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The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,
Speaker

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

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, October 31, 2018

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Hon. Rose-May Poirier: Honourable senators, as we are nearing the end of October and this being the Women's History Month in Canada, I thought it would be an appropriate occasion to share with you a story from the field of medical research of a prominent woman from New Brunswick.

Born in Jackson, New Brunswick in 1909, Gladys Enid Johnson MacLeod was educated at Dalhousie University and graduated as a medical doctor in 1937. She was encouraged to pursue her studies and went on to become an anesthetist. Together with her mentor Harold Griffith, they pioneered the use of a substance called curare, a poison extract from the South African vine as a muscle relaxant which was first used in the support of an appendectomy operation in 1942.

After her marriage to lawyer Innis Gordon MacLeod in 1942, she practised in Sydney, Nova Scotia, for six years and went on to join the Dalhousie University Faculty of Medicine in 1960. She retired in 1978 an emeritus professor and retained her honorary ranks at the university until her death in 2001.

Her legacy also includes the yearly Enid Johnson MacLeod Award given by the Federation of Medical Women in Canada, whereas it recognizes any category of FMWC members involved in the promotion of women's health, research and/or women's health education.

Like the theme for this year's Women's History Month in Canada, Make an Impact, Dr. Enid Johnson MacLeod's impact is still felt today. For all of us who ever had to undergo an operation, I'm sure we are grateful for her research, discovery, and pioneer work in the medical profession.

Honourable senators, as we near the end of the Women's History Month in Canada, where we recognize different women pioneers in various fields, where through their dedication, tenacity and determination they not only changed their respective fields but changed our society for future generations. I salute not only the women who changed our society like Dr. Enid Johnson MacLeod, but to all women who might not get the bigger recognition — those who make and made a difference in their province and their community.

Thank you, senators.

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Dr. Richard Stanwick. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Bovey.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

CANADIAN CONSERVATION INSTITUTE

Hon. Patricia Bovey: Honourable senators, we have a collective responsibility for a significant part of Canada's public trust, art, furniture, and sculptures owned by, loaned to and on view in the Senate. Obviously of interest to me, this trust includes Speakers' portraits primarily by Canadian artists, though few by women, portraits of French and English royalty, some Canadian landscapes and a growing number of Indigenous and Inuit two- and three-dimensional works.

When Centre Block closes for earthquake upgrades, asbestos removal and other renovations, the collection will be moved, some to the new Senate building, some into storage and some will undergo conservation.

Senators Joyal, Eaton, the curators and myself recently visited the Canadian Conservation Institute, and before Thanksgiving I visited the new storage building. I wanted assurance it meets the museological standards for the preservation of these works. I am pleased to report the new facility does meet the primary standards.

The temperature is set at 20 degrees Celsius, with a maximum short-term fluctuation of plus/minus 2 degrees. Relative humidity will remain between 45 and 55 per cent, with a short-term fluctuation of plus/minus 5 per cent, settings critically important for the inherent safety of the works. The maximum light level is 20 lux and the UV content is within standard. A motion sensor will turn the lights off when the space is vacant, an excellent provision. A wet sprinkler fire suppressant system is in the bulk. I want to know what the water pressure will be on activation; if too strong, the canvas structure of the works could be damaged. I am pleased staff agreed to install flood monitors to warn of water from the pipes above or natural disasters like the recent tornadoes.

Dust particulates in the air are another important factor. I await those readings and would like to receive them regularly, as this storage area is in a building which receives deliveries of all sorts.

Access doors are large enough to accommodate the works, they're secure with card entry only. I have been assured the lift mechanisms of the forklift are smooth, no jarring on stopping, important when handling heritage furniture and large works of art. The new paintings screens are sufficient for the works in question.

With a clear collections policy and an updated collections database, now noting the artist, sitter, location and all details of the works, the key aspects in managing public collections have been addressed. I hope we will develop creative ways to make this important Canadian public trust increasingly accessible. It is one we all should be proud of. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

CHILDREN'S VISION HEALTH MONTH

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, as Children's Vision Health Month draws to a close, this is a timely opportunity to consider the gift of vision and the importance of working towards improving blindness prevention and eye care for all Canadians, especially our young people.

To say that vision health is important is to state the obvious. In fact, it is to understate it. A public opinion survey has indicated that vision loss is the disability most feared by Canadians, a fear surely increased when it comes to our children. However, its impact goes beyond the personal. Vision problems in children, particularly if untreated, can quickly lead to learning difficulties.

• (1410)

Classroom learning is mostly visual. Just think back to your own time in school. How much time did you spend studying a book or looking at the blackboard? A child who cannot see well cannot learn well, and that can have repercussions throughout their lives, both for them and for society as a whole.

This problem first came to my attention during the debate in the Senate over the unregulated sales of cosmetic contact lenses. Such sales, as well as the online sales of prescription eyewear and contacts, seemed to arise from the attitude that such devices were merely harmless consumer products to be purchased in the cheapest and most convenient manner possible, rather than medical devices that should be treated accordingly. Although regulatory improvements have been made, such an attitude persists among some members of the public, unaware of the risks that such a purchase may entail. I only mention this because Halloween is tonight, and with it the potentially dangerous use of unregulated cosmetic contact lenses by young people as part of their costumes.

Children's Vision Health Month is a time to reflect both upon the personal and the policy aspects of this important topic. Proper vision care for children pays dividends later on, both for those children and for the society to which they will contribute. We must bear this in mind and carry the lessons of Children's Vision Health Month throughout the year. Thank you, colleagues.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[Senator Bovey]

[Translation]

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Hon. Rosa Galvez: Colleagues, it is my pleasure to talk to you about the latest IPCC special report entitled *Global Warming of 1.5°C*.

[English]

The data is clear: As a direct result of climate change, we can say with confidence that the earth is already facing significant disruptions to ecosystems, infrastructure, food supply, water security, public safety and health, and creating economic havoc.

Canada is at risk. The Arctic is warming at twice the rate of the globe due to polar amplification. This puts people in Northern communities at risk. For example, degrading permafrost impacts infrastructure, and the coastline is exposed to erosion.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada estimates the cost of insurance claims related to natural disasters — floods, forest fires and other extreme weather events — at approximately \$1 billion annually, an amount that has more than doubled from previous decades.

[Translation]

On Tuesday, October 9, The Hague Court of Appeal upheld a ruling ordering the Dutch government to accelerate the country's greenhouse gas emissions cuts. The court has ordered the Netherlands to step up its fight against climate change. Moreover, in March 2017, a UN report documented 894 ongoing litigations around the world. The number of climate change cases is rising worldwide.

[English]

Last week, New York's Attorney General filed a suit against ExxonMobil for fraudulently using an internal carbon price and downplaying the expected risks of climate change to its business. Exxon may have deliberately lowballed the cost of carbon for 14 Canadian oil operations — run by its subsidiary, Imperial Oil — by \$30 billion.

Dear senators, policy debate and decisions must recognize that there is a cost to doing little or nothing to curb emissions. We must aim to achieve net-zero emissions by investing in or providing incentives for energy efficiency and low-carbon technology. With intergovernmental and international cooperation, we can create policy that encourages mitigation, adaptation and climate resilience. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

SENATE COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL

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

Honourable senators, I rise today to congratulate all of the Senate 150 Medal recipients that were recognized in our esteemed chamber on this day, as well as in November 2017, at the start of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the first sitting of the Senate.

In our aim to recognize Canada's unsung heroes, I had the honour of nominating five associations and three outstanding individuals of the national Korean-Canadian community, a community that is an important constituency to me on a deeply personal level, and a community that has contributed so much to every region of our nation.

Honourable senators, let me take you across a better part of Canada, starting from the West, to meet some of the unsung heroes of the community — first to the spectacular Northwest Territories and then to beautiful British Columbia.

Sandy Lee, first elected in 1999 to the Northwest Territories legislature, served as Minister of Health and Social Services, Status of Women, Seniors, and Persons with Disabilities from 2007 to 2011. She is the first Korean-Canadian woman to be elected to office in Canadian history and the first woman elected in Yellowknife to serve in cabinet in N.W.T. history.

The Korean Senior Citizens Society of Greater Vancouver, established in 1976 by 100 Korean immigrants, has served and promoted strong social welfare and development for seniors for over 30 years. Mrs. Kum Ran Choi, the current serving president and a strong female role model of the community, accepted the medal on behalf of the society.

