are very proud of the fact that the treasurer for the 26 member nations of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly is Senator Pierre Claude Nolin. He submitted his first treasurer's report during our recent general assembly. I have the honour of chairing the assembly's Subcommittee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation.

[English]

I also chair the political caucus of liberal democrats. Honourable senators will know that Senator Rompkey earlier chaired that same liberal caucus of political parties in the centre of the political spectrum. I am pleased to inform honourable senators that Senator Jane Cordy was elected to one of the vice-presidential positions at the recent annual general meeting of the assembly. Senator Cordy has taken on ever-increasing responsibilities with the assembly over the past several years, culminating in her being chosen at our plenary session of all parliamentarians of the assembly as Vice-president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly for the next two years.

Congratulations, Senator Cordy.

[ Senator Dyck ]

• (1415)

[Translation]

## CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

### HOMEOWNER RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

**Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck:** Honourable senators, there are critical challenges in this country with regard to housing, especially for low-income Canadians. All provinces are finding it difficult to provide healthy, affordable homes to those most in need. My home province of Prince Edward Island is no exception.

While Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has programs for emergency and general repairs, they are not receiving adequate funding. The Homeowner Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program, or RRAP, on Prince Edward Island currently has a waiting list of six to seven years. The Emergency Repair Program has a waiting list of two years.

Imagine waiting two years for help in an emergency. The roof is falling in, the furnace does not work, and the electrical system is old, faulty, and a fire hazard. How can it be called an emergency program if a person has to wait two years for help?

The situation for low-income Canadians is urgent. This government was in office more than two years before the minister responsible for housing met with his provincial and territorial counterparts in April 2008. In the end, the press release stated that the ministers:

... expressed their great disappointment that Minister Solberg is not able to provide a firm response to any of the issues they raised.

The federal minister has not met with them since.

During the election campaign, the outgoing minister announced that the renovation programs of the CMHC would be renewed for five years. They committed \$218 million over those five years, which means there will be no increase in funding for any of these programs. Funding will only maintain the status quo, leaving more low-income Canadians with more of the same.

In my province, people will have the same wait time of two years in times of emergency, when they need help the most. Government will wait the same three years to assist persons with disabilities to live comfortably in their own homes. Government will wait the same seven years for general repairs that would allow low-income Canadians to live in a safe and healthy environment.

Without additional funding, these wait times will not get any smaller. On the contrary, in these uncertain economic times, Canadians will require the support of the federal government even more than before. It is simply not acceptable that low-income Canadians will be left without the assistance they so desperately need.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### ECONOMIC AND FISCAL STATEMENT

#### DOCUMENT TABLED

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a document entitled "Protecting Canada's Future — Economic and Fiscal Statement, November 27, 2008," which was presented in the House of Commons by the Honourable James M. Flaherty, P.C., MP, Minister of Finance.

### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS OF CANADA

#### 2007-08 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Public Accounts of Canada 2007-08.

### COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

#### ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT AND PRIVACY ACT— 2007-08 ANNUAL REPORTS TABLED

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2007-08 annual reports of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, pursuant to section 72 of the Access to Information Act and section 72 of the Privacy Act.

[English]

### PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

#### ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT AND PRIVACY ACT— 2007-08 ANNUAL REPORTS TABLED

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2007-08 annual reports of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, pursuant to section 72 of the Access to Information Act and section 72 of the Privacy Act.

[Translation]

### CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

#### ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT AND PRIVACY ACT— 2007-08 ANNUAL REPORTS TABLED

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the first annual report of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, pursuant to section 72 of the Access to Information Act and section 72 of the Privacy Act.

## CUSTOMS ACT

### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** presented Bill S-2, An Act to amend the Customs Act.

Bill read first time.

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

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

• (1420)

[*English*]

## CANADA-EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

### VARIOUS REPORTS TABLED

**Hon. Yoine Goldstein:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation to the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association respecting its participation in the Parliamentary Mission to the country that will next hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, visit to Normandy, the Meeting of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Third Part of the 2008 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, held in Paris, Normandy and Strasbourg, France, from June 17 to June 27, 2008.

[*Translation*]

## ECONOMIC AND FISCAL UPDATE

### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the economic and fiscal update, tabled in the House of Commons on November 27, 2008, by the Minister of Finance, the Honourable James M. Flaherty, P.C., MP, and in the Senate on December 2, 2008.

## PAPER BURDEN ON SMALL BUSINESS

### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's plan to reduce the paper burden on small business, eliminate duplicate or overlapping obligations, and continue to provide an economic environment that creates jobs for Canadians.

## IMMIGRATION PROCESSING BACKLOG

### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's record in helping New Canadians and our plan to reduce the immigration processing backlog, and ensure that our immigration system responds to the economic needs of Canada.

## GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR FARM FAMILIES

### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's record of standing up for farmers and providing marketing choice to Western grain producers, and our continued support for farm families.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARCTIC AND NORTHERN REGIONS

### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's strong commitment to protect the sovereignty, and promote the economic development of Canada's Arctic and Northern regions.

## NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP

### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's commitment to celebrate Canadian history and identity, and develop a stronger sense of national citizenship.

**ORGANIZED CRIME AND CRIMINAL CODE REFORM****NOTICE OF INQUIRY**

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's record of getting tough on crime, and our plan to bring in new laws against biker gangs and organized crime, and reform the Criminal Code to make sure that criminals remain behind bars.

**ASSISTANCE TO WORKING FAMILIES****NOTICE OF INQUIRY**

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's record of helping working families through initiatives such as the Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB), the Working Income Tax Benefit, and the Disability Tax Credit, and our plan to improve the UCCB.

**CONSUMER PROTECTION PLAN****NOTICE OF INQUIRY**

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, on behalf of the government:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's commitment to implementing a strong consumer protection plan by modernizing Canada's outdated competition laws, restricting unfair text message charges, and protecting against Internet spam.

• (1425)

**GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS****NOTICE OF INQUIRY**

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 56, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the Government's record of assisting Canada's hard-working students, and our commitment to streamlining and modernizing the Canada Student Loan Program.

**GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC STIMULI****NOTICE OF INQUIRY**

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 56, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the large, sustainable and permanent stimulus that the Government has provided to the Canadian economy over the course of the past two years.

[English]

**Some Hon. Senators:** More! More!

**QUESTION PERIOD****PRIME MINISTER****CONFIDENCE MOTION**

**Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Last Friday, the Prime Minister stood in the foyer of the House of Commons and said that on Monday, December 8, the elected members of Parliament would be given an opportunity to vote confidence or non-confidence in his government. Does this government still stand behind the commitment made by the Prime Minister, and will there be such a vote next Monday?

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)):** Honourable senators, I appreciate the question. We are obviously talking about something that is important to our democracy. The highest principle of a democracy is that one seeks a mandate from the electorate, and that is what we did. One goes to the people and not to the separatists.

What we witnessed yesterday with the three-headed monster, as I call it, was a betrayal of the voters who voted seven weeks ago today. It was a betrayal of the country and the economy. Most importantly — and I must look to senators such as Senator Fairbairn, Senator Joyal and Senator Bacon — it was a betrayal of the history of the Liberal Party. If one wants to govern in this country, one needs to go to the people and not to the separatists for support of one's coalition.

**Senator Cowan:** Honourable senators, I have a supplementary question.

The last time I checked, an election is about electing 308 members of the House of Commons, and the constitutional practice throughout the Commonwealth is that it is up to the majority of those members to determine who the prime minister of the country will be.

My question is simple.

**Senator Stratton:** The people of Canada decide; not the House of Commons.

**Senator Cowan:** The people of Canada did not elect Stephen Harper; the people of Canada elected the 308 members of the House of Commons. Perhaps Senator Stratton will have an opportunity to ask a question in a moment.

I appreciate the explanation and the comments of the leader, but my question is simple: Will there be a vote on Monday, yes or no?

**Senator LeBreton:** I wish to tell the honourable senator that on October 14 the people of Canada elected a Conservative government with the strongest mandate of all parties. They did not elect Stéphane Dion, they did not elect Bob Layton and they did not elect Jack Layton — Bob was the good guy. Speaking of Bob Layton, he would be turning over in his grave today, as would Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

**Senator Cowan:** Perhaps the acoustics are poor in here, but my question is simple: Will there be an opportunity for the members of the House of Commons to vote confidence or no confidence, as the Prime Minister promised less than a week ago, on Monday of next week, yes or no?

**Senator LeBreton:** Speaking of promises, in the midst of the election campaign, Stéphane Dion promised that he would never join a coalition with the NDP because he said it would be bad for the economy.

**Hon. Jane Cordy:** Honourable senators, I will give the question a try. This government has lost the confidence of Parliament, as Mr. Harper has chosen to play partisan politics instead of helping Canadians. He has suspended the right of public servants to strike, he has undermined the concept of equal pay for work of equal value for women. Last night, Mr. Harper said that he would do anything legal to hold on to power. Will this government prorogue Parliament so that Mr. Harper will not have to face a non-confidence vote?

• (1430)

**Senator Comeau:** A Nova Scotian is getting in bed with the Bloc.

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, a mere two weeks after Parliament came back, the government had the confidence of Parliament. The Throne Speech was passed in the other place, so we had the confidence of Parliament. We are bringing the issue of pay equity into the collective bargaining process so that women do not have to wait years for pay equity. Pay equity is part of the collective bargaining process, and that is exactly what is done in the provinces of Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba.

**Senator Cordy:** Collective bargaining does not seem to mean much to this government who signed a contract with the public service only last week.

Stephen Harper has lost the confidence of Parliament whether or not the leader likes to believe it. All she needs to do is read the paper, and if she believes that the Prime Minister still has the confidence of Parliament, then I am sure there will be no hesitation in allowing a vote next Monday.

Canadians count on government to defend the public good. What is good about a government that puts its Reform/Alliance ideology before concrete action to help those in need?

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, first, what is good about the Liberal Party that won 77 seats in the House, the lowest vote they have received since the beginning of Confederation and that then makes an agreement with the New Democratic Party and the separatists? This so-called national party and former government that, in its past history at least, dedicated itself to the unity of the country. The honourable senator should pay attention. If she is talking about the media and reading what is in the papers, she should not concentrate solely on what is going on in Ottawa. She should listen to what the public across Canada is saying.

**An Hon. Senator:** Let the people decide.

**Senator LeBreton:** The public is enraged. They are enraged because they saw a picture in the paper this morning and on television last night of Stéphane Dion, Jack Layton and Gilles Duceppe signing the agreement. For the Liberal Party, of all parties, to form a coalition, signed on the dotted line by the separatists and a party that, during the election campaign the Liberals said they would have nothing to do with, is an attack on Canada, Canada's democracy, and Canada's economy. The Liberal Party has members like Senator Fraser who used to rail about these things in the editorial pages of *The Gazette* in Montreal. The honourable senator should be ashamed of herself.

**Hon. Joan Fraser:** Honourable senators, speaking of railing about things, I am sure the Leader of the Government is deeply aware of a letter that was signed on September 9, 2004, addressed to the then Governor General. It said:

Excellency,

As leaders of the opposition parties, we are well aware that, given the Liberal minority government, you could be asked by the Prime Minister to dissolve the 38th Parliament at any time should the House of Commons fail to support some part of the government's program.

We respectfully point out that the opposition parties, who together constitute a majority in the House, have been in close consultation. We believe that, should a request for dissolution arise this should give you cause, as constitutional practice has determined, to consult the opposition leaders and consider all of your options before exercising your constitutional authority.

Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

That letter was signed by the Honourable Stephen Harper, Jack Layton and Gilles Duceppe.

• (1435)

This government has now lost the confidence of the House of Commons. Why is sauce for the goose not sauce for the gander?

**Senator LeBreton:** First of all, honourable senators, the government has not lost the confidence of the House of Commons. The Throne Speech has passed.



Second, the letter to which the honourable senator refers asked for consultation. The letter is not an agreement to a coalition, and it does not indicate that there would be any such thing as a coalition.

No matter how the honourable senator tries to spin it, those are the facts.

**Senator Cowan:** Honourable senators, if that letter does not refer to a coalition, what were the options referred to by the Prime Minister, then the Leader of the Opposition?

**Senator LeBreton:** As the letter said, the Governor General should consider options. No matter how the honourable senator stacks it up, there was no way that Stephen Harper would have ever signed on the dotted line with separatists who are against the country.

**Senator Cowan:** Honourable senators, I seem to have difficulty communicating with the leader today. My supplementary question is simple. The leader has ruled out coalition as an option. What were the options to which Mr. Harper was referring when he wrote the letter that Senator Fraser just read into the record?

**Senator LeBreton:** The honourable senator will remember that at that time, the issue of the day was around, dare I say it in this place, the sponsorship scandal and other such issues. We still do not know where the \$40 million is.

I am not sure and would be happy to check for the honourable senator, but if the Prime Minister of the day, Mr. Martin, wanted to go to the public to try to get out from under those issues, the Governor General may have had the option to say he had to continue to govern.

#### ECONOMIC DOWNTURN—INCREASE TO CABINET

**Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck:** Honourable senators, my question is to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Canadians have lost confidence in this government because of its unwillingness to streamline the ministry. In the fiscal and economic update last week, the government spoke about restraint, belt-tightening and leading by example.

In times of restraint, one would think the Prime Minister would streamline his own ministry. However, the Prime Minister has expanded his ministry. Before the election, the Prime Minister had 27 ministers and 5 secretaries of state. Since then, he has promoted all of the secretary of state positions to the full rank of minister of state, and added 6 more. They all have a budget of up to \$642,590, including a car allowance and driver. The Prime Minister has given them each a full minister's salary. All told, he has gone on a spending spree of millions of dollars to increase his cabinet. How can the Prime Minister talk about restraint and belt-tightening to Canadians while spending millions of dollars to increase the size of his cabinet?

• (1440)

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)):** Honourable senators, as Senator Callbeck well knows, ministers of state have much smaller budgets. We have many new ministers. The minister of state position gives new ministers an opportunity to work in cabinet and within the government structure.

As I said last week to one of the honourable senator's colleagues, Senator Munson, this is a bit rich coming from a member opposite, under whose party the size of cabinets were huge and the salaries of cabinet ministers and the Prime Minister were vastly increased, as were pensions.

This is not a huge expense of millions of dollars. The government is proud of the people it has serving in cabinet, all of whom are cognizant of their responsibilities to the Canadian taxpayer.

When we speak about ministers of state, we should return to the issue at hand and the \$30 billion that this coalition would cost the Canadian taxpayers in terms of a deal that Mr. Dion is prepared to make with the socialist NDP and the separatists from Quebec in order to sleep at 24 Sussex for a few months.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Oh, oh!

**Senator Callbeck:** The leader speaks about past Liberal cabinets, but that was an entirely different situation. We had a surplus then and a contingency fund to weather an economic crisis. We are now confronting the possibility of a recession and a government deficit for the first time in nearly 15 years. This Prime Minister has done nothing to lead by example and make his own cabinet more efficient. Even Mr. Mulroney cut his ministry during a recession. How can the government justify these excesses at a time when Canadians want an economic stimulus package?

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, our government paid down \$37 billion on the debt. We entered into a stimulus package that was permanent and structural, which was about 1.5 per cent of GDP, rising to 2 per cent as of January 1. Every economist to whom one listens, if one gets beyond the Ottawa arena, says the economic update was a true reflection of the situation as of November 14.

The honourable senator refers to a so-called "deficit." I will read a quote from one of her colleagues. Bob Rae, one of the leading Liberal leadership candidates said in a radio interview on November 21:

So if we have a deficit now at the federal level . . . is that going to be the personal fault of Mr. Harper? I don't think so . . .

Mr. Rae went on to say:

Would I agree with everything they have done so far, in terms of how they've spent things? No. But do I hold them personally responsible for the fact that we're going to have a deficit here? Of course not and no reasonable person should do that.