Next to friendly Manitoba. The Korean Society of Manitoba, founded in 1967, has built a strong ethnocultural community that has become an integral group within the fabric of Manitoba's multicultural society. In 2016, the society worked with the City of Winnipeg to rename Amherst Park to Kapyong Park to honour those of the Second Battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry who served in the historic Battle of Kapyong during the Korean War. Grand Master Kyu Hyon Cho, the current president, accepted the medal on behalf of the society.

[*Translation*]

Now let's talk about Quebec.

The Korean Language School of Greater Montreal was founded in 1978 by Dr. Young Sup Chung, O.C., and his wife, Dr. In Hee Chung. The school teaches Korean language, culture and history and works closely with the broader Montreal community to promote greater intercultural understanding.

[*English*]

Now to Ontario, home to the largest Korean-Canadian community. The Canada-Korea Society, founded in Ottawa in 1984, has been instrumental in promoting and deepening bilateral friendship, cooperation and better understanding between Canada and Korea.

Through the long-standing leadership of President Young-Hae Lee and the dedicated board of directors, the society has built a strong network of active members, key stakeholders and allies with the diplomatic corps.

Honourable senators, if I may say a few words in my first language.

[*Editor's Note: Senator Martin spoke in Korean.*]

Thank you for being such models of servant leadership. Your tireless dedication to your community, to Canada and to Korea inspires me and all of us. Canada is better because of you. Thank you. *Kamsahamnida*.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

STUDY ON ISSUES AND CONCERNS PERTAINING TO CYBER SECURITY AND CYBER FRAUD

TWENTY-FIFTH REPORT OF BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE DEPOSITED WITH CLERK DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Douglas Black: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that pursuant to the orders adopted by the Senate on October 17, 2017, and October 25, 2018, the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce deposited with the Clerk of the Senate on October 29, 2018, its twenty-fifth report entitled *Cyber assault: It should keep you up at night* and I move that the report be placed on the orders of the day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Black (*Alberta*), report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION

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

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 6, 2018, at 2 p.m.

• (1420)

[Translation]

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AFFECT QUESTION PERIOD
ON NOVEMBER 6, 2018

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

That, in order to allow the Senate to receive a Minister of the Crown during Question Period as authorized by the Senate on December 10, 2015, and notwithstanding rule 4-7, when the Senate sits on Tuesday, November 6, 2018, Question Period shall begin at 3:30 p.m., with any proceedings then before the Senate being interrupted until the end of Question Period, which shall last a maximum of 40 minutes;

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

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

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

ELECTIONS MODERNIZATION BILL

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker: informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-76, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments.

(Bill read first time.)

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

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-6(1)(f), I move that the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading later this day.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Harder, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading later this day.)

L'ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

AFRICA MISSION (SENEGAL–MADAGASCAR) OF
THE YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS PROGRAM,
MARCH 5-10, 2018—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Delegation of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF) respecting the Africa Mission (Senegal–Madagascar) of the Young Parliamentarians Program of the APF, held in Dakar, Senegal, and Antananarivo, Madagascar, from March 5 to 10, 2018.

MEETING OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE OF THE APF,
MARCH 19-21, 2018—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Delegation of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF) respecting its participation at the meeting of the Political Committee of the APF, held in Yerevan, Armenia, from March 19 to 21, 2018.

MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
OF THE APF, MARCH 21-23, 2018

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Delegation of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF) respecting its participation at the meeting of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee of the APF, held in Brussels, Belgium, from March 21 to 23, 2018.

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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

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

That the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources have the power to meet at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 6, 2018, even though the Senate may then be sitting, and that rule 12-18(1) be suspended in relation thereto.

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO TEMPORARILY RENAME THE GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE CENTRE

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

That the Senate, taking note:

1. that both Houses of Parliament have agreed to relocate temporarily their meeting chambers from the Centre Block, in order to allow a complete renovation of the building;
2. that these renovations are expected to last until 2028; and
3. that it is planned for both houses to return simultaneously to the Centre Block;

express its desire that the government:

1. rename the Government Conference Centre as “The Senate of Canada Building” during the period that the Senate Chamber is located there; and
2. consult with the Senate as to appropriate signage for that building during that period.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STATISTICS CANADA—PRIVACY COMMISSIONER—PILOT PROJECT

Hon. Larry W. Smith (Leader of the Opposition): Thank you, Your Honour. My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. It was recently revealed Statistics Canada sought the personal financial information of Canadians without their prior knowledge or consent. Statistics Canada’s proposed a personal information bank that would require nine of Canada’s largest banks and credit card companies to provide all banking transactions of 500,000 Canadians, including utility and mortgage payments, ATM withdrawals and account balances — again, all without consent of these Canadians.

In the other place, the Prime Minister defended this plan. My question for Senator Harder is: Will the government reconsider its position and ensure that Statistics Canada does not proceed with this massive intrusion into the privacy of Canadians?

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the honourable senator for his question. Let me assure him and all senators and those who are tuned in to our debate that the work done by Statistics Canada referenced in the question is an important part of the agency’s modelling and their ability to provide the policy basis for governments to monitor household income and household expenditures.

All senators will know that technology and the modern lifestyle of Canadian consumers make the old patterns of collecting data not as reliable. It is important for governments to have reliable data with respect to household expenses and incomes.

Having said that, it is also important to protect the data. The concerns with respect to privacy are significant and real. That is why this Parliament modified the Statistics Canada Act to ensure the arm’s length nature and the appropriate oversight of Statistics Canada. I want to assure him and all senators the actions taken by Statistics Canada are in full compliance with that act, as well as the Privacy Act. The Chief Statistician of Canada is working with the Privacy Commissioner to ensure full and adequate compliance with that act so that all Canadians can be assured their privacy is being protected while the data, which is important for public administration, is appropriately collected, gathered and used in a fashion that does not allow individual files to be identified.

Senator Smith: Thank you, Your Honour, and thank you, leader. One of the sub-questions that would probably come out of this is: Is this the first tranche of 500,000 people? How many more 500,000 people will be asked? Where does this go? It would be nice to have that type of information.

In March of this year, documents revealed through Access to Information showed 20 separate incidents of information and privacy breaches at StatsCan in 2016, including one that involved almost 600 First Nations residents.

In its cybersecurity report released on Monday, the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce noted the Privacy Act does not require federal departments and agencies to report privacy breaches to the Privacy Commissioner. I need your help on this one, Senator Harder. Could you make inquiries and let us know the government's response to our Banking Committee's recommendation that the federal government requires departments and agencies to report privacy breaches to the officer of the Privacy Commissioner?

Senator Harder: I would indeed be happy to provide such information as the senator is requesting. I would also suggest it might be appropriate for the Banking Committee to hear from the Chief Statistician directly to be assured that the actions taken by the statistics organization are in compliance with the expectations of the bill this house passed.

I would also note the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, which we authorized in the last budget, is up and running as of earlier this month. It too is an important contribution to cybersecurity for all sectors, including, of course, government agencies.

Hon. David M. Wells: My question is also for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. It is a follow-up to Senator Smith's question.

• (1430)

Under this plan, Senator Harder, the government will gain access to account balances, transfers between family members, ATM withdrawals, bill payments and more. Not just what you spend with your personal money but what you are buying, all attached to your name. Ontario's former Privacy Commissioner was shocked — I was shocked — when she heard about the plan saying, "the ability for a government agency to build a massive database of personal banking information raises serious privacy concerns." Senator Harder, the Prime Minister is defending this, saying since Statistics Canada has consulted the Privacy Commissioner everything is okay. The Privacy Commissioner's office is, in fact, saying they are expressing concerns.

As a former Prime Minister — and my colleagues may remember which one — once said, "There's no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation." I, and many Canadians, believe the state has no place monitoring the day-to-day financial lives of Canadians.

Do you, Senator Harder, believe the government should be permitted to take such personal information?

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): Again, colleagues, I want to assure all senators that Statistics Canada has, for years, been collecting data on household incomes. On how households spend their money so the data can form, in an anonymous way, important information for the economic advancement of the country. It is important for Canadians to be assured that data being collected by Statistics

Canada is not revealed in an identifiable way with respect to the individual, but in an aggregate form so it forms the basis of a better understanding of economic activity.

The actions taken by Statistics Canada are a pilot project as a result of the changing profile of economic activity and to ensure collected data is reliable for public policy purposes. This project is one that, as I said earlier, is compliant with the Statistics Act and with the Privacy Act. If there are concerns, I want to assure all senators that Statistics Canada is happy to address those concerns. I will be happy to report the concerns, evidenced by the questions that are asked, to the attention of the Statistics Canada officers.