#### FINANCE

##### REGISTERED RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN— INCREASE IN AGE LIMITATION

**Hon. Norman K. Atkins:** Honourable senators, my question is addressed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Subsequent to my question last week regarding mandatory RRIF withdrawals in 2008, why did the government, having indicated a

fiscal freeze for a three-year period, not see fit to allow the same period of time for the RRIF changes, which have the potential to affect our senior citizens so negatively?

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)):** Honourable senators, Senator Atkins has asked a very good question. If the signatories to the coalition succeed, they will deny seniors these changes. This is what they are trying to do by defeating the government; they are denying seniors.

As I mentioned last week, the Minister of Finance has been in touch with the financial institutions to ensure that seniors will not be penalized when they transfer their RRSPs to RRIFs.

• (1445)

Considering all of the options, the Minister of Finance took a prudent position and did as much as he could to assist seniors at this time. Obviously, we continue to monitor the situation. We will see what the Minister of Finance ends up with after the budget consultation period is over. I take note of the concern that the time was not extended, but keep in mind that many seniors will be taking advantage of the tax-free savings account that comes into effect on January 1 as a result of Budget 2008.

**Senator Atkins:** Honourable senators, further to my question, why did the government not, at the very least, raise the age further, from 71 to 75, to try to alleviate the economic impact of forced withdrawals on RRIFs? They are not losing any money; they are just delaying the receipt of that money. The shift could not be so substantial that they could not have given the matter some consideration.

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, we did raise the age from 69 to 71. With regard to the transfers, it is important to point out — and the minister has made this very clear — that financial institutions should accommodate in-kind transfers of assets outside RRIFs without selling and at no cost. He gave the financial institutions until last Friday to confirm that this is the case. I would be happy to get an update for Senator Atkins on the response of the financial institutions. Obviously, there has been some misunderstanding about the transfer from RRSPs to RRIFs. Some financial institutions may have misinterpreted the conditions of transfer.

With regard to raising the age, we did raise it from 69 to 71 as outlined in the economic statement. The Minister of Finance did all that he felt he could at that time, after consultation with the various financial institutions and with seniors' organizations. Obviously, seniors and seniors' organizations would like further consideration. The Minister of Finance has not closed the door on any future action.

[Translation]

## TREASURY BOARD

### PAY EQUITY

**Hon. Lucie Pépin:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. At a time of shrinking budgets, the government is suddenly finding fault with the pay

equity regime. The goal of the proposed reform is ostensibly to help women obtain justice, but what they want is to eliminate women's access to the courts, even though litigation was the only way women could assert their rights.

Does the Leader of the Government not think that it is indecent to take advantage of the economic crisis in order to balance the budget on the backs of women and please her party's grassroots; those who are opposed to pay equity? Why does the federal government want to shrug off its responsibilities and not correct an imbalance that affects thousands of Canadian women?

[English]

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)):** Honourable senators, I do not accept the senator's words to the effect that we are balancing the budget on the backs of our grassroots. Presently, women account for between 60 per cent to 65 per cent of the workforce in the public service.

• (1450)

This measure is about putting in place a mechanism to ensure that both employers and unions have a responsibility to address pay equity issues in a timely fashion. As I said a few moments ago, it is not right that women should have to wait 10 to 15 years to have their pay equity complaints resolved. We intend to introduce legislation — much like the proactive legislation that was passed by the Liberals in Ontario and the New Democrats in Manitoba — so that women will not have to wait as long as they did under previous governments to resolve pay equity issues.

[Translation]

**Senator Pépin:** The government wants to make pay equity an integral part of collective bargaining. In its 2004 report, the federal task force on pay equity recommended the opposite. Pay equity must be separate from the collective bargaining process. It is unacceptable that upholding women's right to equal pay should depend on such bargaining.

Could the Leader of the Government tell us what led the government to conclude that collective bargaining was the best way to reform the pay equity regime? In addition, which unions and expert panels were consulted?

[English]

**Senator LeBreton:** I do not know to what report the honourable senator is referring or who wrote it in 2004. As I said a few moments ago, almost 65 per cent of the public service is women. It makes no sense, when the government and the unions are at the table in collective bargaining, not to address the issue of pay equity at the same time. In the past, collective bargaining negotiations would conclude and then they would begin again on the issue of pay equity.

There was a huge pay equity payout, I believe it is now 10 years ago, that was supposed to have resolved this issue. It makes no sense for women to wait 10 to 15 years for pay equity when in fact that should be part of the bargaining process when salaries are being negotiated. This is exactly what is taking place in Ontario. This brings the government into line with a practice

[ Senator Atkins ]

that has proven to be a good one in Ontario under a Liberal government and in Manitoba under a New Democratic Party government. This has nothing to do with the Conservatives or grassroots.

## STATUS OF WOMEN

### FUNDING TO WOMEN'S PROGRAMS

**Hon. Lorna Milne:** Honourable senators, Parliament has lost confidence in this government because the Conservatives are using the impending deficit as an excuse to cut \$4.3 billion in government spending this year, money that provides Canadians with the social programs on which they have come to rely. This from a Conservative government that chose to cut women's programs, literacy programs, programs to support minority rights, and cultural programs when it had a surplus of \$13 billion.

My question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate is a simple one. Since this government has a penchant for cutting women's programs, can she provide a list to honourable senators of what programs are left to achieve the full participation of women in the economic, social and democratic life of Canada?

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)):** Honourable senators, the premise of the question is quite wrong. We did not cut funding to women's programs. If the honourable senator were to take the time to read a brochure put out by Status of Women Canada, she would see a list of programs that are operating under Status of Women Canada and the regional offices. We simply placed the money where the money was most needed — for women in the communities — as I said the other day in response to a question from an honourable senator.

It is flat-out false that we cut money to cultural organizations; we increased money to them. We simply put money into programs that directly benefit people in the community.

• (1455)

The government put out an economic statement that the honourable senator is criticizing. We paid down the debt. We have not frittered away the surplus. We returned taxpayers' money to their own pockets with the GST cuts. However, the honourable senator is standing here demanding that we spend more money. The other side is about to join in a coalition with the separatists and socialists that will immediately put \$30 billion we do not have into programs without understanding or realizing the need for doing so.

## BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, before we proceed to Orders of the Day, I have been asked to draw to your attention the fact that the official photo of the Senate will be taken tomorrow, Wednesday, December 3. The photograph is an important part of the parliamentary record and is useful for historical purposes.

Is it agreed, honourable senators, that the photograph be taken tomorrow, Wednesday, December 3, at 1:15 p.m.?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

[Translation]

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

#### MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF ADDRESS IN REPLY— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Meighen, seconded by the Honourable Senator Champagne, P.C.:

That the following Address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Military Merit, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Merit of the Police Forces, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

#### MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, Her Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the Senate of Canada in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

**Hon. Maria Chaput:** Honourable senators, it is an honour to stand before you today as we embark on the work of the Fortieth Parliament. Honourable senators, you have come from the four corners of this great land to represent Canadians and to defend their interests. I humbly share this privilege with you.

We are gathered in this historic place to work together on behalf of all Canadians. Honourable senators, the public interest must guide our deliberations and must always take precedence over political partisanship. History has entrusted to us the responsibility to protect the interests of the provinces, the larger regions of this country, and the minorities who occupy this vast land. We will do so proudly in the name of democracy.

[English]

While the "other chamber" represents the will of the people, we represent the will of those who struggle to be heard; those who are inclined to remain silent; those who are too often set aside, who feel forgotten. The Canadian democratic system was founded on a respect for the rights of minorities, and we, esteemed colleagues, are the guarantors of that promise.

History has promised the French-speaking linguistic minority a place in Canada. This is clearly stated in our Constitution and in our laws, regulations and policies. There is a real French culture outside of Quebec. Over 1 million of our fellow countrymen can testify to that.

Honourable senators, I stand before you today on behalf of those people, and insofar as I can be part of your family, they will be, too. I will keep my promise.

[Translation]

I care deeply about the fate of official language minority communities. Everyone here knows that. So when I heard the Speech from the Throne on November 19, I was left feeling somewhat unsatisfied. The speech contained virtually no mention of official languages. I was aghast, so I reread it and thought about it for a while.

If we do not protect Canada's official languages, how can we say that we are "protecting Canada's future"?

Honourable senators, allow me to read from the Throne Speech delivered on November 19, 2008, where it broaches the subject of official languages:

Canada is built on a promise of opportunity, the chance to work hard, raise a family and make a better life. Today, it is more important than ever to deliver on this promise, and ensure that all Canadians share in the promise of this land, regardless of cultural background, gender, age, disability or official language.

• (1500)

Judging by that excerpt, does the Throne Speech uphold the current government's policy, as expressed in its Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality? In my opinion, perhaps. The Conservative government's current policy on linguistic duality, as set out in its Roadmap, recognizes that:

In a highly globalized and knowledge-based marketplace, linguistic duality is a key competitive advantage, which can help Canada further its economic success.

This government policy validates a conclusion that has been clear to many for a long time: the official languages are inextricably linked to the economy. Our official languages are a national treasure. They are engines that drive the economy.

The government must take positive steps to implement language guarantees. In doing so, it is more important than ever to establish a link between linguistic duality and Canada's economy.

The Conservative government must keep its word regarding its financial commitment to promote and protect linguistic duality in Canada. These funds will give official language minority communities the opportunity to enjoy what our country has to offer. In return, these communities will enrich the country's economy. The linguistic treasures of our federation will continue to act as a driving force for our economy.

[ Senator Chaput ]

In June 2007, at the Francophone and Acadian Community Summit, 33 organizations and institutions representing Canada's francophone minorities met in Ottawa. Everyone agreed on the importance of community governance in all areas of their development, and then began drawing up a community strategic plan. For them, the economy is a priority. I would like to quote the five goals of the Community Strategic Plan:

- Strengthen and reinforce Canada's francophone population.
- Expand and stimulate the francophone community in Canada.
- Support francophone governance in Canada.
- Increase the influence of the francophone population within Canadian society and around the world.
- Accelerate economic, social and community development within the francophone community in Canada.

According to the community strategic plan, by 2017, the economic development of francophone minority communities will be stimulated by a partnership among the various levels of government, community organizations, cultural industries and, in particular, the organizations and networks dedicated to community economic development. We are about to see the birth of a francophone economic community.

[English]

Meanwhile, how will the government ensure that minority francophone communities will continue to have opportunities to benefit from what our country has to offer in these difficult economic times? That is still uncertain. It worries me because we are going through an economic slowdown. Our small and medium enterprises and our families will bear the burden of cuts and unemployment. It will be even harder for people living in minority situations.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, the political compromise that led to the founding of Canada was the agreement that our official languages would have equal status. As Michel Bastarache, former Supreme Court justice, said so well:

... [the courts] have linked the safeguards to the need to provide the linguistic minority with cultural security; they also affirmed that rights are permanent even in a new social and demographic context. Therefore, the relevance of the safeguards does not need to be justified again as the numbers change.

The government is bound by the standard of substantive equality and it has an obligation of result regarding its official language minorities. It has to produce results! In other words, no matter what means are chosen by the current government to meet its official languages obligations in the difficult economic times we are facing, it must attain the expected results for these minorities.

It is free to choose how to direct its spending over the next few years, but the results have already been set. We have ownership of the results to be achieved, and they stem from one fundamental concept: that our official languages have equal status.

We agree that the government should focus on results when spending taxpayers' money. But it must never lose sight of the result it must achieve with regard to official languages, and that is the real and substantive equality of our official languages.

Given that support for the development of minority language communities is part of the commitments and the constitutional and legislative mandate of the Government of Canada, these communities rely heavily on the government's support.

Indeed, considering the importance of the official languages to Canada's constitutional and legal framework, not to mention the importance of our founding languages to our identity, they are clearly vital to Canadians. Consequently, the delivery of official languages programs and services remains essential, and if the Conservative government wants to reduce or eliminate any expenditures, there must not be related directly or indirectly to official languages, because such expenditures keep our nation on a strong footing and breathe life into the linguistic soul of our country.

To my way of thinking, early childhood support and intervention are essential to preserving the cultural and linguistic heritage of francophones in minority communities, as well as to their success in school. A strategy based on a continuum of French-language education, from preschool age to adulthood, would be an important tool for retention and francization for minority language communities. Moreover, a national child care strategy would guarantee that parents wanting to place their preschool children in a French-speaking environment could do so. In combination with French-language schools, these daycares would play a key role in expanding French-speaking communities. In this respect, the Conservative government's child care benefit was and still is a dismal failure.

For francophone minority communities, like my community in Manitoba, French-language child care centres are a life raft in a sea of English. It has been well established that preschool education in French allows children to acquire the linguistic base they need in order to pursue their primary and secondary studies in their official language. In Manitoba, there is a shortage of French-language child care centres and, therefore, access to this essential service, so critical to the survival of my community, is severely limited. The situation is no better in other provinces and territories in Canada. The Conservative government's policy in this area does not meet any of the needs of francophone minority communities, which must continually struggle against assimilation.

An Environics poll conducted in September and October 2008 shows that the lack of affordable child care is a serious problem for 77 per cent of Canadians, demonstrating that the Conservative government is out of touch with the people and has not helped parents who are having a hard time finding quality child care.

Honourable senators, the linguistic survival of a minority francophone individual is determined in early childhood. It is the federal government's responsibility, as the watchdog protecting

the rights of official language minority communities, to act intelligently and in good faith to support Canadian families. Investing in early childhood development means investing in the physical, social, emotional and intellectual well-being of our children. It also ensures that Canada remains competitive among other developed nations. Healthy development of minority francophone children contributes directly to the social and economic well-being of our beloved country.

Healthy child development is part of the foundation of the 21st century economy, which is becoming ever more knowledge-based.

Improving early childhood services in minority francophone communities will help to improve literacy among francophones. Let us hope that, someday soon, the historical gap between our two official languages in terms of level of education will close completely. Increased education for young people and adult education programs will enable francophones to acquire the reading, writing and arithmetic skills they need to participate fully in the 21st century economy.

As you know, honourable senators, the roots of Canadian francophones lie in a traditional society characterized by oral traditions, low levels of education, and an inferior socioeconomic status, as the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism found in 1969.

• (1510)

In just a few decades, their situation has changed drastically. Francophones are engaged in a process of transition and catching up that, in terms of education, is not yet complete. The strategic challenge they face is to make the transition to the knowledge-based society, an educational society where they will improve their oral and written mastery of the language while revitalizing their culture and bringing it up to date.

Francophones do not write as well or read as often as anglophones, and reading and writing are less a part of their daily lives. The federal government has a constitutional and moral obligation to correct this embarrassing situation, which has gone on for too long.

The federal government must continue to monitor the official languages situation and work earnestly to meet its responsibilities to its official language minorities. It is the government's job to facilitate academic upgrading for francophone populations in Canada. And early intervention by the federal government is key to real equality — substantive equality — of the official languages.

I can assure honourable senators that educating our young francophones will lead to more artistic innovation and creativity.

While the Conservative government recognized in its Speech from the Throne that the arts will continue to contribute to Canada's cultural and economic vitality, the government will have to walk the talk by investing still more in the arts, not by eliminating existing programs. What purpose will be served by the Conservatives' proposed new system to protect intellectual property if the government does not promote the creation of Canadian works of art and literature?

Most Canadian artists, and certainly most minority francophone artists, live in near poverty. Very few are well off. However, these Canadian artists create cultural and economic wealth.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I regret to inform Senator Chaput that her time is up. Is it the pleasure of the Senate to grant Senator Chaput another five minutes?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**Senator Chaput:** Clearly, a thriving arts and culture sector, supported by adequate investment by the federal government, will place Canada at the forefront of a global society that values innovation, excellence, social cohesion and economic prosperity. The arts, culture and heritage sectors represent a significant segment of the economy. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that in 2007 the sector contributed 7.4 per cent of Canada's GDP.