Senator Wells: Thank you, Senator Harder. Looking at 500,000 Canadians' spending habits, I think that Statistics Canada, through other government agencies like CRA and the HST program, has access to all purchases that Canadians make that are subject to HST. That's a far greater sample size that's not identified with an individual Canadian's spending.

Senator Harder, will the 500,000 Canadians in this pilot project be notified they are one of the lucky 500,000 being monitored by the government?

Senator Harder: Again, I will take that question under advisement. I want to again assure all senators that the pilot project's intent is to ensure the data that Statistics Canada collects is robust and is reliable for public policy purposes.

HEALTH

VANESSA'S LAW

Hon. Judith G. Seidman: My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. It concerns the Protecting Canadians from Unsafe Drugs Act, also known as Vanessa's Law, which passed under the previous Conservative government in 2014.

In July, a Federal Court judge ruled that Health Canada must disclose pharmaceutical clinical trial data to a researcher seeking its release. Information the department tried to withhold.

The ruling found that Health Canada had exercised its power in a manner that contradicts the purpose of Vanessa's Law, which is to improve clinical trial transparency.

Would the government leader please explain why Health Canada chooses to fight the release of this information in court, thereby failing to live up to the spirit and intent of Vanessa's Law? Could the government leader also please confirm that Health Canada has complied with the court order?

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the honourable senator for her question. I will make inquiries and report to the honourable senators.

Senator Seidman: Thank you for that. Also, four years have passed since Vanessa's Law received Royal Assent in November 2014. Health Canada has yet to put its regulations fully in place.

Health Canada has published a notice which states, and I quote: "Canadians will have the opportunity to provide comments on the Recall of Therapeutic Products during the Canada Gazette, Part I public comment period, which is anticipated to take place in spring 2019 and last 75 days."

Would the government leader please tell us if this means that regulations for Vanessa's Law will not fully come into effect by the end of this year, as expected?

Senator Harder: Again, I'll make inquiries and would be happy to report.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

CHINA—HUMAN RIGHTS

Hon. Thanh Hai Ngo: My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Over recent months, several reports about systematic suppression of Chinese Uighurs and other Muslim minorities at the hands of the Chinese communist party in Xinjiang province has come to light. China has imprisoned up to 1 million Uyghurs and Kazakhs in detention and indoctrination camps where they suffer physical and psychological torture.

They are reportedly being asked to denounce their Muslim faith, pledge alliance to the Chinese Communist Party, coerced into learning the Chinese language, forced to chant "long live President Xi", forced to memorize the Chinese National Anthem, remove their headscarf, trim their beards and engage in self-criticism for being who they are. What we are seeing is in Xinjiang province is an intentional systematic oppression of a target religious minority. This is nothing short of cultural genocide.

The Government of Canada has only lightly raised this concern with China in its statement on the occasion of International Religious Freedom Day last Saturday. However, Minister Freeland is refusing to publicly criticize China.

Senator Harder, if the government is so committed to promoting and protecting religious freedom, why is it seeking to deepen its ties with China over trade deals? Will the minister take steps to sanction the party secretary of the province for his gross human rights violations?

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the honourable senator for his question and for his appropriate attention to issues of human rights around the world. In this case specifically, the People's Republic of China.

The Government of Canada has, for many administrations, been vigilant in bringing to the attention of the leadership of China concerns with regard to human rights. That has not prevented the Government of Canada from seeking deeper and closer relations across a wide range of areas of co-operation, including economic and trade relations. That continues to be the position of the Government of Canada, in large measure endorsed by the activities of many administrations.

With regard to the specific issues raised in the question, as the senator himself acknowledges, Minister Freeland has spoken about this publicly. I can assure you that the Government of Canada has made its views known at the appropriate senior levels of the administration, as one would expect.

Senator Ngo: Senator Harder, this large-scale indoctrination against Chinese Muslim minorities has also reached the Uyghur community in Canada. Many are concerned about their refugee status claim in Canada and about being deported back to China. We heard reports about the Chinese intrusion demanding the Uyghur diaspora in Canada hand over personal information and threaten their families back home if they do not.

Germany has stopped deporting Uyghur to China because of the serious crackdown in Xinjiang. Can you tell us if Canada will adopt a similar policy?

Senator Harder: The honourable senator will know the refugee determination system in Canada has a very high standard of review of claims and even, should a claimant not be successful, before a deportation there are other hearings and grounds for which deportation can be suspended. Those remain actively in place, are used on a regular basis and there is no need for a specific reference, as the honourable senator suggests.

• (1440)

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Diane Bellemare (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 4-13(3), I would like to inform the Senate that as we proceed with Government Business, the Senate will address the items in the following order: Motion no. 222, followed by second reading of Bill C-76, followed by all remaining items in the order that they appear on the Order Paper.

[English]

THE SENATE

MOTION TO AFFECT WEDNESDAY SITTINGS UNTIL THE END OF 2018 ADOPTED

Hon. Diane Bellemare (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of October 30, 2018, moved:

That, until the end of 2018, when the Senate sits on a Wednesday:

1. the provisions of the order of February 4, 2016, relating to the adjournment or suspension of the sitting at 4 p.m., only take effect at the later of 4 p.m., the end of Question Period, or the end of Government Business;
2. notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this order, the sitting not continue beyond the time otherwise provided in the Rules; and
3. without affecting any authority separately granted to a committee to meet while the Senate is sitting, if the Senate sits past 4 p.m. pursuant to this order, committees scheduled to meet be authorized to do so for the purpose of considering Government Business, even if the Senate is then sitting, with the application of rule 12-18(1) being suspended in relation thereto.

She said: Honourable senators, this motion is for the government to be able to conduct government business, the Senate to do this part of their work on Wednesday, and that the Senate be able to sit if they are doing government business. However, my intention was, according to the debate I had with the chairs of two committees today, since this motion appears now and that some work was forced to be done in committee today, with leave of the Senate, to ask after we adopt this motion that the Banking Committee and the Social Affairs Committee be allowed to sit today exceptionally even though the Senate is sitting.

Hon. Percy E. Downe: I'm wondering, Senator Bellemare, if you could give us an elaboration on section 3 that you just spoke about. Only the committees dealing with government business will be allowed to sit, unless there is an exception, until the end of December 2018. Is there an excessive amount of government legislation? There doesn't appear to be. Other years we've been able to accommodate committees, particularly with private members' bills and other bills would be excluded, in most cases, if this was allowed to pass.

Senator Bellemare: Honourable senator, I would just underline that the schedule of the study of the government bills is quite heavy at this time of year, and traditionally we have more hours in the last part of the fall. We are starting now so that we'll be able to proceed with government business and other business in the time we usually do. Otherwise, we'll have to extend the number of days. This will enable us, whenever it's possible, to do it on our regular sitting days.

Senator Downe: I don't object to additional hours, but I do have a concern about committees not being able to meet on bills other than government legislation unless we get approval from here.

Many senators have bills that they have been advocating for some time. All that will be slowed down because of this provision.

I haven't seen this in the past in November or October — this is early — and it seems to be a dramatic change to the rules just to accommodate the government, not to accommodate other senators. It has been my experience that there is a rush every year, but I'm not familiar with any situation where the government didn't achieve most of its objectives by the end of every session. This seems to be a punishment to other senators who have priorities other than government legislation. But if it's the will of the Senate to agree to it, so be it.

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

Hon. Donald Neil Plett: Would Senator Bellemare take another question?

Senator Bellemare: I guess so.

Senator Plett: I'm on your side of this, Senator Bellemare. I'll try to phrase my question in such a way that you'll be happy.

Senator Downe referred to "punishment" to some senators, and he said that the committee chairs would have to seek the approval of this chamber. I don't think that is deviating from the rules we have at present. Even at present, when committees want to meet, isn't it correct, Senator Bellemare, that they have to serve a notice of motion and then bring a motion to the chamber in order to sit? Are you not, Senator Bellemare, simply suggesting that obtaining approval may be a little more difficult from now until Christmas time?

Senator Bellemare: Yes, indeed, senator.

Senator Downe: I'm sorry, Senator Bellemare and Senator Plett. I didn't understand that, because your motion clearly says that if the Senate is sitting past 4 p.m., committees scheduled to sit cannot sit unless they are dealing with government legislation. That's a change and that's a punishment.

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

Hon. Senators: Question.

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

Some Hon. Senators: Agreed.

An Hon. Senator: On division.

(Motion agreed to, on division.)

[Translation]

ELECTIONS MODERNIZATION BILL

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Dennis Dawson moved second reading of Bill C-76, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments.