Adequate government investment in the sector is critical to ensuring that the sector continues to grow and that Canadians continue to have access to outstanding artists and works of art. Furthermore, particular attention must be given to francophone artists in minority communities who often have to fight for their economic and linguistic survival.

The Canadian federal government must lead the way when it comes to official languages. We have entrusted it with that role.

As the Honourable Justice Bastarache reminds us:

... Official language minority communities are not demanding something that is a universal right, or in fact, an essentially moral right. They are demanding something that is their constitutional right.

We are waiting for this support. We, as francophones in a minority situation, truly need it.

My wish is that all young, minority francophones may fulfill their dreams in our vast, prosperous country.

My hope is that these young people do not have to fight the way their ancestors did. May those historic battles — such as the demonstrations against Regulation 17 in Ontario or our recent successful fight to save the Montfort Hospital — remain things of the past.

May this next generation of francophones in minority communities be able to express themselves with pride in their mother tongue, in their official language.

"Today, it is more important than ever to deliver on this promise, and ensure that all Canadians share in the promise of this land, regardless of official language." Those words, from the Speech from the Throne delivered on November 19, 2008, must not go unheeded. We must put these words into action.

In its Roadmap for Linguistic Duality, the current government recognizes that, in a highly globalized and knowledge-based marketplace, linguistic duality is a key competitive advantage, which can help Canada further its economic success. So let us focus on this key competitive advantage.

I am asking all of you to work together for the good of all Canadians. And I hope that our work here will be marked by mutual respect and a profound love for our federation that is so beautiful in its diversity.

Honourable senators, thank you for this opportunity to speak to you.

[English]

**Hon. Grant Mitchell:** Honourable senators, I consider it a great honour to address the Speech from the Throne today. Before I begin, I welcome back Senator Cools who is in the chamber for the first time this session. Senator Cools, it is nice to have you back.

It has been somewhat difficult to prepare an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne because things have changed so fast. The Throne Speech, which was controversial in and of itself, has been overtaken by the fiscal update. We now have an unravelling of a government that is, in many ways, unseemly in its conduct toward and on behalf of Canadians because it has not addressed the issues that are of fundamental importance to Canadians today. I will address the reasons that Canadians have lost confidence in the government.

Most significant is the manner in which the government has failed to handle economic policy adequately and to intervene in the economy with a stimulus package when it is needed, and when every other nation in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is taking such steps. As I said earlier during Question Period, I am reminded of the mother who, while watching her son in a military parade, noted that everyone was out of step except her Johnny. I ask a rhetorical question: Why would anyone think that a Conservative government could run an economy? The Liberals gave this government a \$13-billion surplus and, two and one half years later, it is in deficit. We know for certain it is in deficit because three of the first five months of this fiscal year were in deficit. Interestingly, I would bet that September and October were in deficit as well. The next seven months will not be nearly as good as the last seven months of the previous fiscal year. The Liberals gave the Conservative government a \$13-billion surplus after overcoming the deficit left to them by a Conservative government. That is proof positive that Conservatives cannot run an economy or a government in a fiscally responsible way.

Honourable senators, I am not finished yet. The Liberals also gave the Conservatives, Senator Tkachuk included, the top-performing economy in the G8. Honourable senators, do you know where it stands today? Canada has the bottom-performing economy in the G8. Thankfully, Mr. Martin will be back because he knows how to run an economy and a government fiscally. We have underperformed the U.S. this year. Imagine that. We will have negative growth this year.

I will speak to another example of how Conservative governments cannot manage economies. Consistently in the U.S. under Republican governments, the stock market underperforms. Likely, that would hold true in Canada as well if there had been enough Conservative governments over the years to accumulate adequate data.

• (1520)

Consistently, in the U.S., the dollar is weaker under Republican presidents. Of course, it was under a Republican, right-wing Harper-like government — in fact, supported by Harper — that we had the biggest economic meltdown in the history of the world, and I am not exaggerating.

Why was that? That was because that right-wing government failed to back the implementation of rules and regulations that were already there to manage those financial companies in a way that would mean they would not have melted down.

It reminds me of listeriosis. Why did that happen? It happened because this government relinquished regulations that ensured, much more effectively, that food was adequate for Canadians to eat without getting sick — and without 20 Canadians dying.

Now we have an economic circumstance that is absolutely, as the Prime Minister says, a “technical” recession. I wonder how technical that recession is for a family whose breadwinner is unemployed. I wonder how technical it is for a retiree couple who has seen their investments, upon which they live, literally dissolve and evaporate. I wonder how technical that recession is for young people who are leaving colleges and universities to find employment to build their futures.

I tell you what: That recession is not technical in the least in its impact on people.

Someone once said to me that a right-wing conservative is someone who cannot imagine what it is like to be someone else. There is proof positive that this government cannot imagine what it is like to be someone else. Do honourable senators know why? The government’s answer to that technical recession is nothing more than citing tax cuts, most of which occurred two and three years ago, and that clearly have not worked.

I can give honourable senators all kinds of statistics: industrial production is down 4.7 per cent so far this year; retail sales are down almost 1 per cent in the single month of October; payroll employment is down 1 per cent since it peaked in December; gross domestic product is negative this year, annualized; and I could go on.

They have said they will decrease taxes. Let me think. If people are unemployed and they are not making any money at all, how will decreased taxes stimulate their ability to contribute to the economy? That is the ultimate decreased tax, is it not? That is 100-per-cent decreased. They do not pay taxes.

If their retirement income is cut significantly, perhaps in half, you know what, honourable senators? Retirees do not pay taxes under those circumstances either. How will reducing taxes stimulate their ability to contribute to the economy?

If businesses are not making money, or if there is so little security and confidence in the future, why would receiving a tax cut in the unlikely event that they make money during this recessionary period entice a business into investing further and driving this economy during a recession that could go on for a long time?

In a nutshell, do honourable senators know why Canadians have lost confidence in this government? It is because they have mismanaged the economy and it will only become worse.

It is almost incomprehensible that a Prime Minister who said that he predicted a year ago — although he was not saying that a year ago and he was not saying that in the election — that we were going to encounter economic rough times, not to come up with a stimulus package. Are not 365 days, 52 weeks, an entire year, enough to come up with a stimulus package that goes beyond the mantra of tax cuts, tax cuts, tax cuts?

You would almost think, given that they are fighting for their political life, that if they had a plan, they would have implemented it this week to try to stem the destruction of their own government. What would make anyone believe, if they do not have a plan after a year, that they would have one after 60 more days?

I believe that if they were to survive, cutting and running by bringing in prorogation, we would not see a proper stimulus package. Why is that? It is because they have leadership — and I use that phrase lightly, believe me — that is afraid to intervene in the economy when it needs intervention. They have ideological paralysis on the part of their leadership and what we see is the clear result of that paralysis.

If people had wanted to fix the Second World War, they would have fixed it. That is what ideological paralysis says. If people want to fix the recession, they could fix it. Government is there to lead. It becomes increasingly apparent that when we reach a crisis, the right-wing ideology that permeates the government’s front bench — and probably its backbench — does not allow it to take the kinds of steps that are necessary to stimulate the economy.

That is the first reason why people have lost confidence in Senator Tkachuk and his government.

The second reason is because the government has revealed yet another hidden agenda. It is almost as though it has an infinite number of hidden agendas. What it did to the unions, or is proposing to do to them in this fiscal update, is absolutely unacceptable. What does an agreement signed by both sides, based upon the collective bargaining process that has been refined over the years, mean to this government? Does it mean anything at all?

I guess it does not because we have a litany of agreements that this government has broken, not to mention an agreement with the Parliament of Canada not to call an election before next year. That agreement would be a significant one, I would say, but it is no more significant than breaking a collective agreement.

The leader in the Senate has said today and other times that the government will allow pay equity to be dealt with through the collective bargaining process, but then they throw out that process. It is absolutely unacceptable.

Even though they are clutching and clawing for their political lives, they have left in place a cap on increases for civil servants, who negotiated more than that cap in their collective bargaining

agreement. They negotiated about 1.5 per cent a year for four years. Is that increase too much to expect? I do not think so. It is abusive of those public servants, and another reason why Canadians have lost confidence in this government.

Pay equity is a third reason. I believe deeply that one of the greatest equality issues that faces our generation, and has faced way too many generations to this point, is the equality of women.

I know that any job or profession that is largely performed by women generally is paid less money than if that profession was performed by men. Why is it? I ask this question but I do not know the answer.

Why is it that so many fathers of daughters do not fight for pay equity for their daughters? Why should someone's daughter be paid less than my sons simply because they are of a different gender?

This government should do something to deal with that issue, but, honourable senators, do you know what they are doing? They are inhibiting the progress we could make, based on some of the limited progress we have made. They are inhibiting that progress by saying that the Canadian Human Rights Commission cannot review that issue. It is incomprehensible what that step says about the lack of fairness in this government.

Pay equity is significant in our society. It is critical to fairness and justice in our society, and we have taken a step back. Fortunately, after Monday, I hope we can return to the right road. That is another reason that Canadians have lost confidence in this government.

I want to mention the environment, which is something I am interested in and concerned about — as many of us are. Again, the government has not addressed that concern in the way that it should.

Many Canadians care deeply about the environment. If we add up the votes, we will see that as many as 65 per cent of Canadians voted for parties that embrace environmental policy in a way that this government cannot even imagine.

What has government said about dealing with climate change? It has said that we have to be careful because climate change initiatives can hurt the economy. Honourable senators, do you know what will hurt the economy? It is if we keep doing what we have been doing.

Their answer is a 20-per-cent reduction of carbon by 2020.

• (1530)

That target is not based, in any sense, on the science of the day. That target is not based, in any way, on initiatives that this government is taking. It is clear we are running out of time to reach that target, and nothing seems to be happening, despite the fact that the government has been in place for three years.

The fact is that people have lost confidence in this government because they have not taken initiative with one of the most profound issues facing us today, which is climate change.

The people of Canada have lost confidence in this government because they want to put 14-year-old children in jail. It is amazing that they think that somehow that would make our streets safer. It is the most cynical kind of politics to play to people's fears in that way. Imagine if a 14-year-old were to have such a difficult problem in his or her life that they would actually murder someone or perpetrate a violent crime. It is impossible to imagine that they could, in any way, comprehend life in jail.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I must inform the honourable senator that his 15 minutes has expired.

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government):** No more than five more minutes.

**Senator Mitchell:** Thank you. It is interesting that the government, on the one hand, increased the age of consent from 14 to 16 years of age for making judgments about having sex, because they argue 14-year-olds are not mature enough to make that judgment in any competent way. Then they reduce, from 16 to 14, the age at which children are expected to make mature judgments about undertaking a violent crime.

It is the ultimate hypocrisy and it makes me believe that somehow hypocrisy has embraced that government, and certainly embraced it to the disadvantage of Canadians. Canadians, particularly Quebecers, interestingly enough, have lost confidence in this government because of what they have proposed to do to 14-year-old children.

I would like to close by talking about Senate reform. Senate reform captures this government's tricky, manipulative style of politics because they try to distract people from the real issues. I see Senator Brown chortling. I want to address Senator Brown's refreshing naïveté about the Prime Minister's desire to reform the Senate. Of course, if the Senate is elected, the Senate will become the most powerful elected part of the parliamentary system. We would be able to veto everything that the House of Commons does, essentially.

Why would it be that the most power-hungry Prime Minister, perhaps in the history of the country, would ever want to relinquish that power to an elected Senate? At the same time, why would premiers want to relinquish that power to an elected Senate? We represent regional interests, and they, of course, are the current spokespeople for regional interest. They do not want to give up that responsibility.

It is interesting, if one digs down deep enough, that MPs of the honourable senator's party do not want to give it up. For example, in Alberta we have 28 MPs; 27 of whom happen to be Conservatives. They represent one twenty-eighth of the province. Most of us represent the entire province, or one sixth at the very least. Who do you think will have power in that structure? It will not be the House of Commons, the premiers or the Prime Minister. Those three bodies are relatively influential in our system. I think one will find that, at the end of the day, they absolutely do not want an elected Senate.

I applaud Senator Brown's efforts to go across this country and work on this issue. In fact, the Prime Minister actually asked him to do it. Senator Brown should go and ask him if he really means to carry out his intentions, because I expect he does not.

[ Senator Mitchell ]



Honourable senators, those are the reasons this government no longer has the confidence of Canadians. Those are the reasons why the coalition has to do what it will do. Sixty-five per cent of Canadians voted for initiatives other than what this government has offered them. I know this front bench and backbench are very frustrated, but the fact is the parliamentary system works in this way. The parliamentary system has always, over hundreds of years, found a way to work and solve the problems. Thankfully, this week it has begun to solve that problem.

**Hon. Lowell Murray:** Honourable senators, I apologize for my unavoidable absence last week when this debate got underway. I have, however, read the Debates of the Senate. I do hasten to congratulate the mover and seconder of the address in reply, Senator Meighen and Senator Champagne, on having been chosen to carry out this time-honoured tradition, and having done so well.

Permit me to express my satisfaction — which I believe is widely shared in this place — that you, Your Honour, are continuing in the high office that you occupied with such grace and distinction in the last Parliament.

I offer my best wishes to the leadership on both sides. Honourable senators will understand if I single out the new Leader of the Opposition and the new opposition whip for my congratulations and best wishes.

Honourable senators, there is a political and potentially a constitutional crisis evolving in the other place. We senators are not directly involved, but I am sure you will understand my inability, which, judging by Question Period, is shared by some honourable senators, to resist the opportunity to comment on the matter.

Let me say at the beginning, in case anyone is in suspense, that I oppose the course of action that the opposition parties have embarked upon, believing, as I do, that it is untimely in a number of important respects. It is untimely in a political sense, in the aftermath of an election a few weeks ago; untimely in a parliamentary sense, for reasons I will refer to; and untimely because it puts the political and economic stability of the country at risk.

Let me say also — and honourable senators will not be surprised to hear me say it — that I fully understand and sympathize with the negative and even angry reaction of opposition parties and others to the fiscal and economic update that was presented by Finance Minister Flaherty last Thursday. The content of that update was, to put it charitably, inadequate to the expectations of Canadians. I do not know whether some of the fiscal assumptions and numbers that Mr. Flaherty used were the product of unrealistic wishful thinking, or even political manipulation.

What I do know — and this is just as damaging to the government — is that most objective experts whose opinions have been canvassed in public have dismissed Mr. Flaherty's assumptions and his numbers as some kind of strategic or political mind game being played by the minister.

To top it all off, there were proposals in that economic and fiscal update that were grossly offensive, provocative and quite inappropriate for a fiscal and economic update. Whatever may be said about their merits or demerits, they belonged somewhere else in some other initiative.

Once the adverse public and parliamentary reaction had become clear, if the government had hung tough and had said, "No change, take it or leave it," I think there would be a large, perhaps even majority, sentiment among the Canadian people to say, "Bring them down, they just do not get it," but that is not what the government has done.

• (1540)

The government has withdrawn some of the most contentious provisions in the economic and fiscal update. There is nothing new about backing down, backing away and withdrawing measures from fiscal updates or even from budgets, as we have seen. There have been economic and fiscal fiascos in this country at least as bad as the one we have just endured at the hands of Mr. Flaherty. Some of us are old enough to remember Finance Minister Walter Gordon; forgive me for going back in time. When one gets into what the late Senator Macquarrie used to call one's "anecdote" and what others call one's old "goatage," one has a tendency to do this.

Some of us are old enough to remember Finance Minister Walter Gordon's first budget in the minority Pearson government in 1963, when he had to back away from important provisions of that budget.