He said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-76, the Elections Modernization Act.

Those of us who have been around for a while know that this is not my first time sponsoring a bill aimed at modernizing the Canada Elections Act. Our new colleagues may be interested to know that I have already sponsored three Senate public bills intended to amend the Canada Elections Act. I see these previous sponsoring experiences as groundwork. Today, I am proud to support Bill C-76.

This bill is a generational overhaul of the Canada Elections Act that will bring Canadian federal elections into the modern age. The bill has four central themes or objectives: number one, to make the electoral process more transparent for Canadians; number two, to make the electoral process accessible to more Canadians; number three, to modernize the administration of Canadian federal elections; and number four, to make the electoral process more secure. Allow me to expand on each of these themes.

[English]

I will start with transparency. As we know, in 2007, Parliament passed legislation to put in place fixed election dates. There have been some unintended consequences from this change in Canadian election processes and Bill C-76 seeks to address them. Bill C-76 will make the electoral process more transparent to Canadians, both during the election period and after the writ has been dropped, and in the months leading to the election, the pre-writ time in case of fixed date elections.

Currently, political parties and third parties can spend large sums of money with no regulatory oversight up until the drop of the writ. The bill before us creates a new pre-election period that imposes requirements on registered parties, electoral district associations, future candidates as well as third parties.

By “third party,” I mean people or groups other than candidates’ registered political parties or electoral district associations. This pre-election period will start on June 30 in an election year, assuming that there will be an election on the third Monday of October.

The date of June 30 for the start of the pre-election period would continue until the drop of the writ, which would be expected to be normally during the summer to allow for an October election. In the case of by-elections and elections not occurring on fixed dates, these pre-election periods would simply not apply.

What does this pre-election period mean for political parties, districts, candidates and third parties? Political parties will have spending limits on partisan advertising during this pre-election period. Currently, political parties are subject to spending limits only during the election period.

• (1450)

So the bill limits spending on partisan advertising outside of the election period.

When it comes to third parties, the bill imposes new spending limits during the pre-election period. As well, during the election period, third parties will find a wide array of activities subject to spending limits. Third parties will be required to register with Elections Canada during the pre-election period if they spend more than \$500 on partisan election advertising, partisan activities and election surveys. They would also need to report all contributions received for these purposes.

The bill also requires third parties to operate a Canadian bank account, similar to political parties that have the same obligation.

When it comes to advertising, third parties will have to provide clear disclosure that election-related messages are being paid for by a third party during both the election and pre-election periods, similar to the requirements of political parties.

The bill also amends the Canada Elections Act regarding the length of the election period. The election period will now be limited to a maximum of 50 days. This will avoid long, drawn-out election campaigns that, theoretically, benefit the party in power, since the wide discretion of the Prime Minister to set the length of the election could afford him or her the opportunity to manipulate circumstances in their party’s favour. As some of you might remember, the federal election in 2015, which was the longest in Canadian history, lasted 78 days.

The bill also addresses concerns about the role of money in politics, generally, and in elections, specifically. I firmly believe that elections should be a fair contest of ideas and of which party has the policy ideas that inspire and instill confidence in Canadians, and not a contest of which party has the deepest pockets.

This bill will also address the process under which political parties are entitled to reimbursement for certain expenses they incur during an election. Bill C-76 will eliminate the pro-rated increase for spending limits during the writ period that is currently in place. This means that for every day an election period went on beyond 37 days, political parties saw the limit of their spending increase by one/thirty-seventh. But in the 2015 election, which I mentioned was 78 days, it meant that political parties could spend up to \$55 million. That is a dramatic increase when you look at the limit of \$18 million for 2006 and \$20 million for 2011. To be clear, no party ever spent up to the limit in 2015.

However, because of the reimbursement process, it saw taxpayers, through Elections Canada, paying a very hefty bill for their federal election. Reimbursements for a 78-day election campaign in 2015 cost taxpayers \$102 million, while the 2011 campaign cost only \$61 million.

Honourable senators, the elimination of the pro-rated increase will save money, but, more importantly, it will assure Canadians that political financing is fair and transparent, and will help address concerns that the parties with significant means are not overwhelming the debate.

The bill also affects third party spending during the writ periods. In 2015, third parties had a spending limit of \$211,000 for the election period, and not all of their activities were subject to spending limits. Only 19 of 116 registered parties spent over \$100,000, indicating that the spending limit did not result in greater fairness; rather, it benefited a few actors with deep pockets.

This bill will bring all partisan activities conducted by third parties under spending limits. This will also include expenses incurred by third parties for rallies, phone campaigns and door-to-door advertising.

To match this wider array of activities, spending limits have been increased to \$500,000 for the election period to a limit of \$4,000 per electoral district. The limits for pre-election periods are larger: \$1 million in total, with no more than \$10,000 per electoral district. This increase for the pre-election period is recognition that it could be twice as long as the actual election period.

Expenses incurred by third parties on issue advertising will not be counted against these limits during the pre-election period, which should assure honourable colleagues who are concerned about the freedom of expression.

In addition to clearer spending limits for the pre-election and election periods, the bill achieves greater transparency through improved reporting mechanisms. Besides registering with Elections Canada after spending \$500 — that is, activities prescribed in the act during the pre-election period or the election period — third parties incurring expenses greater than \$10,000 on regulated activities or accepting more than \$10,000-worth of contributions would have to report these contributions and expenses to Elections Canada on very precise dates: upon registration; on September 15; three weeks prior to election day; and one week before the election day.

[*Translation*]

The next key theme of the bill is to make the right to vote more accessible to more Canadians. That involves changing the rules for four large groups of Canadians who may find it difficult to exercise their right to vote. These are voters with disabilities, voters who have difficulty producing proof of identity, voters living abroad and voters in the Canadian Armed Forces.

The bill does away with the concept of “level access” that exists in the current act and instead requires the premises to be accessible. This will ensure that the significant progress made by Elections Canada to enhance the accessibility of polling stations

will now be enshrined in the act. Voters with disabilities who need help voting will now be able to seek the assistance of the person of their choice rather than being forced to choose a friend or family member.

The bill will also increase the Chief Electoral Officer’s ability to authorize mobile polling stations in isolated or remote areas. The Chief Electoral Officer will have the power to explore voting technologies that could help more voters with disabilities to vote independently, without assistance from another person, and to improve their voting experience. Giving people with disabilities the ability to vote independently would better protect the secrecy of the vote and would have a positive effect on their sense of dignity.

The bill makes voting easier for those individuals who may have difficulty providing appropriate identification. It reinstates two procedures at the polling station that were eliminated by the previous government. The voter information card, which is sent to all voters registered with Elections Canada, will again be accepted as proof of the voter’s address when the voter also produces another piece of ID. The practice of vouching to confirm the voter’s identity and residence will be restored.

Appropriate measures are in place to guarantee the integrity of the voter information card and the vouching procedure to reassure Canadians that the integrity of the voting process is safeguarded. The voter information card is a valuable tool for students who live far from their parents and their electoral ridings, and also for Indigenous voters.

Lastly, a special vouching procedure will be provided for seniors living in a long-term care institution. An employee of the institution will be authorized to vouch for one or more voters residing in the institution as long as the employee is a voter residing in an electoral district near the institution.

The bill also reintroduces the right to vote for Canadians who have resided outside Canada for more than five years. Canadians affected by this change will be required to vote in the electoral district associated with their last place of ordinary residence in Canada.

The bill introduces several reforms that will improve the electoral process for Canadian Armed Forces electors. Many of these reforms are long overdue and are in response to a special report on the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer. Less than 50 per cent of the Canadian Armed Forces members who were eligible to vote asked a service polling station for a special ballot during the last election. This problem must be solved. At this time, the only way for Canadian Armed Forces members to change their address for electoral purposes is to complete a form called a “Statement of Ordinary Residence.” In effect, Canadian Armed Forces electors cannot change their address during an election period. This process was designed in 1950 and has not been updated since the National Register of Electors was created, which eliminated the need for going door to door to register voters. It is imperative that this be fixed. The simplest way to solve the problems created by this requirement is to completely eliminate the “Statement of Ordinary Residence.” Electors in the Canadian Armed Forces will be able to use the same mechanism all other Canadians use to update their address in the National Register of Electors.

• (1500)

The bill also creates a new requirement for the Canadian Forces and Elections Canada to work together to make voting easier for hundreds of civilians outside Canada, such as teachers, RCMP and foreign service officers, support staff or military family members living abroad. The Minister of Defence will have the option of designating liaison officers who will be in charge of coordinating interactions between Elections Canada and Canadian Armed Forces commanding officers during the election period.

These changes will help maintain the security and integrity of the Canadian electoral system, and we hope that they will improve the voting experience for the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces and ensure that their voices are heard next October.

Lastly, the bill makes the electoral process more accessible for two other groups: candidates and young Canadians. The bill includes new reimbursements of expenses to support candidates with families and candidates who have a disability or are caring for someone with a disability. The bill will make it easier for candidates to manage their budget as they take part in an election.

Here again, the changes were based on the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations. We hope he will be able to come to the Senate to talk to us about his proposal. He identified a number of administrative barriers that several candidates have had to overcome and that most likely deterred many others from participating.

The bill will also introduce a pre-registration process for young Canadians. This does not lower the voting age. It creates a separate register of electors just for young people called the Register of Future Electors. About 1.5 million Canadians aged 14 to 17 will be able to pre-register with Elections Canada. When they turn 18, they will be transferred from one register to the other. Inclusion in the register of future electors is entirely optional. The register will be held securely within Elections Canada's walls and behind its firewalls. The Register of Future Electors will never be shared with political entities, such as parties. It is a good way to introduce young people to the electoral process.

The third theme I want to talk about is the modernization of the administration of elections in Canada. One of the biggest changes is that the Chief Electoral Officer will have more discretionary power. Bill C-76 makes the act less prescriptive. The CEO is a model of good management, and the bill eliminates a number of obstacles that were making it hard for the CEO to run safe and effective elections. For example, the bill addresses some factors that were causing long lines at polling stations. The current act states that voters must vote at a specific table. However, with modern technology facilitating operations at polling stations, this security measure is no longer necessary. In the future, Elections Canada will be able to let voters vote at the first available table at some polling stations.

Similarly, the practice of crossing out names on paper voter lists with a pencil could be simplified by using secure tablets with no Internet connection. Bill C-76 eliminates the job

descriptions of certain election officers from the act and replaces them with the more universal role of "election officer." Election officers will be qualified to perform various tasks at the polling station, giving the returning officer more leeway to allocate resources and employees at a polling station.

Other changes include the elimination of residency requirements for most election officers. The Chief Electoral Officer has received authorization to hire election officers as young as 16. In previously conducted pilot projects, young people proved that they have the necessary skills, and involving them in the process is a fantastic way to stimulate a lifelong interest in Canadian politics.

In addition, the bill authorizes returning officers to fill half of the available election officer positions as soon as the writ is issued. Political parties will still be invited to submit names for the other half, but returning officers will be able to put some employees to work earlier in the electoral process, reducing their own workload.

Those are just a few examples of how Elections Canada can give Canadians a simpler and more secure way of voting for generations to come.

The last point I wanted to raise has to do with security. There is one more key aspect of the bill that I want to talk about. I spent the last few minutes praising the excellent amendments that the bill makes to the Canada Elections Act, but I want to assure everyone here that the bill also helps protect the integrity of Canadian elections in many ways that make sense in today's world.

Bill C-76 provides for some important mechanisms to protect Canadian democracy, particularly through amendments that respond to foreign attempts to influence outcomes, amendments that reflect the way political parties function, a new compliance mechanism and the organizational relocation of the Commissioner of Canada Elections.

Canadians are concerned, and rightly so, about the potential impact of foreign influence on our country's elections. The global landscape has changed dramatically since the last federal election. Stories of foreign spies, compromised social media accounts and leaked campaign materials have become the norm in democratic elections around the world. Tackling these problems is like trying to hit a moving target. Nevertheless, the bill proposes various amendments that should help to reassure Canadians.

Under the current Canada Elections Act, non-Canadian third parties can spend up to \$500 during an electoral period. Bill C-76 would prohibit non-Canadians from spending any amount. Canadian third parties would also be banned from using foreign money, regardless of when that money was received, to pay for partisan advertising, electoral advertising, partisan activities or polls during the electoral and pre-electoral periods.

The bill clarifies provisions on foreign influence in order to address the most insidious and most dangerous problems, rather than tackling violations that are relatively innocuous or impossible to sanction. These are the provisions in the Canada Elections Act dealing with false statements or statements intended to mislead the public.

Bill C-76 seeks to enhance the integrity of Canadian elections by also protecting them against abuse from within. The bill requires the political parties to better inform the public about how they use Canadians' personal information by publishing a confidentiality policy on their websites.

One of the main changes this bill makes to the electoral system is the creation of an administrative monetary penalty system, or AMP system. It is basically a compliance and enforcement mechanism that will enable the Commissioner of Canada Elections to apply sanctions more quickly for minor violations of the Canada Elections Act, without having to resort to criminal proceedings. The proposed AMP system will give the commissioner more flexibility to deal with minor infractions, while still providing for an administrative review system for individuals who feel they have been treated unfairly.

It is also important to note that individuals and businesses subject to the AMP system could still get a criminal record or receive jail time.

The AMP system will also allow the commissioner to investigate a broader range of possible violations and infractions, while recognizing that not all cases will necessarily require long, drawn-out criminal proceedings.

Furthermore, the bill gives the commissioner the power to compel someone to testify, which will help simplify investigations into urgent issues. We saw a similar case during the last election campaign.

The bill will make other changes to the Office of the Commissioner of Canada Elections. The previous government removed the position of Commissioner of Canada Elections from the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer and had the commissioner report to the Director of Public Prosecutions. This change in the commissioner's reporting structure was not ideal. It imposed the consolidation of two institutions with different functions: The commissioner literally polices federal elections, whereas the Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for conducting prosecutions. That is why the bill relocates the Commissioner of Canada Elections within the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. This change returns the commissioner to an office that supports both an independent officer of Parliament and the federal government's office with the best knowledge of election law.

• (1510)

I must point out that the commissioner will remain independent from the Chief Elections Officer. Bill C-76 explicitly sets out in the Canada Elections Act that the commissioner's investigations are fully independent from the Chief Electoral Officer. Furthermore, the bill authorizes the commissioner to publish independent annual reports.

[English]

In conclusion, with this, I believe I have finished describing the bill. I hope I have covered the most important details of a bill that has over 800 pages. To summarize Bill C-76, it accomplishes four things: The bill will make the electoral process more transparent, more secure, more accessible and modernizes the administration of our elections. I should add there are several measures in this bill that reflect recommendations from the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs of the Senate in the report *Controlling Foreign Influence in Canadian Elections*. Specifically, these include the measures that prevent foreign funding from playing a direct or indirect role in Canadian elections, modernizing the regulation of third parties involved in elections and bolstering reporting mechanisms.

As sponsor of the bill, I am particularly pleased to see measures introduced in my previous Senate bills to extend limits on election expenses in pre-election advertising that found their way into Bill C-76. I believe Senator Frum will also be pleased, I hope, to see that policy objectives of her bill, Bill S-239, Eliminating Foreign Funding in Elections Act, were integrated in the legislation before us.

Canadians are privileged to have one of the most lauded, exemplary election administrations in the world.

Bill C-76 modernizes this democratic process for our current age. The electoral system will be more open to a greater number of Canadians while simultaneously being more secure. I look forward to this important bill moving expeditiously to committee, where it can be studied in greater detail. Thank you.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Senator Frum, do you have a question?

Hon. Linda Frum: Will you accept a question, Senator Dawson? I am compelled to ask you a question because you invoked my bill, Bill S-239, which I appreciate. I want to ask you: In Bill C-76 it's true there is a defined writ period, a defined pre-writ period and there is a pre-pre-writ period, therefore. Can you say this bill, Bill C-76, in the pre-pre-writ period does anything to limit the acceptance of a third party accepting foreign funds?

Senator Dawson: Well, as far as the legal aspect of how it will be controlled, I have to admit that I modestly am not a lawyer, but it is one of the objectives of the bill, not only pre-election period obviously, pre-writ, but the pre-pre-writ period then becomes a question of *liberté de parole*, the freedom of speech of people and how you define it and what are charities and what are electoral processes, who is sending money. Some of them are subject to traditional lawsuits, they are subject to Revenue Canada laws on recognizing of charities. I would limit it like that. You will have the occasion if you want to speak to the people who wrote the bill, who will have a better answer than I can offer you today.

Senator Frum: I appreciate that. I look forward to studying this at committee as well. What I understood you to say, which is also my understanding, is in the pre-pre-writ period there is no limit to a third party accepting foreign funding.

Senator Dawson: I'm sorry, I really can't be that drastic in saying black or white what the answer is, so I will give you the opportunity. You will have the commissioner of elections, you will have the director general of elections, you will have the committee to have an opportunity.