Many of us will remember the budget of Finance Minister MacEachen in 1981 during the majority Trudeau government when, because of adverse public and parliamentary reaction — not because the government was in any danger in the parliamentary sense — but because of public reaction he had to back away and withdraw quite a few of those measures.

Some of us remember Finance Minister Michael Wilson in the majority Mulroney government; the very first mandate had to back away from at least one contentious measure in his economic statement of November 1984.

I can recall after the National Energy Program was brought in, the then Governor of the Bank of Canada, Gerald Bouey, came publicly to appeal to us not to do what the government had just recently urged us to do and provided incentives for us to do, which was to buy back control of American oil companies. So successful was that government policy that Canadian funds were leaving the country by the carload and undermining the value of the Canadian dollar. Mr. Bouey pleaded with us not to do what the government had asked us to do.

The point is that there have been fiascos at least as bad as this one; withdrawals of policies from budgets and economic statements are not new.

The economic and fiscal update, in recent years, has been a presentation to the Standing Committee on Finance of the House of Commons. It was not even presented formally in the House of Commons. In any case, for years, the economic and fiscal update has been the prelude to a budget. More properly, it has been the prelude to a consultation leading up to a budget.

In the present instance, the government has not only withdrawn parts of some of the proposals in its economic and fiscal update, but has also set a date for the budget, and that date is after Christmas. I believe it is January 27.

They have done so; this was a matter that was discussed earlier today in Question Period. They have set the date for the budget, having received a vote of confidence in the House of Commons on the Throne Speech on the very night that Mr. Flaherty brought in his unlamented fiscal and economic update. Therefore, they have a vote of confidence behind them. Senator Corbin interjects to say it was a vote on division. Well, of course. It is almost unprecedented to have a unanimous vote of confidence in the House of Commons, at least in my observation.

It is almost without precedent for a government that has won its initial vote of confidence not to be able to bring in a budget. Therefore, I believe that it would be at best premature for the opposition parties to bring the government down and replace it with a coalition government in the immediate aftermath of an election, or to plunge the country into another election now. I believe that, at a minimum, the House should wait for the government to present the budget. If the budget is as bad as the economic and fiscal update, then the opposition parties will have a decision to make. So perhaps will the Prime Minister and so perhaps will the Governor General.

When I heard last weekend — I am getting somewhat far afield — that the Prime Minister might seek to prorogue Parliament this soon after it was just opened, my first reaction was to say he should not be allowed to do it; the Governor General should deny him the prorogation; it is an abuse, et cetera. However, as I have seen the weekend and the early part of this week unfold, it appears to me that he does not really have any option. The only way that he can get the time to let matters cool off, but more importantly, to bring in a budget, as a government should be permitted to do, is to advise prorogation. If that is the only option left to him, I hope he advises it, and I hope he obtains it from Her Excellency.

By the way, the idea that the Governor General has no choice, as some say, but to allow a coalition government to be formed or no choice but to allow a recommendation for prorogation to go forward is, I think, a bit of nonsense. The Governor General always has a choice. She could, in theory, refuse to sign a bill into law. It would create a constitutional crisis, but there it is.

Whoever wrote the document that I heard someone quoting on television the other day to the effect that the Governor General's discretion on matters of prorogation no longer exists is talking nonsense. This is something written by bureaucrats for bureaucrats. If the Governor General wants to deny a prorogation, she could do so. It would be unprecedented, and I think extremely, if I may say so, unwise in the present circumstances, but she could do so. I hope the Prime Minister advises prorogation, and I hope he obtains it.

The air is full of inexact historical parallels, some of which I have placed on the record myself, but you will forgive me a few more. One interesting thing that came to mind from my long memory around here is that in 1962, the Diefenbaker government was brought down. History and popular lore records that the

issue was the equipping of Bomarc missiles with nuclear warheads. In fact, my recollection of the non-confidence motion was that it also referred to the failure of the Diefenbaker government to present a budget. That issue brought the Social Credit Party to support the Liberals and the NDP on the non-confidence motion.

Mr. Diefenbaker's government had been reduced to a minority in June of 1962 and he took his good old time summoning Parliament back. A great parliamentarian though he always professed to be, he was in no hurry to meet them in 1962. When they came back in the fall, he had appointed a new Minister of Finance in August. February came, and there was still no budget. That was one of the issues that brought him down.

In 1974, the Trudeau government was brought down and in 1979, the Clark government was brought down, not because of a failure to bring in a budget, but because they had brought one in that was unacceptable to the House of Commons.

These parallels are always very inexact, but there are similarities to a situation in 1968 when the Pearson government was defeated on a budget bill. I believe it was defeated on third reading.

• (1550)

Prime Minister Pearson was out of town and asked the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Stanfield, not to press the issue in order to give him time so that the government could get their act together effectively. The Governor of the Bank of Canada, Mr. Rasminsky, came to see Mr. Stanfield to brief him on a financial and economic situation that was far less serious than the one we face today, and Mr. Stanfield's hand was stayed, rightly or wrongly — in partisan political terms, probably wrongly because he lost the next election — and ultimately the government got enough support to carry the day.

The rules of the House of Commons in those days were such that the Progressive Conservatives could have held off Parliament and brought the government down if they had chosen to do so. They did not. Contrary to some popular belief, Mr. Stanfield was as partisan as they come, but he knew when to put the country first.

On motion of Senator Andreychuk, debate adjourned.

## THE ESTIMATES, 2008-09

### SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B)—MOTION TO REFER TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE— DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government),**  
pursuant to notice of November 26, 2008, moved:

That the expenditures set out in Supplementary Estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2009, be referred to a Committee of the Whole for examination on Wednesday, December 3, 2008, with the Senate resolving itself into said Committee at the conclusion of Question Period;

That television cameras be authorized in the Senate Chamber to broadcast the proceedings of the Committee of the Whole, with the least possible disruption of the proceedings; and that photographers be authorized in the Senate Chamber to photograph proceedings, with the least possible disruption of the proceedings; and

That, notwithstanding the Order adopted by the Senate on Tuesday, November 25, 2008, when the Senate sits on Wednesday, December 3, 2008, it continue its proceedings beyond 4 p.m. and follow the normal adjournment procedure according to Rule 6(1); and

That Rule 13(1) be suspended on Wednesday, December 3, 2008.

He said: Honourable senators, as you are aware, it is our normal practice to refer the estimates of the government to the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance for study prior to any supply bill reaching us here in the Senate. This allows for a comprehensive study of the government's spending plans and quick passage of the supply bills that, because of the standing orders of the House of Commons, normally reach us only a very short time prior to the date by which they must receive Royal Assent. We are all experienced with the fact that somehow it is an afterthought that supply has to go to the Senate. We are used to having to deal with the bills at the last minute. By looking at the estimates prior to the supply bill arriving, we are able to do most of the work that needs to be done.

Because of the timing of the last election, there is also an unusually short period of time between the opening of Parliament and the time by which the fall supply bills must be passed.

In addition, the normal committee selection process has not yet been completed. I believe our respective leaders are still in dialogue as to how this can be resolved, and I leave it to those wise heads to come up with ways to accomplish that. However, at this time, we cannot refer the Supplementary Estimates (B) to the National Finance Committee as we normally would because the committee has not yet been struck.

In order to complete a thorough study of the estimates for this one time only, the government is proposing to send the estimates to a Committee of the Whole. This would allow this chamber the greatest possible study of the estimates by the greatest number of senators.

I would also note that we have a number of competing motions on the Order Paper with respect to the supplementary estimates. Senator Tardif has given notice of two motions that would refer the estimates to a newly created special committee. I do not wish to talk about those motions at this point because they are a separate issue and it would not be appropriate to discuss those two motions.

However, I would point out that the creation of a special committee would involve the expenditure of monies. Under the policies of the Senate, each committee chair is entitled to an annual stipend of \$11,000 and each deputy chair is entitled to an annual stipend of \$5,600. In a time of global economic uncertainty, Canadians expect their representatives, including those of us in this chamber, to show restraint and be prudent with

their hard-earned dollars. I would not want the Canadian public to accuse the Senate of creating unnecessary special committees so that certain senators can pad their paycheques. I see Senator McCoy on the other side mocking my comments, or was it Senator Moore? While \$11,000 may not seem like a lot of money to certain senators, to many average Canadians, \$11,000 is a lot of money. We have the opportunity to avoid this criticism by simply referring the estimates to a Committee of the Whole, which would be in keeping with earlier practices of the Senate.

I am quite sure some of the older senators who have been here much longer than I would remember that back in the old days there were only two committees in the Senate; the Railroad Committee, a transport committee, and the Banking Committee. Most of the work that is now done by special committees that are being created ad hoc was done by two committees plus the Committee of the Whole, where all senators had the opportunity to participate. I would suggest that may be a fresh way of looking at things, at least temporarily.

A Committee of the Whole will avoid the criticism of spending \$11,000 plus \$5,600. I would ask honourable senators to join with me in adopting the motion proposed by the government at this time. I think we would be doing well by Canadian taxpayers.

**Senator Tkachuk:** Question!

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Would my honourable colleague accept a question?

**Senator Comeau:** Absolutely.

**Senator Tardif:** Honourable senators, I completely agree about the good work that our National Finance Committee has done in the past. The senator is right that competing motions have been presented concerning the issue. However, Senator Comeau mentioned the costs, and I was struck by his reference to \$11,000. That is per year. If we divide that on a per-week basis, it would be \$211 per week for the chair of a standing or special committee, and a deputy chair of a standing or special committee would be paid \$107 per week. If you add that up, that is \$318 per week to form this special committee. When you consider the heating bills for the chamber for a Committee of the Whole session, would Senator Comeau not agree that it would be much more efficient to go with the special committee?

**Senator Comeau:** I thank my honourable colleague for the question. It is a well-reasoned question. Judging by the seriousness with which she approaches it, indeed it would be reasonable. However, honourable senators have had the opportunity to read the motions as set forward. They do not give the special committee an end date and therefore it is open ended. The committee could be in existence until the end of the session, which could be in two and a half to three years, and we have not only \$11,000 and \$5,600, but it could be two to three times that amount for an open-ended committee. There is no end date mentioned in the motion for creation of this committee. It is a special committee that has an open end date, so there is no time provision on it.

I have learned in the past few days that I should not place any great trust in what the opposite side is proposing at this time, especially an opposition that would make deals with people who are against the unity of this country.

• (1600)

**Hon. James S. Cowan** (Leader of the Opposition): Does the honourable senator remember the 2004 letter? Did he read who signed it?

**Senator Comeau:** I am referring to a written deal at this point made with a group that is prepared to destroy my country. This is my country, and I will not trust a group that is prepared to deal with the separatists of this country.

**Hon. Pierrette Ringuette:** Honourable senators, I question the proposal for the Committee of the Whole. This chamber has always been efficient in its committees. I used to be — I do not know if I will be again — a member of the Finance Committee. I have been a member for a number of years and understand the numbers that are tabled by the Minister of Finance; whether the minister is Conservative or whatever. For the efficiency of the process and the responsibility and role of this chamber, if the honourable senator does not care to delay the work we need to do here, why are we not organizing our committees this week so we can go to work, or is that a delay tactic on the part of the honourable senator?

**Senator Comeau:** Honourable senators, the question gives me the opportunity to say again that our two leaders, my good friends Senator Cowan and Senator LeBreton, are talking about the makeup of committees, and in no way would I even think of suggesting that the Finance Committee does not do fine work. I have sat on the committee and have observed the members who sit on that committee, and they do fine work. I would not even think to question that work, and I appreciate the work they do because often, it is much more valuable than what is being done in the other place because the Finance Committee looks at things seriously.

However, as I noted earlier, our two respective leaders have not arrived at an agreement as to the makeup of the committees. Therefore, to suggest exemptions, the Finance Committee for example, where does that put us then? We might as well leave it to our two respective leaders to arrive at a solution that would deal with the committees of this chamber. In the meantime, referring the supplementary estimates to the Committee of the Whole allows us to proceed with an important piece of work, which will not be done if we do not have the Finance Committee in place.

[Translation]

**Senator Ringuette:** Once again, honourable senators, I have some serious questions. There has been no change in the composition of the Senate since it ended its work in June. Why, then, should there be major changes to the Senate committees?

We have a list of standard committees, we have the Senate Chamber, which is virtually unchanged, except for two members who retired, if my memory serves me well. In fact, in terms of percentages, the Conservatives have lost the most.

Why does the Senate not get down to work immediately? We know that the committees have a mandate to examine the bills brought before them. The National Finance Committee should be able to carry on.

**Senator Comeau:** I would never tell my leader what she should or should not do in terms of Senate work. The leaders of both sides of the chamber are still engaged in discussions.

However, I am absolutely convinced that your leader has told you why the Senate committees have not yet been established. I believe you are perfectly aware of the reason that no committee is meeting at present.

**Senator Ringuette:** Since you seem to have the answer, tell us why the committees were not convened immediately? Will the Deputy Leader of the Government enlighten the members of this chamber?

**Senator Comeau:** As I stated earlier, I am convinced that you already know what is being discussed at present by the leaders of this chamber. Given my position, I do not believe it necessary to answer the question. That is not at all my role.

My plate is quite full; I do my work and I do not go looking for more.

[English]

**Hon. Tommy Banks:** Putting aside the arguments about committees and the Committee of Selection and dealing with the present question of how we deal with Supplementary Estimates (B), the supplementary estimates are the only piece of government business before this house, aside from Bill S-2, which was introduced today. As the honourable senator knows, this house always wants to deal with alacrity the government business that comes before it. The honourable senator has agreed that the work that has been done by, and the expertise that exists in, the Finance Committee is particularly well-suited to dealing with questions of Supplementary Estimates (B). The honourable senator has also indicated that his objection to the idea of an ad hoc or special committee is the fact that it does not have a sunset date on it. As far as I can recall, the consideration of the Finance Committee in this place for Supplementary Estimates (A) or Supplementary Estimates (B) has never taken more than a week, tops. Let us assume in this case the committee might take two weeks. In the beginning paragraph of the motion, I think there is at least an inference of a sunset date that says what specific job the committee is to do. It is to consider Supplementary Estimates (B). One assumes from that wording that when the job is done, the committee would cease to exist, as is reasonable.

However, my question is: Since the honourable senator has put forward that objection to the motion to establish a special committee, if such a motion were to be amended by including a specific end date, measured in weeks, would the honourable senator then agree that option is the better one?

**Senator Comeau:** If I felt that the motions as presented by Senator Tardif were a better option to deal with supplementary estimates at this point, I would have moved the motion myself. I presented an absolutely reasonable motion, which was to refer the supplementary estimates to the Committee of the Whole. I think it would be marvellous for all honourable senators to observe how supplementary estimates are looked at and studied by experienced members of the Finance Committee, who would be a major part of the dialogue. I say again that this option is the best possible avenue at this point, but it also avoids having to deal

with the creation of special committees. We want our two respective leaders to arrive at some kind of solution to the dialogue they have been holding for the past week or so. This avenue gives them a chance to arrive at that solution without creating special committees for various matters that may be referred to committees.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I regret to inform the honourable senator that his time has expired. Is there continuing debate?

**Hon. Joseph A. Day:** I move the adjournment of the debate.

• (1610)

**The Hon. the Speaker:** It is moved by the Honourable Senator Day, seconded by the Honourable Senator Banks, that further debate be adjourned to the next sitting of the Senate.

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

**Some Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**Senator Comeau:** No.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is it called on division?

**Some Hon. Senators:** No.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Will those in favour of the motion to adjourn the debate please say “yea”?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yea.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Will those opposed to the motion to adjourn the debate please say “nay”?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Nay.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** In my opinion, the “yeas” have it.

*And two honourable senators having risen:*

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Call in the senators. There will be a one-hour bell, unless it is agreed otherwise.

Does the chair have permission to step down?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** The bells will ring at 5:10 p.m.