After having read the bill, there are still some questions I want to ask.

Hon. Marty Deacon: Thank you. Would you take another question? I thank you very much for the depth and the detail and the breadth. You have covered many pieces and many aspects of a very large document.

Based on our conversations today and where this may go, do you believe the breadth and depth of this can be achieved in the time this particular bill needs to be moved forward for what you talk about happening next fall?

Senator Dawson: Well, obviously with the extended limits the house adopted today, I think we will have enough weeks to be able to study it. We will have an appearance in front of the committee here of the elections officers. We will have the Legal Affairs Committee studying it. I think having the number of weeks we have left is more than enough. If we want this legislation to be applied, I'm quite sure we have to pass it before Christmas if we want it to be applied for the October election. That is the request made by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada. He wants this bill so he can give Canadians more access to elections.

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the senator take a few more questions?

Senator Dawson: Yes.

Senator Martin: Following up on what Senator Frum was asking, you mentioned charities. I am part of the steering committee of our Charitable Sector Committee, a special committee. What we learned from CRA officials is non-profits are not captured under our existing statutes. Therefore there isn't data about their activities in the way we would have for charities. I don't have concerns about charities. It's the non-profit sector, numbering probably in the hundreds of thousands, and foreign funding that may be received and potentially the influence through the non-profits that we don't have data nor the ability to follow accurately. Is that a concern you have considered? Is it addressed in this bill?

Senator Dawson: I did mention that trying to hit mobile targets is a little bit difficult. The more we widen the debate concerning charities, it gets out of the scope of what Elections Canada has to look at and addresses the issues you're addressing with your committee and addresses the issues that Revenue Canada has to address with charity organizations. Yes, it might have some effect on the electoral law. I don't think this law could change all of that.

Senator Martin: I would hope that some of the vocal critics of the loopholes we have in our current system, like Vivian Krause and others, would be perhaps called upon by the committee. That is just a comment.

My next question is: I understand that in the house there were quite a few amendments brought forward regarding third party foreign funding because it is a concern for all Canadians regarding transparency. Would you say in the Senate as we study this very carefully that amendments should be considered?

Senator Dawson: Well, amendments are always normally considered by this place. As far as elections law, *je pense qu'on a une petite gêne*.

As far as non-elected parliamentarians, I would lead to tell people that since the other chamber is elected and they have passed this bill, I am ready to amend it. Trust me, I have no qualms and I will be more than happy to listen to the witnesses you mentioned before. I think there is a certain limit to what we can overturn as far as bills that are not addressed to a non-elected Senate.

Hon. Lillian Eva Dyck: Thank you for that speech. You covered many aspects of the bill. I know you had a section in there about voter identification for Aboriginal communities. I wonder if you would be so kind as to repeat that and indicate how it will improve the ability of Aboriginal Canadians to vote, especially as it relates to having the proper identification.

Senator Dawson: Reinstating the electoral registration means if you are recognized as an elector and you can go to an election booth and you can prove your identity, that means you have to prove your identity. Your name and address is written on the electoral card and your other card can be your health card. I think there are 43 or 44 different cards used for identification. Some people don't have driver's permits, passports, or native identity cards. They have an identity card with their name and will have a polling card.

• (1520)

In addition to that, if you have your neighbour sitting beside you who lives on your street and they say, "I recognize her, she is my neighbour and she is such-and-such a person," that is how you will solve most of the problems. There will always be problems in this type of legislation, but this is a solution. It created problems last election, and we're trying to solve it for the next one.

Senator Dyck: Will it be necessary to have a street address on your identification?

[Translation]

Senator Dawson: Your voting card will serve as the address card, depending on how it's formulated.

Senator Dyck: The street address?

Senator Dawson: If you have a voting card, it's because you have an address. You are recognized as a voter, I should say. You are recognized as a voter and that will serve with another card in identifying your identity.

Again, I will repeat the answer I gave to Senator Frum: That's why we have honourable witnesses coming in to answer questions to which I, humbly, am not able to guarantee a 100 per cent response.

Hon. Ratna Omidvar: Thank you, Senator Dawson. I appreciate the principle of broadening accessibility in Canadian elections. I'm particularly interested in the measure to increase voting rights for non-resident actors. Currently, the law restricts participation in Canadian elections based on the number of years you have been outside Canada: it can't be more than five years and you must state your intent to return to Canada. Those are the two criteria.

Once these two criteria are removed, I'm not clear if there are any criteria at all, or if it is just open to any Canadian citizen who was once a Canadian citizen, who now lives overseas and who happened, maybe, to have lived in some place many years ago.

I need some comfort that there is a sense of attachment to this country when you vote.

Senator Dawson: The intention of coming back is the primary criteria. You have to intend on coming back to Canada. You have to have lived in Canada and not only had a citizenship by birth; you have to have lived and have had an address that you are referring yourself to.

We will have a plenary session on Tuesday where we will hear from the Chief Electoral Officer for more precise answers. I humbly say that the reason we're having this plenary session is to get as many answers as possible. After that, you will still have the opportunity at committee to seek more precise answers.

(On motion of Senator Omidvar, debate adjourned.)

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

COMMITTEES AUTHORIZED TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Hon. Diane Bellemare (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-5(j), I move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce and the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology have the power to meet today at 4:15 p.m., even though the Senate may then be sitting, and that rule 12-18(1) be suspended in relation thereto.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

[English]

Hon. Joseph A. Day (Leader of the Senate Liberals): I am wondering if you are able to help me. Is the work of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce government business?

[Translation]

Senator Bellemare: It is not government business. However, some committee meetings were already scheduled for today. The Banking, Trade and Commerce Committee was scheduled to hear from the Governor of the Bank of Canada as well as the deputy governor. Senators will understand that it would be inappropriate to cancel the meeting. I believe that the Social Affairs Committee is in a similar situation.

[English]

Senator Day: Regarding the motion that we adopted earlier on, which was your Motion No. 222, you're now asking for an exception to that, and that I understand.

But I understood, from looking at and reading this many, many times to try to understand what motion we passed earlier, that it proposes that committees doing government business can sit after 4 p.m. But now you're asking for an exception to allow two committees to sit that are not doing government business. Is this an extraordinary exception because they had already been given the approval, in which event we should have made a reservation before we passed this other motion?

[Translation]

Senator Bellemare: Senator, I mentioned that exception a few minutes ago when we adopted the motion. I provided a full explanation. However, the motion was not specified then, which is why we are moving this new motion now.

[English]

Everything was explained before we voted on this motion: that exceptionally, for today, we would give permission for two committees, but that has already been explained. It is not something that I'm just raising. It was explained a few minutes ago.

Senator Day: What I'm trying to do is to help this chamber understand what your understanding is of this motion that you put to us earlier on. Is it just government business? You have an extraordinary exception for two committees for today, but after today, other committees will not be able to meet unless they're doing government business after four o'clock on Wednesdays?

Senator Bellemare: This is correct, Senator Day.

Hon. Percy E. Downe: We had a long discussion when this measure was first proposed to us at Senate Liberal caucus this week, and we objected to the two steps. The first step, of course, was that committees will be doing only government business after hours between now and Christmas if we're sitting; the second part, of course, was committees will not be allowed to travel outside Ottawa until the end of the year. These are both new initiatives. I'm frankly surprised other caucuses agreed to it, but that is their business.

Our concern is about how rigid this would be. I'm wondering whether Senator Bellemare could tell us whether the proposal she is making today will be the norm or will it be the exception. Will there be flexibility in the motion earlier passed?

[Translation]

Senator Bellemare: We discussed all that earlier. The motion we adopted today states that if Government Business is not done by 4 p.m., we continue sitting. Today we were expecting to adjourn around 4:15. If this debate does not go on forever, we might even wrap up before 4 p.m., and that would be fine. We moved this motion to ensure that the debate on Bill C-76 does not drag on. Now, because the committees were not informed in advance, we are proceeding as usual, which means that, if a committee wants to sit at the same time as the Senate, it requests permission. That is how we usually do things. I don't think I have anything to add. We debated this earlier.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

• (1530)

EXPORT AND IMPORT PERMITS ACT CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Saint-Germain, seconded by the Honourable Senator Woo, for the second reading of Bill C-47, An Act to amend the Export and Import Permits Act and the Criminal Code (amendments permitting the accession to the Arms Trade Treaty and other amendments).

Hon. Leo Housakos: Honourable colleagues, I am pleased to participate in the debate on Bill C-47, An Act to amend the Export and Import Permits Act and the Criminal Code to enable Canada to accede to the United Nations international Arms Trade Treaty.

This bill basically implements Canada's decision to join that treaty. The government says this treaty establishes international standards for the conventional arms trade so that member states can create effective national systems to scrutinize and control the conventional arms trade.

[English]

On the surface, this sounds like a very important objective. However, if one looks beyond the surface, you may find yourself asking, how credible is the government's narrative?

The reality is that Canada already has a comprehensive system for monitoring and controlling the export of all types of security and defence equipment. This type of trade is regulated by the Trade Controls Bureau of Global Affairs Canada and has been since 1947. The bureau's role encompasses several tasks, several of which I'd like to highlight that are pertinent in this bill.

First, the bureau already regulates Canada's trade in military and strategic dual-use goods.

Second, the bureau also has the task of preventing the supply of military goods to countries that threaten Canada's security, are under the UN sanction, are threatened by internal and external conflict and/or abuse the human rights of their citizens. All of these provisions are already in place and have been for decades.

Third, the bureau has an even broader mandate to fulfil other and broader Canadian international obligations.

Finally, the bureau is charged with implementing UN Security Council trade sanctions.

As you can see, the role of the bureau is comprehensive, and I would argue that it already implements and meets all of Canada's international obligations related to the potential trade in conventional arms.

Moreover, the national system that Canada maintains is further strengthened by the fact that the government has the ability to impose a selective ban on dual-use exports to countries through the Export Control List and also can impose a blanket ban on trade with any countries through the use of the Area Control List.

If these provisions are already in place, then why, one might ask, is the government joining the international Arms Trade Treaty?

The first argument of the government is that, by joining it, the legal provisions of the treaty will serve to further strengthen Canada's arms trade regime. But will it? Article 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty requires that parties refrain from permitting the export of conventional arms if there is an overriding risk that the transaction would violate Article 7.

Article 7 incorporates general criteria that must be considered such as "undermine peace and security," "commit or facilitate a serious violation of international human rights or humanitarian law," and other equally broad considerations.

What is particularly telling is that each state is largely its own judge in determining whether a proposed export contravenes Article 7. One could therefore argue that it is somewhat naive to believe that we are strengthening Canada's arms trade regime by legally incorporating the provisions of Article 7 in measures that the Government of Canada is in fact already considering.

[Translation]

Colleagues, the reality is that Canada is not and never has been part of the problem the treaty seeks to fix, that is, the illicit and illegal movement of weapons in conflict areas around the world. This means that Canada's accession to the international Arms Trade Treaty will have no effect on the illicit and illegal transfer of weapons in international conflict zones.

The government's second argument is that, as a member of the international treaty, Canada will be in a better position to strengthen cooperation with its international partners that share the same objective of curbing illicit arms trafficking in conflict zones.

[English]

That slogan by itself is one which undoubtedly appeals to the current government. However, the truth of the matter is that this cooperation already occurs through a myriad of multilateral and bilateral international forums.

Canada is already engaged with many international partners in trying to combat the flow of new arms into specific conflict zones — Iraq and Syria, for example. It is also engaged in preventing arms trafficking generally to international terrorist groups or to organized crime groups.

Preventing this type of traffic certainly does not require new international agreements. What the combat of such trafficking does require is the commitment of resources and the will to actively commit one's own police and military forces in that effort.

[Senator Housakos]

Some countries have completely exempted themselves from that effort. Russia, China and India have all refused to sign the treaty. Russia has called it an ineffective instrument, while the United States has signed but seems unlikely ever to ratify it.

[Translation]

Personally, I am not convinced that Canada's adherence to the treaty will have a major impact, one way or another, on its arms export policy. That is especially true given that the government has discretely — and rightfully, to my mind — excluded from this bill a good part of the arms trade between Canada and the United States.

[English]

I believe that in order to really understand this government's decision to table Bill C-47, one must consider it in the context of its broader approach to foreign policy. It is no secret that "virtue signalling" is a pillar of the Trudeau government's foreign policy, and Bill C-47 is certainly virtue signalling. It is a feel-good bill, which, in reality, changes nothing.

With all of that said and since we are at second reading, I do believe that this bill deserves to be sent to committee for further study.

[Translation]

Before we do that, I would like to share three things that came to mind when I studied the bill. First, I am not sure I understand how the Trudeau government establishes its legislative priorities. Last week we debated Bill C-21. It is an important piece of legislation that remained in the House of Commons for two years. It is deemed to be "important," but the government did not consider it to be urgent. However, Bill C-47, a bill that actually changes nothing but is symbolic, seems to be more urgent. Urgent, but not important. Stephen Covey's followers know that this approach is the hallmark of poor managers.

[English]

Second, the government will have to address concerns that adherence to the international Arms Trade Treaty may lead to the imposition of new measures that will impact on the legitimate and legal trade in civilian firearms used by Canadian hunters and sport shooters.

Canadian hunters and sport shooters certainly have nothing to do with the illegal traffic of military weapons to conflict zones, but overly broad definitions can potentially have unintended consequences. Our committee hearings should be used by the government to clarify its position.

Finally, we have to be aware that the treaty and Bill C-47 may already be outdated. While the trade of firearms, ammunition and other conventional weapons must be regulated, I have grave concerns that our monitoring and approval systems for sales of technologies that can be of military use are completely outdated.

Right now several Canadian companies are developing technologies that can be used for civilian purposes like automation, artificial intelligence or computer vision. But these technologies can also have a military use, and it is now impossible for the government to control how these technologies are transferred and to whom they are transferred. This, I think, is much more dangerous to Canada's national security than the trade of more conventional weapons that does not exist in practicality or practice.

These and other issues of concern should be heard when the Senate committee considers this legislation. It will be important to look at the potential downstream impacts of what is before us and, if necessary, propose appropriate amendments.

I support giving the Senate committee tasked with reviewing this bill adequate time to do precisely that. Thank you, honourable senators.

[Translation]

Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain: Thank you for your interesting presentation. You made the point that joining the Arms Trade Treaty is unnecessary, and you gave the example of Russia and China, who refused to sign the treaty. As you know, of the 29 NATO countries, Canada is the only one that hasn't signed this treaty. What is more, the primary purpose of this treaty is ensure that people are protected in war situations.

• (1540)

I would like to know why you are looking to Russia and China as examples when it comes to the protection of human rights.

Senator Housakos: I didn't say that we should do what Russia and China are doing. Those are two examples of countries that have a much worse track record than Canada. The point I'm trying to make is this: Canada has been a role model for years with the system that we currently have in place; our country has responded well to this challenge. I don't think this bill does anything to improve Canada's position.

Senator Saint-Germain: Would the senator take a supplementary question?

Senator Housakos: Yes.

Senator Saint-Germain: You said, and it's true, that Canada has a robust system for regulating the arms trade. That's absolutely correct. However, in light of the Arms Trade Treaty, changes due to globalization, and issues associated with the export of arms from one third-party country to another for use in illegal activities, Canada is unfortunately a country that is not taking legislative action in relation to brokering.

Do you think the measures taken in Bill C-47 to comply with the Arms Trade Treaty are in Canada's best interest and provide more protection and credibility to a country seeking to reassure the international community that it is controlling the arms trade responsibly?

[English]

Senator Housakos: That is a broad question, senator. I think that will be the role of the committee that studies this legislation to see the various aspects in place. There cannot be found a single example of second or third parties that deal with Canada in arms-dealing technology over the last 20 years where they've infringed upon our values, principles or rules when it comes to our treaty — not one example.

I highlighted a number of examples just now — in terms of artificial intelligence, telecommunication technology, and what is considered non-offensive weapons technology — that currently don't fall under the bill that's being proposed, nor under the process we currently have in place, which I think is robust.

I don't believe that the bill, as is, serves to protect all the various outstanding issues, including the ones you raised in your question. That's why I believe the bill needs to be reviewed robustly by the Senate committee. This bill must be brought back here with amendments and changes that will strengthen it.

I understand that signing the international treaty that is before us, the UN treaty, is the ultimate objective of this bill. However, since we have that objective in hand, we might as well strengthen the practicality of this bill and add other elements to try to make it a bill that is a model to the world. I reiterate that Canada has always been a model to the world when it comes to responsible trade in weapons systems.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time.)

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

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

(On motion of Senator Saint-Germain, bill referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.)

IMPACT ASSESSMENT BILL CANADIAN ENERGY REGULATOR BILL NAVIGATION PROTECTION ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Mitchell, seconded by the Honourable Senator Pratte, for the second reading of Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Hon. Tony Dean: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

I will begin by thanking Senator Mitchell for his hard work in sponsoring this important bill.