• (1710)

Motion agreed to and debate adjourned on the following division:

#### YEAS THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Atkins	Jaffer
Banks	Joyal
Bryden	Kenny
Callbeck	Losier-Cool
Campbell	Mercer
Chaput	Merchant
Cook	Milne
Corbin	Mitchell

Cordy  
Cowan  
Dallaire  
Dawson  
Day  
Downe  
Eggleton  
Fox  
Fraser  
Furey  
Goldstein  
Hervieux-Payette  
Hubley

Moore  
Murray  
Pépin  
Phalen  
Ringuette  
Robichaud  
Rompkey  
Sibbeston  
Smith  
Stollery  
Tardif  
Watt—41

#### NAYS THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Andreychuk	Johnson
Angus	Keon
Brown	LeBreton
Champagne	Nolin
Cochrane	Oliver
Comeau	St. Germain
Di Nino	Stratton
Eyton	Tkachuk—16

#### ABSTENTIONS THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Nil

#### THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN CANADA

##### INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government)** rose pursuant to notice of November 25, 2008:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the 250th anniversary of representative government in Canada.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today to recognize the historic anniversary of representative government in Canada. As a proud Nova Scotian, few events inspire more pride than the fact that the foundation of our modern democratic system was laid out in my native province on October 2, 250 years ago. Nova Scotia is the cradle of Canadian democracy, and this is something of which we can be proud, especially when one considers that Canada is the third oldest continuous democracy in the world.

When Halifax was founded in 1749, a form of “royal” government was established whereby the governor of the colony was empowered to appoint a council of the governor’s own choosing to decide upon the internal affairs of the colony. After agitation from local residents and community leaders, this form of royal government was altered to include an elected assembly, which met for the first time on October 2, 1758.

Ninety years after the achievement of representative government, in 1848 the great Canadian reformers Joseph Howe, Sir Louis LaFontaine, Sir Robert Baldwin and Lord Elgin brought about the achievement of responsible government. Once achieved in Nova Scotia, and then the Province of

Canada, which included both Lower and Upper Canada, the other British North American colonies followed suit. P.E.I. achieved responsible government in 1851, New Brunswick in 1854 and Newfoundland in 1855.

For the first time, the Governor General — in those days it was mostly men — took himself out of the daily political life and decisions of the colony and left Canadians to decide their own internal affairs. With this momentous achievement came the principle that major policy decisions would be taken by the elected representatives of the citizenry and not the representative of the Crown or the Crown's unelected advisers.

It is in the footsteps of those early legislators that we follow today. Dating back even before Confederation, our legislatures and parliaments have adhered to the principle that the elected body serves as the source of policy decisions while the appointed body, or upper chambers — the old legislative councils and Senate today — serve in a salutary fashion as reviewers of legislation and policy, and not as engines of statute creation.

With all this history in mind, it is an appropriate time to reflect on the legislative role of our chamber in the context of representative and responsible systems of governance.

Specifically, I want to talk about Senate public bills — what have more commonly become known as private member's bills. Some honourable members are upset that the progress of these private member's bills has not been as rapid as they would like. Indeed, many members in this place, primarily those seated across the aisle, view these bills as a vehicle to continue crafting government policy, even after their party has been removed from power by the people of Canada. This concept, honourable senators, runs contrary to our historical concept of representative government.

• (1720)

In surveying the literature and the analysis of Canada's Senate, I could not help but notice that academics and commentators from all periods have failed to address the issue of private member's bills in the Senate, largely because the practice of flooding the upper chamber with a sea of private member's bills is a recent development from our Liberal friends across the aisle.

What is more concerning is that many of these bills are not related to such worthy causes as establishing National Blood Donor Week or World Autism Day but, rather they seek to create or augment major elements of government policy in a manner that is contrary to the policy agenda of the duly-elected Government of Canada.

Prior to Confederation, during the crafting of the 72 Resolutions of the Quebec Conference that helped bring the Fathers of Confederation to agreement on the structure and function of our federal government, Sir Alexander Campbell noted that the intent of the Senate — then styled the Legislative Council — was to be “calm, considerate and watchful.” Even the renowned Liberal George Brown, who was never a great fan of this chamber, noted that the purpose of the Senate chamber was to be “a thoroughly independent body, one that would be in the best position to canvass dispassionately the measures of this House of Commons.”

On the eve of the First World War, Sir George Ross published his book, *The Senate of Canada: its constitution, powers and duties historically considered*. It was the first lengthy work written about our chamber, and it provides an interesting window into what this place was like as it approached its fiftieth anniversary. Ross noted that the labours of the second chamber in Canada is limited to the task of perfecting the legislation of the lower House. There is not one mention throughout the work of senators introducing private member's bills.

We then fast-forward to 1963 and the publication of Robert MacKay's book, aptly titled: *The Unreformed Senate of Canada*. Professor MacKay briefly examined the issue of private member's bills in the Senate, and he postured that the initiation of bills by private members on public subjects is still possible, but the chances of such bills becoming law are normally remote.

Between 1867 and 1960, a total of 230 private member's bills were brought before this chamber. That works out to 2.4 private member's bills per year. By contrast, senators introduced 13 private member's bills in one day on November 20, 2008. Contrast that: 2.4 per year versus, on November 20, 13 in one day.

Next, we have Professor C.E.S. Franks. Many honourable senators are aware of Professor Franks' work. He is the author of the highly acclaimed study, *The Parliament of Canada*. Franks does not examine at any length the role of private member's bills in the Senate. He ably notes that the purpose of the Senate is to conduct investigations, revise legislation, represent the regions, and provide representation for special interest groups and protect individual rights. Most importantly, there is no mention of private member's bills from this modern student of Parliament.

One of the most recent academic works to examine the role of the Senate was edited and partially written by our own Senator Joyal. *Protecting Canadian Democracy: The Senate You Never Knew*, contains a collection of excellent essays written by a number of legislators and leading academics. One chapter in Senator Joyal's book is particularly relevant to the issue we are presently discussing.

In the chapter entitled “Comparing the Lawmaking Roles of the Senate and the House of Commons,” Professor Paul Thomas of the University of Manitoba notes that most knowledgeable observers would say that the Senate rarely, if ever, initiates legislation. He goes on to explain that since the late 1950s, the Senate has initiated public policy work through committee work and debate, which is where most of us find that the greatest role and the greatest work of the Senate has been accomplished.

Thomas explains further that the Senate's main legislative role is to review government-sponsored public bills that have already undergone debate and perhaps amendments in the House of Commons. The Senate has not, traditionally, initiated public policy through private member's bills because it is inconsistent with the concept of representative government that was achieved in Nova Scotia in 1758.

Lastly and most recently, we have Professor David E. Smith's *The Canadian Senate in Bicameral Perspective*. Professor Smith echoes the findings of earlier students of the Senate. Smith finds that the Senate has four roles that include legislative revision,

which has been the primary role of the Senate since Confederation; second, conducting investigations “to deliberate, to build up its legislative case to debate, to take testimony from witnesses, and to collect a broad range of opinion from Canadians in all walks of life and all parts of the country; third, scrutinizing the executive; and, fourth, sectional/minority representation, which “pervades all other functions.”

Here is yet another expert, well known to many honourable senators, who has left the issue of private member’s bills in the Senate to the side, simply because it has never been a significant part of our role in this place.

Through the Thirty-ninth Parliament we have had before us, more private member’s bills than have previously been on the Order Paper; 43 in total. In examining the number of private member’s bills introduced over the past decade, we find that it was only in the Thirty-ninth Parliament that the chamber began to be flooded with private member’s bills. If the opening days of this Parliament are any indication, I suspect we will see more of the same in this Parliament. At best, this is legislative inflation; at worst, it is a tactic meant to clog the chamber and committees with legislation that seeks to rob the elected government of its mandate.

Beyond the simple mathematics of private member’s bills in this place, there is a more significant problem: Many of the bills introduced by the opposition blatantly attempt to counter the policy direction brought forward by the government that was elected by the Canadian people. This was never the intent of the appointed upper chamber either in the old Legislative Councils or in the Senate. What we see is a trend away from our traditional role to one where senators behave like members of the other place, introducing dozens of private member’s bills.

Why are these bills being introduced and, in most cases, passing this chamber to be sent to the House of Commons? In most cases, it is not because they provide sound legislation. I would argue it is because opposition members of this chamber no longer see themselves as filling the traditional role of senators in our representative and responsible system of governance. Rather, they view themselves as the natural opposition to the elected government.

Some honourable senators will say that we simply have to appoint more senators and this problem will cease, but we all know that is not the solution.

I hear that Elizabeth May has been measuring the offices to find out which office she will be in.

**Senator Stratton:** She called me already.

**Senator Comeau:** Apparently, she has called our whip already to find out the size of the offices. Apparently, because she had one million votes in the last election, she will be more than first among equals in this chamber. We will see where the Bloc Québécois members will fit in the chamber as well. I imagine you will have them sitting on your side.

**An Hon. Senator:** How many did they get? Did they get six?

**Senator Comeau:** When Senator Mercer gets back to Nova Scotia and starts to explain to Nova Scotians why he wants Bloc Québécois separatist members in the chamber, I imagine that his Nova Scotia friends and colleagues in Halifax and Dartmouth will not take kindly to that. We will see if he will walk down the street when we have Bloc Québécois members here in this chamber.

As we mark the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of representative government in Canada and the one hundred and sixtieth anniversary of responsible government in Canada, it is an opportune time to reflect on the recent practices in our chamber — an appointed body — in some ways, not unlike the old appointed executive councils of pre-1848 colonial Canada.

All of the academic and parliamentary experts agree that our chamber was never intended to be the source of large amounts of legislation. As we are in the early sittings of this new Parliament, I hope that all honourable senators will reflect on the purpose of our chamber and not return us to the state of the Thirty-ninth Parliament, where private member’s bills were used as a policy weapon against the government, thereby shifting the Senate away from its traditional role.

I think we have enough work and enough responsibilities on our plate.

**Senator Mercer:** What about committees?

**Senator Fraser:** We need committees.

**Senator Mercer:** Where is the legislation?

**Senator Comeau:** Senator Mercer wants to get into the debate. I look forward to his comments on how important he considers legislation in this chamber.

• (1730)

We have enough responsibility in representing the minorities of Canada, as well as those people who do not have a voice, and those who wish us to scrutinize legislation as we have done historically. Over the years, we have done a great job reviewing and fixing legislation from the other place, without attempting to become an executive body in this chamber.

We have enough work on our plate. I would hope that we would take a dim view of having all these private member’s bills flooding our Order Paper.

Thank you for your kind attention. I look forward to your comments.

**Hon. Yoine Goldstein:** With leave, I would like to ask a question.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** There is one minute remaining.

**Senator Goldstein:** Thirty seconds is all I need.

Since the honourable senator is so anxious to have the chamber proceed with its very important work, does that mean that his government will not prorogue?

**Senator Comeau:** Honourable senators, unlike Senator Goldstein's side, I do not even pretend to speak on behalf of the government. I am a private member. I am not a member of government. I will not even touch that one.

When my friend presents his speech in the Senate — and I hope he does get involved in the debate — he might want to speak about the role that the Bloc Québécois will hold in this chamber if they form government.

On motion of Senator Oliver, debate adjourned.

[Translation]

## BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

### MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY CREDIT AND DEBIT CARD SYSTEMS— DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Pierrette Ringuette,** pursuant to notice of November 25, 2008, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce be authorized to examine and report on the credit and debit card systems in Canada and their relative rates and fees, in particular for businesses and consumers; and

That the Committee report to the Senate no later than June 30, 2009, and that the Committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 90 days after the tabling of the final report.

She said: Honourable senators, I have put forward a motion to authorize the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce to study the credit and debit card systems in Canada, as well as their respective rates and fees, in particular for businesses and consumers.

Here are the facts. According to my research, Canadians have 64.1 million credit cards and use 65 per cent of them to purchase \$294 billion worth of goods and services.

Eighty per cent of these 64.1 million credit cards are issued by Visa or MasterCard. The maximum interest rate for consumers is 24.75 per cent. The maximum fees for credit card payments, or interchange fees, are 3 per cent for businesses, 1.8 per cent for governments and 1.5 per cent for charities.

In fact, since the spring of 2008, interchange fees have gone up. Interchange fees are the percentage of the total purchase price that businesses pay so that their customers can make credit card purchases. We should also be concerned about the fact that credit card issuers are still charging consumers higher interest rates than the rates for commercial bank loans.

According to a recent *Toronto Star* article, changes to come into effect on December 1 at TD Bank will result in higher interest rates for most customers who do not pay the minimum balance on their VISA card two times in a row. Therefore, if you pay the minimum balance 30 days after the payment date, you will be

charged 24.75 per cent interest, which represents an increase of 5 per cent. We should bear in mind that the Bank of Canada prime rate is 2.25 per cent.

In the event of financial difficulties, we sometimes rely on credit to a greater extent and that is what will happen more and more.

Honourable senators, some of our fellow citizens are in difficult situations and the major banks are partly responsible. The federal government injected \$75 billion into a mortgage buyback plan in the hope of encouraging banks to lend funds, that is, to increase liquidity. Consequently, banks and credit card institutions should be able to charge fair rates that will enable businesses and consumers to deal with the current financial situation.

[English]

My research indicates that businesses pay an interchange rate to credit card issuers of up to 3 per cent of the amount of purchases, and indications are that credit card issuers are raising rates for premium cards and for higher risk customers. There is neither disclosure to businesses of the customer's risk factor nor any input for businesses as to the number of premium cards issued and its additional interchange rate.

We must all acknowledge the aggressive marketing strategies used by credit card issuers to give consumers premium cards and, therefore, directly increase interchange rates on the business community.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which represents 105,000 small businesses in every sector, has denounced the introduction of new types of cards such as premium, mosaic or infinite. In addition to being unsolicited, those cards bring a different interchange rate when the card has been deemed "high spend" or when the bank detects that a certain amount has been reached.

Interchange rates vary considerably and the complexity of their structure becomes an indeterminable cost for businesses. Accordingly, those charges will be passed on to consumers.

Business interchange rates on major credit cards generate \$4.5 billion in revenue for credit card companies. Canadian rates are already among the highest in the industrialized world. Of course, credit card issuers need to generate revenue for their shareholders. However, the very same companies that have raised the interchange rates are not necessarily poor companies.

Visa Inc.'s 2008 fiscal fourth quarter earning figures show that the company had a net income of \$0.8 billion from total operating revenues of \$6.3 billion. MasterCard Worldwide 2007 Annual Report indicates a net income of \$1 billion from net revenues of \$4.1 billion. MasterCard Worldwide net income has more than doubled between 2006 and 2007.

Credit cards are an important monetary medium for exchange between customers and businesses. In 2007, 64.1 million credit cards were used in Canada. Almost 65 per cent of Canadian consumer payments for \$294 billion in goods and services are done using credit and debit cards. Visa and MasterCard have about 80 per cent of the national credit card market. Credit card companies are, therefore, extremely wealthy and powerful.



Is there “collusion” in this quasi-monopoly situation? Are the proposed increases by credit card issuers a means to move towards the 2 per cent of sales vacated by the reduction of 2 per cent of the GST? I strongly believe that, based on those facts, there is a definite need for parliamentarians to be involved in the debate and in understanding the impact on businesses, consumers and the overall economy.

• (1740)

[Translation]

Similarly, we are concerned about the impact on businesses of the likely fee increase for debit card purchases, such as those using Interac.

Apparently, Interac is in talks with the Competition Bureau about giving up its not-for-profit status. The Senate study should provide information for the Competition Bureau.

In 2006, the Bank of Canada did a survey revealing that each debit card purchase cost the vendor about 12 cents. In addition, debit card holders were paying a monthly fee or a per-use fee. If Interac were no longer a not-for-profit operation, would the interchange fees businesses and consumers pay on debit card use go up? If so, the unit costs would rise, and this would lead to a rise in consumer prices.

[English]

We should also look at the potential impact of rising interchange rates on the three levels of government; i.e., Crown corporations, government agencies, museums, parks and licensing departments, which all pay interchange rates when Canadians purchase government services. Any increase in the rates paid by these entities would logically raise government's cost.

Being from New Brunswick, my office was in contact with Service New Brunswick and we have discovered that they have a blended 1.813 per cent interchange rate. Service New Brunswick passes that rate to their partners, such as the City of Fredericton and the City of Edmundston, for sewer and water bills.

Rates charged to government agencies and Crown corporations are significant. A report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office states that, for fiscal year 2007, U.S. federal entities accepted cards for over \$27 billion in revenue and paid at least \$433 million in merchant discount fees. For those able to separately identify interchange costs, these entities collected \$18.6 billion in card revenues and paid \$208 million in interchange rates.

Honourable senators would all agree that these taxpayers' dollars could have had a more efficient use. Why is MasterCard only charging 0.33 per cent to Australia's government and agencies but 1.813 per cent in Canada? That is one and a half per cent more for the same kind of operations.

[Translation]

When Canadians donate to a charitable organization, they have no idea that part of their donation is used to pay the companies that issue credit cards. When I discussed this with representatives of some large charitable organizations, I found out that credit card companies charge an average of 1.5 per cent of all donations

as an interchange fee. I should note that these companies have suspended their fees in certain cases, such as when the tsunami hit.

In Australia, MasterCard and Visa have voluntarily eliminated interchange fees for charitable organizations. Why can they not demonstrate that kind of corporate citizenship in Canada by applying the same policy here?

[English]

The Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses says that Canadian credit card fees are unregulated and are, therefore, higher than in many countries where they are regulated. I believe that the possibility of establishing legislation and regulations should be explored by the committee. I invite honourable senators to visit a campaign called “Stop Sticking It To Us” at the following address: [www.stopstickingittous.com](http://www.stopstickingittous.com). The group behind the website, made up of Canadian associations led by the Retail Council of Canada, represents more than 120,000 Canadian businesses.

According to the campaign's website, Canada has some of the highest interchange rates in the world. Rates in Canada average 2 per cent while regulated rates in Australia are 0.45 per cent and in the U.K. are 0.78 per cent. The Australian authorities have been regulating interchange rates for the past five years. The Retail Council of Canada estimates that nearly \$2 of every \$100 Canadian spent using credit cards go directly to Visa and MasterCard and their issuing banks.

Mr. Derek Nighbor, Vice-President of National Affairs for the Retail Council of Canada, says that a \$1 transaction and a \$100 transaction cost about the same to process, yet the fee is based on a percentage of the total price of the sale. There seems to be a disconnect there.

There is also a related campaign headed by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I met with both organizations.

[Translation]

I believe that the Senate must refer this motion to committee. We have to make sure that these organizations get some respect, that their work is not undermined by excessive interchange fees and that, all things being equal, fees charged in Canada are competitive. We have to make sure that interest rates charged to consumers are fair. The Bank of Canada's current rate is 2.25 per cent, but credit card companies charge as much as 24 per cent.

Honourable senators, this is not about the Senate or partisan politics; this is about regulations, accountability and oversight. This is about our economy.

We have to make sure that Canadians' voices are heard, and we have to urge the government to intervene if necessary. I hope that the Senate will let the committee do its work to carry out this study. We have no time to lose.

[English]

**Hon. David Tkachuk:** Will the honourable senator permit a question?

**Senator Ringuette:** Yes.

**Senator Tkachuk:** Are credit cards, on average, more expensive in Canada or is the honourable senator taking the extreme high? I believe what the honourable senator said was 24 per cent. On average, are they higher in other countries and what would the difference be between, say, the average in the United States and the average in Canada?

**Senator Ringuette:** Honourable senators, the main issue behind this motion is how credit card rates are affecting the business community and how that cost is being translated to higher fees for consumers. That is one of the basic arguments.

In Canada, we have anything from an average of 2 per cent and it rises to as much as 3 per cent. The business community has no say. The more Canadian consumers use premium cards that give points — or whatever kinds of bonuses — the more the business community pays at the other end.

**Senator Tkachuk:** I do not quite understand. I do know that, if you do not have premium cards that give points, the interest rates are fairly low in Canada. We all receive mail and we are all told how inexpensive it is, though, I am surprised how inexpensive some credit cards are. There is no question that, to collect points, they charge people quite a substantial amount. However, at the same time, if you pay at the end of each month, then you are not charged any interest.

Is the honourable senator saying that she would have government make decisions on what incentives credit card companies can use, regulating their interest rates and telling businesses how much they can charge as interest?

**Senator Ringuette:** Honourable senators, please bear in mind that we are in a financial crisis. If the Government of Canada — your government — provides \$75 billion taxpayers' dollars to banks to increase their liquidity — their cash flow — yet, on the other hand, is not willing to look at the fact that those same banks are not willing to consider the fact that consumers should not be paying 24 per cent on credit cards, then there is a major problem. That is a certainty.

**Senator Tkachuk:** I have one more question.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I regret to inform the Honourable Senator Ringuette that her time has expired.

On motion of Senator Di Nino, debate adjourned.

• (1750)

## THE ESTIMATES 2008-09

### SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B)— MOTION TO STRIKE SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE— DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition),** pursuant to notice of November 26, 2008, moved:

That a Special Committee of the Senate be appointed to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in Supplementary Estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2009;

That, notwithstanding rule 85(1)(b), the Committee be comprised of twelve members, namely the Honourable Senators Biron, Callbeck, Chaput, Day, De Bané, P.C., Eggleton, P.C., Mitchell, Ringuette, and four additional members to be named by the Leader of the Government in the Senate following the process set out in Rule 85(5);

That four members constitute a quorum;

That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records; to examine witnesses; and to print such papers and evidence from day to day as may be ordered by the Committee;

That the Committee be authorized to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings;

That the Committee have power to sit when the Senate is sitting, and that the application of Rule 95(4) be suspended in relation thereto; and

That, pursuant to Rule 95(3)(a), the Committee be authorized to meet during any adjournment of the Senate that exceeds one week.

**Hon. Joseph A. Day:** Honourable senators, we heard the debate earlier in relation to Government Motion No. 2 for a hearing in relation to Supplementary Estimates (B) by the Committee of the Whole. This alternative approach of the creation of a special committee is suggested by this side. Motion No. 12 and Motion No. 13 are similar. Motion No. 12 has four members of the government side named. We felt, in retrospect, that this motion may be somewhat heavy-handed. Therefore, it is suggested in this motion, Motion No. 13, to which I am now speaking, that the government name their four persons for this committee.

I want honourable senators to note that the senators on this side who are mentioned are senators who have extensive experience with respect to the review of estimates, generally the estimates cycle and how they fit into supply for the government.

Honourable senators, to put it in perspective, we are asking that we create a special committee to deal with this document. This document is the same one the Honourable Senator Comeau suggests can be easily handled by a Committee of the Whole. I suggest to the honourable senator that we would do a poor job indeed if we were to put that kind of document before a Committee of the Whole without any background experience.

**Senator Comeau:** It is a shame that senators are not as bright as you.

**Senator Day:** Honourable senators, the normal way we operate would be to study this document and to come back with a report after extensive study in the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance. That report provides the focus that can be debated then by this chamber as a whole. That is the normal way we would handle this document.

Normally, when a supply bill arrives here, we have already done a pre-study of what is in the bill because it is included in this particular document in the schedule and the estimates. Therefore, it is not necessary to refer that supply bill to committee because we have a report that is the result of extensive study of these supplementary estimates by the committee.

Honourable senators, according to the schedule in the House of Commons, we are told that the supply bill will arrive here next Wednesday or Thursday. By that time, we should have finished, or almost finished, the report that forms the basis for the study of that supply bill. This side is anxious to get on with this work. This side wants to study this supplementary estimate.

However, this is government supply. The honourable senator should accommodate this approach as much as possible to complete this work because the government needs supply.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

**Senator Day:** Honourable senators, the question is why are we not proceeding with this matter.

The primary reason we suggest a special committee is because we can put the time and effort into hearing from many different witnesses. There are many issues here, honourable senators. Three billion dollars worth of revenue is being requested in this particular document. Honourable senators, the basis for this \$3 billion — \$2.8 billion, in fact — flows from a budget generated in February or March of last year.

When there has been much economic turmoil and a significant change in our financial status, should we not look at this request thoroughly?

Minister Flaherty, in his economic and fiscal statement made only a week ago said:

We take no pleasure in saying that despite our best efforts, this may not be enough to keep a small surplus on the books.

In other words, the government is warning that we will go into a deficit. Then, why would we not look at the request to go \$3 billion more into deficit, which is exactly what these supplementary estimates provide? Why would we agree to that request without looking thoroughly and extensively at these particular supplementary estimates?

Honourable senators, I recognize that I do not have a lot of time to make my point. The point I want to leave with you is that the House of Commons deals with this kind of supply bill in a Committee of the Whole. In the same way, Senator Comeau has indicated in the past that the Senate used to deal with this kind of supply bill in a committee of supply.

Many documents refer to this committee; in 1968, an extensive change took place because in 1965-66, the House of Commons spent 90 days in the Committee of the Whole dealing with supply in order to do a thorough job with respect to the supply cycle.

The motion of my honourable colleague for a Committee of the Whole here contemplates that we can deal with this book and everything in it tomorrow afternoon. I submit to honourable senators that situation is neither realistic, nor possible.

In both Houses of Parliament there is a tradition, honourable senators, that the opposition should be accommodated as much as possible because in this document the government is seeking its supply. The opposition — in its place — is also accommodating, recognizing the importance of supply for the cycle of government.

One illustration of this accommodation is the long-standing practice in both Houses of an opposition member chairing the relevant committees out of convention.

The government does not have much time to have these estimates approved; much less time than usual. I expect that the government would accommodate the opposition to secure the passage of estimates. Instead — and I must say I regret this very much — the government has chosen to press for an option that it finds more convenient rather than accommodate the legitimate concerns on this side that the estimates be properly examined.

We have a proud tradition in this place, honourable senators, of carrying out a serious and deliberate process of examination. It is all the more important, as Senator Murray often reminds us, because the supply process in the other place is an embarrassing rubber stamp that occupies mere seconds on their agenda.

Honourable senators, we are all proud of our committee system and the useful, thoughtful and thorough reports the committees produce. We should uphold that record of thoughtful and thorough scrutiny of public expenditures, particularly at this time. Let us establish this special committee so that we can proceed with this work.

**Hon. Terry Stratton:** The honourable senator gives an interesting speech. It is one that I look at and am rather dumbfounded. I have been on the Senate Finance Committee for a long time and often we receive the Supplementary Estimates (A), (B) or (C) virtually at the last moment.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** It is six o'clock. Pursuant to the rules, I will leave the chair to return at eight o'clock unless there is unanimous consent not to see the clock.

**Senator Comeau:** There is a clock.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I leave the chair and will return at eight o'clock.

The Senate adjourned during pleasure.

• (2000)

The sitting was resumed.

**Senator Stratton:** Honourable senators, I will finish my question with Senator Day, if I may.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Day's time had expired.

**Senator Comeau:** May I have five minutes?

**The Hon. the Speaker:** The honourable senator has a five-minute extension.

**Senator Stratton:** As honourable senators know, Senator Ringuette, Senator Murray and I have been members of the Senate Finance Committee for a number of years. When we review estimates, in particular Supplementary Estimates (A), (B), or (C), at times we must select what we will look at specifically because we do not have the time to review everything because one comes down pretty hard. However, we are able to continue the study of supplementary estimates thereafter if we so choose. The Finance Committee can do anything it wants when it comes to the study of Main Estimates and supplementary estimates. We usually select an area where we want to look at a particular category or subject.

We bring supplementary estimates before the Finance Committee but historically we have not spent much time on them unless there is a particularly hot issue. Often, supplementary estimates are dealt with over a period of time that is necessarily short because of the tight time frame and the liberty thereafter.

Spending an afternoon and evening studying these estimates shows that they can always be looked at later, should an extended study be required of a specific issue. The Finance Committee often studies them later. I listened to the honourable senator's reason for not agreeing to go into Committee of the Whole. It is extraordinary in this case because we are trying to allow the two leaders, who have not had much time to reach an agreement, more time to deal with the supply bill; and this method is the most expeditious way to do so. My fear is that when special committees are struck, as has happened with other committees in this chamber, the committees take on a perpetual life. We have examples in this chamber of special committees that have continued for years. Once a special committee is struck to study the supplementary estimates, what will prevent other special committees from being struck to study other issues, and then continuing for years as well? A time frame and a life expectancy must be set out for such special committees. Otherwise, we will have a proliferation of special committees at the whim of this chamber. To deal with the supplementary estimates, why not consider the alternative of going into Committee of the Whole? I do not see the point of striking a special committee for the study.

Does Senator Day care to respond?

**Senator Day:** It is difficult to respond because the honourable senator did not hit on any specific points but asked: Why not go into Committee of the Whole? I ask: Why not have a special committee? We have the expertise and the people who want to do it and are anxious to start immediately. Why limit the study to an afternoon and an evening of a Committee of the Whole when the normal process is to have the Finance Committee conduct the study?

I suggest that the honourable senator should not be concerned that striking a special committee might lead to many other special committees because Motion No. 13 says:

That a special committee of the Senate be appointed to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in Supplementary Estimates (B) for fiscal year ending March 31, 2009.

That time frame is straightforward. The special committee will do its job and report back to the Senate next Wednesday. The supply bill will be coming to the Senate and we need the report before the supply bill passes.

Why do we not have the special committee proceed with the work? The committee's work would end next Wednesday.

**Hon. Senators:** Question!

**Senator Stratton:** Has my time expired?

**Senator Cowan:** The honourable senator's time is up.

**Senator Stratton:** Did we ask for five minutes more?

**Senator Cowan:** That was your question.

On motion of Senator Stratton, debate adjourned.

## COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

### MOTION INSTRUCTING COMMITTEE TO MEET AND REPORT—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition),** pursuant to notice of November 27, 2008, moved:

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.

She said: Honourable senators, the intent of this motion is clear. It asks that our selection committee, which was struck on November 19, the day of the Speech from the Throne, fulfill its obligations. Rule 85(1) states that the Committee of Selection shall nominate "the senators to serve on the several select committees, except the Committee on Conflict of Interest for Senators." That is what the *Rules of the Senate of Canada* require. Unfortunately, although the Selection Committee has been in existence for two weeks, it has not met to nominate the senators to serve on the committees and to report those names. We, on this side of the chamber, believe that the delay is unacceptable and not in keeping with historic practice.

For instance, in October 2007 as the Second Session of the Thirty-ninth Parliament began, the Selection Committee presented its report nominating senators for a standing committee seven days after it was created. In April 2006, when the first session of that same Parliament began, it took two days for the Selection Committee to present its report. In 2004, the Selection Committee reported on committees one day after the Throne Speech.

In comparison, we have now been waiting for 14 days and the Chair of the Committee of Selection has not even called a meeting to nominate members. This is unacceptable, particularly when the government says we are in the middle of a worldwide economic crisis.

• (2010)

Our committees need to be struck. There is work to be done. We on this side of the chamber believe that this work needs to begin as quickly as possible.

We all recognize the value of Senate committees, the value of their work, and as Senator Day said earlier today, the thorough and extensive work they do when they examine issues. We take pride in our committee members who are appointed to select committees because of their experience and expertise.

[Translation]

In practice, at the beginning of each session, the leaders from both sides of the chamber meet to discuss and agree on how the committees will be formed.

Although those discussions took place, no committees have been formed. Without entering into the details of the various proposals discussed, I will say that this side of the chamber is in a majority position, and we believe that our majority position deserves to be recognized when the committees are struck.

That is why our caucus cannot accept the government's proposal regarding committees, given that the talks have not been successful. The Senate, through its Committee of Selection, should take the initiative.

Therein lies the motion's *raison d'être*: it orders the Committee of Selection to fulfill its mandate.

[English]

Honourable senators, it is unconscionable for the government to demand and expect that the majority in this house must bow to the will of the minority. That is not democracy. When minorities dictate to majorities, the result is not a democracy.

The purpose of this motion is to ensure that democratic principles are followed in our chamber and that senators, and not the Prime Minister's Office, have the final say of how we conduct our business.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

**Senator Tardif:** I urge all honourable senators to support this motion for two reasons: first, to ensure that democratic principles are followed in this chamber; and second, so that we can begin to work on the important issues now facing our country, as Canadians rightly expect us to do.

**Hon. Elaine McCoy:** Honourable senators, I am not a member of either caucus, and this is all news to me. Would the Deputy Leader of the Opposition identify the chair of the Selection Committee, please?

**Senator Tardif:** Senator Tkachuk is the Chair of the Committee of Selection.

**Senator McCoy:** Has a reason been given as to why the committee has not been called in the last 14 days?

**Senator Tardif:** No, we have not been given a reason.

**Senator McCoy:** If I may, I wish to address this question in debate.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator McCoy in debate.

**Senator McCoy:** Honourable senators, I rise because I find it quite fascinating that during these exceptional times we are looking for collaborative solutions.

However, before I address the substantive issue, I wish to welcome Your Honour back to the chair. It has been my experience that you have been very fair. I offer you felicitations and look forward to working with you as you handle the debates in the most even-handed manner. I do appreciate the courtesy that I have received from you over the past several years and I look forward to your continued presence in the chair.

I also congratulate Senator Losier-Cool, who will be once again our Speaker *pro tempore*. Congratulations, and I was very pleased to see the Selection Committee move with such alacrity to bring forward such a result, which I believe was welcomed throughout the chamber.

In speaking to this matter, I note that it is one of the few rules in our chamber that is, to my mind, somewhat undemocratic in and of itself. The Senate Committee of Selection, in my observation — never having been part of it — one day arrives in the Senate for ratification of some committee appointments that have been decided amongst 12 people. As I understand from tidbits that I hear back and forth — and there have been allusions to that today — the leaders must come to an agreement as to who sits on which committee.

I am told that I should appreciate the magnanimity of the current members of the Senate in following this rule because, not so very many years ago, independent senators, senators who did not belong to either the government or the opposition caucus in this chamber — were not included on Senate committees at all. Therefore, this has been a great leap forward in even-handed, non-partisan collaborative work on committees, for which the Senate is justly renowned. Indeed, it is particularly strange in this day and age, when there are shortages of senators in the Senate, that the independent senators are not used on more committees. When I think of Senator Dyck and her tremendous talents, for example, it seems to be a waste of a talented resource in this chamber. She could easily help to fulfil the role that the Senate plays on behalf of all Canadians and it would be so much wiser to deploy her to a larger extent.

In the previous session, I also saw another perhaps oversight, but a failing that can happen, and that was another independent senator who was left off of all committees. Again, it is a shame to underutilize the talents of the very talented people who are called to serve in the Senate.

In my short tenure here, I have observed these things and questioned the fundamental basis of what I would consider to be something of an antiquated rule, which does not allow us to utilize the counsel of elders, some of the most talented people in Canada, to work on behalf of the country. Then I am shocked to hear that this committee, this year, is a “hung jury,” as we might say. Therefore, I begin to think surely there must be other ways around this particular conundrum.

I hear, on this motion put together by Senator Tardif and called for with much thought on her part, a remedy to bring the committee back with recommendations as soon as possible. I appreciate that effort, although in reading past debates, it has not always worked; the Senate has not always been able to force a committee back into the chamber. I believe it was on the drug patents bill that they waited some six months or so, with repeated attempts to bring the reports from that committee back into the Senate. It was not entirely successful.

• (2020)

I have some sympathy for this approach, and I understand the desire to get the committees working. Then we would not be in such a sad state and able to deal, for example, with supply and estimates which, by and large, means paying our civil servants. Therefore, I put this proposal on the table for consideration, and remind all honourable senators that there are often many ways to address a question and this one may not have been thought of.

I am inspired by a close friend in Calgary whom I had lunch with not so long ago. She is a delightful person. She says that all her life she has operated on the assumption that she will receive what she needs and wants at any given time. She always deals with people in a way that assumes the best. She will assume the best of anyone; she will assume that you want to help her in reaching a goal that she might articulate. She says time and again her faith is rewarded.

Not long ago she and her husband and two long-standing friends were in Kelowna. Apparently Kelowna has tucked away one of the best restaurants in Canada. Friends of theirs across the country had been saying that if one is ever in that area one must go to this restaurant. They were travelling home and had one night to go to the restaurant. Her friend's husband picked up the phone and said he would make the reservation. He was turned down. They were very disappointed. How were they going to compare notes with their friends? They really wanted to try this little out-of-the-way, *bon vivant* experience. She said, "Never mind, leave it to me. I always get what I want." She called the number and the proprietor answered the phone. She said, "Sir, you must understand, my friends all across the country are talking about this restaurant and we really want to come. Can you not get us in?" He said, "No, madam, I am sorry, I really cannot." She told him they only had one night, and surely he must have a table by the kitchen, even halfway out the back door, close to the dumpster. She said they would do whatever it took, and went on in her cheerful, persuasive way. Jenny was getting nowhere, which

was quite a shock to her. Finally she ran out of persuasive things to say and became defeated and stopped. The proprietor said, "Madam, now that I have your ear, you must understand that we are closed tonight."

At that point she laughed and said she had done her best. He said to her that she had persuaded him so much that he would serve dinner for just her and her friends. She did indeed get what she wanted.

It was because she believed that there was a way to make something happen, and if you just put out to one another the faith that you both want to come to an agreed state of affairs that pushes all the right issues forward.

It is in Jenny's spirit that I say why not look at this issue another way? For this year, if we have a hung jury on our Selection Committee for whatever reason, then why do we not move, as a chamber, suspend rule 85 this time, insofar as it has not yet been fully responded to, bring the whole matter before this chamber, have an open, transparent process in which nominations are brought forward, and vote on them *en masse*. In that way we would be able to move forward to do the good work of the Senate.

I admit, it is an entirely different way of doing things, but I would urge honourable senators to consider this idea. It would model some behaviour that would allow us to begin to reach out to one another. It would be transparent, which I think is much more in the spirit of the times in 2008 than when these rules were written after the GST debate.

We could also accommodate more suggestions that would put more of us to work on the good issues. Certainly there is no shortage of issues for these committees to look at, legislative and otherwise. It might model an open sense of collaboration so that all honourable senators begin speaking in public, not behind closed doors making deals or not making deals at their whim or not at their whim, as the case may be. Let us do it in public, and let us see then the force of the arguments on one side or another.

In the spirit of Jenny, I offer that as an alternative approach.

On motion of Senator Tkachuk, debate adjourned.

The Senate adjourned until Wednesday, December 3, 2008, at 1:30 p.m.

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## **APPENDIX**

Officers of the Senate

The Ministry

Senators

(Listed according to seniority, alphabetically and by provinces)

Committees of the Senate

**THE SPEAKER**

The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella

**THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT**

The Honourable Marjory LeBreton, P.C.

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

The Honourable James S. Cowan

---

**OFFICERS OF THE SENATE****CLERK OF THE SENATE AND CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS**

Paul Bélisle

**LAW CLERK AND PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL**

Mark Audcent

**USHER OF THE BLACK ROD**

Kevin MacLeod



## THE MINISTRY

(In order of precedence)

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(December 2, 2008)

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The Right Hon. Stephen Joseph Harper	Prime Minister
The Hon. Robert Douglas Nicholson	Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
The Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn	Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture)
The Hon. Gregory Francis Thompson	Minister of Veterans Affairs
The Hon. Marjory LeBreton	Leader of the Government in the Senate and Minister of State (Seniors)
The Hon. Chuck Strahl	Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Metis and Non-Status Indians
The Hon. Peter Gordon MacKay	Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway
The Hon. Stockwell Day	Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway
The Hon. Vic Toews	President of the Treasury Board
The Hon. Rona Ambrose	Minister of Labour
The Hon. Diane Finley	Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development
The Hon. Beverley J. Oda	Minister for International Cooperation
The Hon. Jim Prentice	Minister of the Environment
The Hon. John Baird	Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities
The Hon. Lawrence Cannon	Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State (National Capital Commission)
The Hon. Tony Clement	Minister of Industry
The Hon. James Michael Flaherty	Minister of Finance
The Hon. Josée Verner	President of the Queen's Privy Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister for La Francophonie
The Hon. Jay D. Hill	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
The Hon. Peter Van Loan	Minister of Public Safety
The Hon. Gerry Ritz	Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board
The Hon. Jason Kenney	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism
The Hon. Christian Paradis	Minister of Public Works and Government Services
The Hon. James Moore	Minister for Official Languages and Minister of Canadian Heritage
The Hon. Leona Aglukkaq	Minister of Health
The Hon. Lisa Raitt	Minister of Natural Resources
The Hon. Gail A. Shea	Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
The Hon. Gary Lunn	Minister of State (Sport)
The Hon. Gordon O'Connor	Minister of State and Chief Government Whip
The Hon. Helena Guergis	Minister of State (Status of Women)
The Hon. Diane Ablonczy	Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)
The Hon. Rob Merrifield	Minister of State (Transport)
The Hon. Lynne Yelich	Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)
The Hon. Steven John Fletcher	Minister of State (Democratic Reform)
The Hon. Gary Goodyear	Minister of State (Science and Technology)
The Hon. Denis Lebel	Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)
The Hon. Keith Ashfield	Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)
The Hon. Peter Kent	Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)

## SENATORS OF CANADA

### ACCORDING TO SENIORITY

(December 2, 2008)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
Willie Adams . . . . .	Nunavut . . . . .	Rankin Inlet, Nunavut
Lowell Murray, P.C. . . . .	Pakenham . . . . .	Ottawa, Ont.
Peter Alan Stollery . . . . .	Bloor and Yonge . . . . .	Toronto, Ont.
Peter Michael Pitfield, P.C. . . . .	Ottawa-Vanier . . . . .	Ottawa, Ont.
Jerahmiel S. Grafstein . . . . .	Metro Toronto . . . . .	Toronto, Ont.
Anne C. Cools . . . . .	Toronto Centre-York . . . . .	Toronto, Ont.
Charlie Watt . . . . .	Inkerman . . . . .	Kuujuuaq, Que.
Joyce Fairbairn, P.C. . . . .	Lethbridge . . . . .	Lethbridge, Alta.
Colin Kenny . . . . .	Rideau . . . . .	Ottawa, Ont.
Pierre De Bané, P.C. . . . .	De la Vallière . . . . .	Montreal, Que.
Eymard Georges Corbin . . . . .	Grand-Sault . . . . .	Grand-Sault, N.B.
Norman K. Atkins . . . . .	Markham . . . . .	Toronto, Ont.
Ethel Cochrane . . . . .	Newfoundland and Labrador . . . . .	Port-au-Port, Nfld. & Lab.
Mira Spivak . . . . .	Manitoba . . . . .	Winnipeg, Man.
Gerald J. Comeau . . . . .	Nova Scotia . . . . .	Saulnierville, N.S.
Consiglio Di Nino . . . . .	Ontario . . . . .	Downsview, Ont.
Donald H. Oliver . . . . .	South Shore . . . . .	Halifax, N.S.
Noël A. Kinsella, <i>Speaker</i> . . . . .	Fredericton-York-Sunbury . . . . .	Fredericton, N.B.
J. Trevor Eyton . . . . .	Ontario . . . . .	Caledon, Ont.
Wilbert Joseph Keon . . . . .	Ottawa . . . . .	Ottawa, Ont.
Michael Arthur Meighen . . . . .	St. Marys . . . . .	Toronto, Ont.
Janis G. Johnson . . . . .	Winnipeg-Interlake . . . . .	Gimli, Man.
A. Raynell Andreychuk . . . . .	Saskatchewan . . . . .	Regina, Sask.
Jean-Claude Rivest . . . . .	Stadacona . . . . .	Quebec, Que.
Terrance R. Stratton . . . . .	Red River . . . . .	St. Norbert, Man.
Marcel Prud'homme, P.C. . . . .	La Salle . . . . .	Montreal, Que.
David Tkachuk . . . . .	Saskatchewan . . . . .	Saskatoon, Sask.
W. David Angus . . . . .	Alma . . . . .	Montreal, Que.
Pierre Claude Nolin . . . . .	De Salaberry . . . . .	Quebec, Que.
Marjory LeBreton, P.C. . . . .	Ontario . . . . .	Manotick, Ont.
Gerry St. Germain, P.C. . . . .	Langley-Pemberton-Whistler . . . . .	Maple Ridge, B.C.
Lise Bacon . . . . .	De la Durantaye . . . . .	Laval, Que.
Sharon Carstairs, P.C. . . . .	Manitoba . . . . .	Winnipeg, Man.
John G. Bryden . . . . .	New Brunswick . . . . .	Bayfield, N.B.
Rose-Marie Losier-Cool . . . . .	Tracadie . . . . .	Tracadie-Sheila, N.B.
Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C. . . . .	Bedford . . . . .	Montreal, Que.
William H. Rompkey, P.C. . . . .	Newfoundland and Labrador . . . . .	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Lorna Milne . . . . .	Peel County . . . . .	Brampton, Ont.
Marie-P. Poulin . . . . .	Nord de l'Ontario/Northern Ontario . . . . .	Ottawa, Ont.
Wilfred P. Moore . . . . .	Stanhope St./South Shore . . . . .	Chester, N.S.
Lucie Pépin . . . . .	Shawinigan . . . . .	Montreal, Que.

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
Fernand Robichaud, P.C.	New Brunswick	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.
Catherine S. Callbeck	Prince Edward Island	Central Bedeque, P.E.I.
Serge Joyal, P.C.	Kennebec	Montreal, Que.
Joan Cook	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Francis William Mahovlich	Toronto	Toronto, Ont.
Joan Thorne Fraser	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.
Vivienne Poy	Toronto	Toronto, Ont.
George Furey	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Nick G. Sibbeston	Northwest Territories	Fort Simpson, N.W.T.
Tommy Banks	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.
Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.
Elizabeth M. Hubley	Prince Edward Island	Kensington, P.E.I.
Mobina S. B. Jaffer	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.
Jean Lapointe	Saurel	Magog, Que.
Gerard A. Phalen	Nova Scotia	Glace Bay, N.S.
Joseph A. Day	Saint John-Kennebecasis	Hampton, N.B.
Michel Biron	Mille Isles	Nicolet, Que.
George S. Baker, P.C.	Newfoundland and Labrador	Gander, Nfld. & Lab.
Raymond Lavigne	Montarville	Verdun, Que.
David P. Smith, P.C.	Cobourg	Toronto, Ont.
Maria Chaput	Manitoba	Sainte-Anne, Man.
Pana Merchant	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.
Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.
Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.
Mac Harb	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Terry M. Mercer	Northend Halifax	Caribou River, N.S.
Jim Munson	Ottawa/Rideau Canal	Ottawa, Ont.
Claudette Tardif	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.
Grant Mitchell	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.
Elaine McCoy	Alberta	Calgary, Alta.
Robert W. Peterson	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.
Lillian Eva Dyck	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.
Art Eggleton, P.C.	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Nancy Ruth	Cluny	Toronto, Ont.
Roméo Antonius Dallaire	Gulf	Sainte-Foy, Que.
James S. Cowan	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Andrée Champagne, P.C.	Grandville	Saint-Hyacinthe, Que.
Hugh Segal	Kingston-Frontenac-Leeds	Kingston, Ont.
Larry W. Campbell	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.
Rod A.A. Zimmer	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Dennis Dawson	Lauzon	Sainte-Foy, Que.
Yoine Goldstein	Rigaud	Montreal, Que.
Francis Fox, P.C.	Victoria	Montreal, Que.
Sandra Lovelace Nicholas	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations, N.B.
Bert Brown	Alberta	Kathryn, Alta.

## SENATORS OF CANADA

### ALPHABETICAL LIST

(December 2, 2008)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
THE HONOURABLE			
Adams, Willie	Nunavut	Rankin Inlet, Nunavut	Liberal
Andreychuk, A. Raynell	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Conservative
Angus, W. David	Alma	Montreal, Que.	Conservative
Atkins, Norman K.	Markham	Toronto, Ont.	Progressive Conservative
Bacon, Lise	De la Durantaye	Laval, Que.	Liberal
Baker, George S., P.C.	Newfoundland and Labrador	Gander, Nfld. & Lab.	Liberal
Banks, Tommy	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Liberal
Biron, Michel	Mille Isles	Nicolet, Que.	Liberal
Brown, Bert	Alberta	Kathyrn, Alta.	Conservative
Bryden, John G.	New Brunswick	Bayfield, N.B.	Liberal
Callbeck, Catherine S.	Prince Edward Island	Central Bedeque, P.E.I.	Liberal
Campbell, Larry W.	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.	Liberal
Carstairs, Sharon, P.C.	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Liberal
Champagne, Andrée, P.C.	Grandville	Saint-Hyacinthe, Que.	Conservative
Chaput, Maria	Manitoba	Sainte-Anne, Man.	Liberal
Cochrane, Ethel	Newfoundland and Labrador	Port-au-Port, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative
Comeau, Gerald J.	Nova Scotia	Saulnierville, N.S.	Conservative
Cook, Joan	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Liberal
Cools, Anne C.	Toronto Centre-York	Toronto, Ont.	
Corbin, Eymard Georges	Grand-Sault	Grand-Sault, N.B.	Liberal
Cordy, Jane	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.	Liberal
Cowan, James S.	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Liberal
Dallaire, Roméo Antonius	Gulf	Sainte-Foy, Que.	Liberal
Dawson, Dennis	Lauson	Ste-Foy, Que.	Liberal
Day, Joseph A.	Saint John-Kennebecasis	Hampton, N.B.	Liberal
De Bané, Pierre, P.C.	De la Vallière	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Di Nino, Consiglio	Ontario	Downsview, Ont.	Conservative
Downe, Percy E.	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.	Liberal
Dyck, Lillian Eva	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Ind. New Democrat
Eggleton, Art, P.C.	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Eyton, J. Trevor	Ontario	Caledon, Ont.	Conservative
Fairbairn, Joyce, P.C.	Lethbridge	Lethbridge, Alta.	Liberal
Fox, Francis, P.C.	Victoria	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Fraser, Joan Thorne	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Furey, George	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Liberal
Goldstein, Yoine	Rigaud	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Grafstein, Jeremiah S.	Metro Toronto	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Harb, Mac	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Liberal
Hervieux-Payette, Céline, P.C.	Bedford	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Hubley, Elizabeth M.	Prince Edward Island	Kensington, P.E.I.	Liberal
Jaffer, Mobina S. B.	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.	Liberal

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
Johnson, Janis G.	Winnipeg-Interlake	Gimli, Man.	Conservative
Joyal, Serge, P.C.	Kennebec	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Kenny, Colin	Rideau	Ottawa, Ont.	Liberal
Keon, Wilbert Joseph	Ottawa	Ottawa, Ont.	Conservative
Kinsella, Noël A., <i>Speaker</i>	Fredericton-York-Sunbury	Fredericton, N.B.	Conservative
Lapointe, Jean	Saurel	Magog, Que.	Liberal
Lavigne, Raymond	Montarville	Verdun, Que.	Liberal
LeBreton, Marjory, P.C.	Ontario	Manotick, Ont.	Conservative
Losier-Cool, Rose-Marie	Tracadie	Tracadie-Sheila, N.B.	Liberal
Lovelace Nicholas, Sandra	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations, N.B.	Liberal
Mahovlich, Francis William	Toronto	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Massicotte, Paul J.	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.	Liberal
McCoy, Elaine	Alberta	Calgary, Alta.	Progressive Conservative
Meighen, Michael Arthur	St. Marys	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative
Mercer, Terry M.	Northend Halifax	Caribou River, N.S.	Liberal
Merchant, Pana	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Liberal
Milne, Lorna	Peel County	Brampton, Ont.	Liberal
Mitchell, Grant	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Liberal
Moore, Wilfred P.	Stanhope St./South Shore	Chester, N.S.	Liberal
Munson, Jim	Ottawa/Rideau Canal	Ottawa, Ont.	Liberal
Murray, Lowell, P.C.	Pakenham	Ottawa, Ont.	Progressive Conservative
Nancy Ruth	Cluny	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative
Nolin, Pierre Claude	De Salaberry	Quebec, Que.	Conservative
Oliver, Donald H.	South Shore	Halifax, N.S.	Conservative
Pépin, Lucie	Shawinigan	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Peterson, Robert W.	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Liberal
Phalen, Gerard A.	Nova Scotia	Glace Bay, N.S.	Liberal
Pitfield, Peter Michael, P.C.	Ottawa-Vanier	Ottawa, Ont.	Independent
Poulin, Marie-P.	Nord de l'Ontario/Northern Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Liberal
Poy, Vivienne	Toronto	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Prud'homme, Marcel, P.C.	La Salle	Montreal, Que.	Independent
Ringuette, Pierrette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.	Liberal
Rivest, Jean-Claude	Stadacona	Quebec, Que.	Independent
Robichaud, Fernand, P.C.	New Brunswick	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.	Liberal
Rompkey, William H., P.C.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Liberal
St. Germain, Gerry, P.C.	Langley-Pemberton-Whistler	Maple Ridge, B.C.	Conservative
Segal, Hugh	Kingston-Frontenac-Leeds	Kingston, Ont.	Conservative
Sibbeston, Nick G.	Northwest Territories	Fort Simpson, N.W.T.	Liberal
Smith, David P., P.C.	Cobourg	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Spivak, Mira	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Independent
Stollery, Peter Alan	Bloor and Yonge	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Stratton, Terrance R.	Red River	St. Norbert, Man.	Conservative
Tardif, Claudette	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Liberal
Tkachuk, David	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Conservative
Watt, Charlie	Inkerman	Kuujuuaq, Que.	Liberal
Zimmer, Rod A.A.	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Liberal

**SENATORS OF CANADA**  
**BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY**  
 (December 2, 2008)

**ONTARIO—24**

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Lowell Murray, P.C. . . . .	Pakenham . . . . .	Ottawa
2 Peter Alan Stollery . . . . .	Bloor and Yonge . . . . .	Toronto
3 Peter Michael Pitfield, P.C. . . . .	Ottawa-Vanier . . . . .	Ottawa
4 Jeremiah S. Grafstein . . . . .	Metro Toronto . . . . .	Toronto
5 Anne C. Cools . . . . .	Toronto Centre-York . . . . .	Toronto
6 Colin Kenny . . . . .	Rideau . . . . .	Ottawa
7 Norman K. Atkins . . . . .	Markham . . . . .	Toronto
8 Consiglio Di Nino . . . . .	Ontario . . . . .	Downsview
9 John Trevor Eyton . . . . .	Ontario . . . . .	Caledon
10 Wilbert Joseph Keon . . . . .	Ottawa . . . . .	Ottawa
11 Michael Arthur Meighen . . . . .	St. Marys . . . . .	Toronto
12 Marjory LeBreton, P.C. . . . .	Ontario . . . . .	Manotick
13 Lorna Milne . . . . .	Peel County . . . . .	Brampton
14 Marie-P. Poulin . . . . .	Northern Ontario . . . . .	Ottawa
15 Francis William Mahovlich . . . . .	Toronto . . . . .	Toronto
16 Vivienne Poy . . . . .	Toronto . . . . .	Toronto
17 David P. Smith, P.C. . . . .	Cobourg . . . . .	Toronto
18 Mac Harb . . . . .	Ontario . . . . .	Ottawa
19 Jim Munson . . . . .	Ottawa/Rideau Canal . . . . .	Ottawa
20 Art Eggleton, P.C. . . . .	Ontario . . . . .	Toronto
21 Nancy Ruth . . . . .	Cluny . . . . .	Toronto
22 Hugh Segal . . . . .	Kingston-Frontenac-Leeds . . . . .	Kingston
23 . . . . .	. . . . .	
24 . . . . .	. . . . .	

## SENATORS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

## QUEBEC—24

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Charlie Watt	Inkerman	Kuujuaq
2 Pierre De Bané, P.C.	De la Vallière	Montreal
3 Jean-Claude Rivest	Stadacona	Quebec
4 Marcel Prud'homme, P.C.	La Salle	Montreal
5 W. David Angus	Alma	Montreal
6 Pierre Claude Nolin	De Salaberry	Quebec
7 Lise Bacon	De la Durantaye	Laval
8 Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C.	Bedford	Montreal
9 Lucie Pépin	Shawinigan	Montreal
10 Serge Joyal, P.C.	Kennebec	Montreal
11 Joan Thorne Fraser	De Lorimier	Montreal
12 Jean Lapointe	Saurel	Magog
13 Michel Biron	Milles Isles	Nicolet
14 Raymond Lavigne	Montarville	Verdun
15 Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire
16 Roméo Antonius Dallaire	Gulf	Sainte-Foy
17 Andrée Champagne, P.C.	Grandville	Saint-Hyacinthe
18 Dennis Dawson	Lauzon	Ste-Foy
19 Yoine Goldstein	Rigaud	Montreal
20 Francis Fox, P.C.	Victoria	Montreal
21		
24		
23		
22		

## SENATORS BY PROVINCE-MARITIME DIVISION

## NOVA SCOTIA—10

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Gerald J. Comeau	Nova Scotia	Saulnierville
2 Donald H. Oliver	South Shore	Halifax
3 Wilfred P. Moore	Stanhope St./South Shore	Chester
4 Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth
5 Gerard A. Phalen	Nova Scotia	Glace Bay
6 Terry M. Mercer	Northend Halifax	Caribou River
7 James S. Cowan	Nova Scotia	Halifax
8		
9		
10		

## NEW BRUNSWICK—10

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Eymard Georges Corbin	Grand-Sault	Grand-Sault
2 Noël A. Kinsella, <i>Speaker</i>	Fredericton-York-Sunbury	Fredericton
3 John G. Bryden	New Brunswick	Bayfield
4 Rose-Marie Losier-Cool	Tracadie	Tracadie-Sheila
5 Fernand Robichaud, P.C.	Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent
6 Joseph A. Day	Saint John-Kennebecasis, New Brunswick	Hampton
7 Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston
8 Sandra Lovelace Nicholas	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations
9		
10		

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—4

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Catherine S. Callbeck	Prince Edward Island	Central Bedeque
2 Elizabeth M. Hubley	Prince Edward Island	Kensington
3 Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown
4		



## SENATORS BY PROVINCE-WESTERN DIVISION

**MANITOBA—6**

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Mira Spivak . . . . .	Manitoba . . . . .	Winnipeg
2 Janis G. Johnson . . . . .	Winnipeg-Interlake . . . . .	Gimli
3 Terrance R. Stratton . . . . .	Red River . . . . .	St. Norbert
4 Sharon Carstairs, P.C. . . . .	Manitoba . . . . .	Winnipeg
5 Maria Chaput . . . . .	Manitoba . . . . .	Sainte-Anne
6 Rod A.A. Zimmer . . . . .	Manitoba . . . . .	Winnipeg

**BRITISH COLUMBIA—6**

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Gerry St. Germain, P.C. . . . .	Langley-Pemberton-Whistler . . . . .	Maple Ridge
2 Mobina S.B. Jaffer . . . . .	British Columbia . . . . .	North Vancouver
3 Larry W. Campbell . . . . .	British Columbia . . . . .	Vancouver
4 . . . . .	. . . . .	
5 . . . . .	. . . . .	
6 . . . . .	. . . . .	

**SASKATCHEWAN—6**

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 A. Raynell Andreychuk . . . . .	Saskatchewan . . . . .	Regina
2 David Tkachuk . . . . .	Saskatchewan . . . . .	Saskatoon
3 Pana Merchant . . . . .	Saskatchewan . . . . .	Regina
4 Robert W. Peterson . . . . .	Saskatchewan . . . . .	Regina
5 Lillian Eva Dyck . . . . .	Saskatchewan . . . . .	Saskatoon
6 . . . . .	. . . . .	

**ALBERTA—6**

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Joyce Fairbairn, P.C. . . . .	Lethbridge . . . . .	Lethbridge
2 Tommy Banks . . . . .	Alberta . . . . .	Edmonton
3 Claudette Tardif . . . . .	Alberta . . . . .	Edmonton
4 Grant Mitchell . . . . .	Alberta . . . . .	Edmonton
5 Elaine McCoy . . . . .	Alberta . . . . .	Calgary
6 Bert Brown . . . . .	Alberta . . . . .	Kathryn

## SENATORS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

### NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Ethel Cochrane . . . . .	Newfoundland and Labrador . . . . .	Port-au-Port
2 William H. Rompkey, P.C. . . . .	Newfoundland and Labrador . . . . .	St. John's
3 Joan Cook . . . . .	Newfoundland and Labrador . . . . .	St. John's
4 George Furey . . . . .	Newfoundland and Labrador . . . . .	St. John's
5 George S. Baker, P.C. . . . .	Newfoundland and Labrador . . . . .	Gander
6 . . . . .		

### NORTHWEST TERRITORIES—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Nick G. Sibbeston . . . . .	Northwest Territories . . . . .	Fort Simpson

### NUNAVUT—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 Willie Adams . . . . .	Nunavut . . . . .	Rankin Inlet

### YUKON—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
THE HONOURABLE		
1 . . . . .		

# ALPHABETICAL LIST OF STANDING, SPECIAL AND JOINT COMMITTEES

(As of December 2, 2008)

\*Ex Officio Member

## INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

**Chair: Honourable Senator Furey**

**Deputy Chair: Honourable Senator Stratton**

### Honourable Senators:

Comeau,	Furey,	* LeBreton, P.C. (or Comeau),	Prud'homme, P.C.,
Cook,	Goldstein,	Massicotte,	Robichaud, P.C.,
* Cowan (or Tardif),	Jaffer,	Nancy Ruth,	Stollery,
Downe,	Kinsella,	Phalen,	Stratton.

### *Original Members as nominated by the Committee of Selection*

*Comeau, Cook, \*Cowan (or Tardif), Downe, Furey, Goldstein, Jaffer, Kinsella, \*LeBreton, P.C. (or Comeau), Massicotte, Nancy Ruth, Phalen, Prud'homme, P.C., Robichaud, P.C., Stollery, Stratton.*

## SELECTION

**Chair: Honourable Senator Tkachuk**

**Deputy Chair: Honourable Senator Munson**

### Honourable Senators:

Brown,	Di Nino,	Hervieux-Payette, P.C.	Robichaud, P.C.,
Cochrane,	Fairbairn, P.C.,	* LeBreton, P.C. (or Comeau),	Tkachuk.
* Cowan, (or Tardif),	Fraser	Munson,	

### *Original Members agreed to by Motion of the Senate*

*Brown, Carstairs, P.C., Cochrane, \*Cowan (or Tardif), Di Nino, Fairbairn, P.C., Hervieux-Payette, P.C., \*LeBreton, P.C. (or Comeau), Munson, Robichaud, P.C., Tkachuk.*

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