Let's start with the government's objectives. What do they tell us about this bill? They say it is legislation designed to deliver better rules for the assessment of major projects, to protect the environment, fish and waterways, and rebuild public trust in how resource development decisions are made, while providing certainty for industry and investors.

Let's start by looking at the genesis of the legislation. In 2016, the government created an expert panel to review Canada's environmental assessment processes, with the objective of restoring public trust in environmental assessments, to improve review processes and to get resources to market. The panel published its report in 2017 and made a number of recommendations that formed the basis of Bill C-69.

The panel visited 21 cities across Canada and heard from over a thousand participants, including almost 400 presentations from provinces and territories, NGOs, industry, experts and Indigenous groups. It took an extensive look at environmental assessments and drafted its recommendations based on what was heard from stakeholders.

Essentially, the panel tells us the policy pendulum, it believed, had swung too far. This was a reference to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012 — or CEAA — implemented by the previous government. The panel states that:

While CEAA 2012 improved EA processes for some, it also sowed the seeds of distrust in many segments of society: it imposed unrealistically short timelines for the review of long, complex documents by interested parties; it vastly reduced the number of projects subject to review; and it placed more accountability for some assessment decision-making in the political realm.

I emphasize that came from the expert panel.

The 2017 panel set out to find middle ground between the practices of the 1990s and those set out under CEAA 2012. Having taken a look at the report, I believe the review panel has found a reasonable balance. However, we're at the beginning of the process. At the end of the day that determination will be a collective one, by all of us.

So what does the bill do?

First, there is a clear intention to replace the silos that exist under CEAA 2012. Yes, I'm talking about silos again. For each project, there would be one integrated assessment led by the proposed impact assessment agency, or the IAA. Authority over projects would be consolidated in the impact assessment agency. There would no longer be three responsible authorities — reminiscent, again, of our discussion yesterday about siloed organizations.

Second, it introduces a new and early proactive planning phase. This is probably the most important element in this legislation, from my perspective. All proponents would be brought to the table during this planning phase to present information, establish a plan, and resolve any conflicts at the outset. This includes regulators, government officials from both federal and provincial jurisdictions, Indigenous leaders, and representatives from industry. There is encouragement for greater collaboration between stakeholders.

This is an important change. Under the current system, it seems most significant delays in the process often result from insufficient upfront planning and discussion. There is little incentive under the current system to identify key stakeholders and bring them to the table; neither is there an upfront focus on identifying potential issues and opportunities.

Under the current process, it is not usual for government departments, local stakeholders or other organizations to raise issues later in the process, resulting in considerable delays. I've seen this first-hand at the provincial level, where a government department, a ministry, will raise its hand relatively late in the process and introduce new concerns and considerations. That's not to say there shouldn't be an opportunity for that, but it shouldn't be a regular way of doing business.

• (1550)

The proposals in Bill C-69 would turn this process on its head by ensuring that an effort is made to identify key stakeholders and major opportunities and problems at the front end of the process. This is also a commitment to the government's efforts to advance Indigenous reconciliation by ensuring that their voices are heard and their rights are respected, something about which I'm sure we'll have more discussion in this place.

While I'm pleased to see these changes, it will be important to ensure that proponents in the new planning phase are not getting lost in the new planning arrangement. That is, we can look beyond, far and wide, for the involvement of others, but we shouldn't lose sight of the proponents at that table as well.

Third, Bill C-69 proposes a more holistic approach. There will be a set of criteria to be considered when a project is being assessed. For the first time, the negative and positive effects of a project on social and economic conditions require consideration in an assessment in addition to environmental impacts. Timelines are firm, but they also provide flexibility in order to be responsive to the nature, scale and complexity of the project. Some large and complex projects will need more time. Those that are less complex will come in way under the timelines. It's not a one-size-fits-all approach, and information on all projects will be available to the public, encouraging greater accountability and transparency.

We've heard from a number of stakeholders that these changes are long overdue, and we're also hearing concerns raised. I will get back to those in a moment.

Let's briefly return to the government's stated objectives.

The first is restoring public trust. Providing clear timelines for each stage of the process and making assessments accessible for all Canadians would ensure transparency and accountability in the review of a project. The expert panel heard concerns that decisions were made behind closed doors with insufficient explanation. Developing a more transparent regime will go a long way in restoring public trust and is good practice in public policy and public governance.

There has been some concern that the bill's timelines are not shorter than under the current regime. They are shorter. Under the CEAA 2012, the maximum time for an environmental assessment would be 1,895 days. Under Bill C-69, the maximum time for an impact assessment, including the new addition of the early planning phase, would be 1,770 days. That includes that new early planning phase that's meant to provide greater clarity to proponents about what is required of them and more certainty in the review process. This will likely create greater efficiencies in the review process and should lead to more timely decisions.

As a result of this early planning approach, proponents should know who needs to be consulted and how. Potential issues would be identified and hopefully addressed early. Information required for the review would be identified early on, and the things to be examined during the impact assessment phase would be clarified to the extent possible.

We've heard, both in this chamber and from the Alberta Minister of the Environment, that the ability of the minister to hit pause at any point in the process could stall projects. That's the case now. I think this needs to be explored further in committee.

I understand, though, that every project is different. For some assessments, it will be necessary to pause in order to resolve issues that are often raised by project proponents themselves. Notably, the government consultation paper on information requirements and time management regulations proposes putting specific criteria in the regulations to provide guidance on when the clock could be stopped. Those criteria include: a request from the proponent, a design change by the proponent that could change the potential impacts of the project, critical information needed to complete the assessment, or nonpayment for recoverable activities — that would be until payment has been received.

When the clock stops, the minister is required to provide detailed reasoning for the decision and to make it publicly available to all Canadians on the website. Again, this is a move toward greater transparency. It's a step forward from our current system, where decisions are being made, often behind closed doors, as under CEAA 2012.

While we're on the subject of transparency, it is important to have clarity around the project list, and its development and management. I know there are many organizations that have emphasized the importance of knowing what approved or authorized projects are on the list, how they're managed and by whom.

Second is protecting the environment. I've heard some colleagues suggest there was too much focus on the environment and perhaps not enough on economic development in this new

proposed scheme. This would be a problem, but I note that one of the goals of the legislation is getting resources to market and approving sound projects.

In its report, the panel proposes changing the term "environmental assessments" to the all-encompassing term "impact assessments," and the government accepted that recommendation, stating:

IA goes beyond a review of individual aspects of a proposal to look at the big picture — what is proposed and what may be impacted?

Considerations of this nature would look at the five pillars of environmental, health, social, cultural and economic impacts. When we talk about sustainability, we're not only referring to environmental sustainability but rather looking at all the factors that go into making our lives more sustainable.

Further, Minister Shannon Philips provided her insight into this and clearly stated that economic considerations had always been part of assessments and always will be. The new system is not going to change that.

I also note that under CEAA 2012, only negative environmental effects are assessed. Positive impacts are not given formal consideration. Under Bill C-69, there is a holistic approach to assessments. Again, I believe the bill strikes a balance between environmental protections and economic considerations. Again, though, that will be our collective determination.

Third is introducing modern safeguards. The creation of the Impact Assessment Act as the sole responsible authority for assessments has drawn some criticism. Currently, under CEAA 2012, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and the Canadian Environmental Agency are involved. The expert panel recommended that a single independent and impartial body should be responsible for overseeing assessments. They cited concerns heard about the perceived lack of independence between the National Energy Board and the CNSC, and the industries they regulate. They also found having three responsible authorities only served to duplicate work and create unnecessary inconsistencies.

With the independent assessment agency as the sole authority, processes will be streamlined, and be more efficient and effective from a regulatory standpoint, and this seems to make sense.

All that being said, it's no surprise that significant concerns are being raised about the bill, both at the political level from the petroleum industry and others. I know we're going to hear those, and I know we're going to consider those views presented to us.

In addition, and perhaps more understandably, Indigenous organizations and Indigenous senators in this place are going to have a substantial interest in the proposed processes, not least of which will be those related to the involvement and the agency of Indigenous peoples in the processes envisaged in this bill.

Honourable senators, I'm generally supportive of this legislation, but I am in agreement with many colleagues in saying that this legislation requires very careful consideration. It may not be a perfect bill, but I'm confident we can make adjustments where and as they're needed.

Finally, I want to return to the purpose of the bill, which is to restore public trust of Canadians. Here, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity — and these opportunities come through rarely — to review our environmental assessment system and make adjustments to reflect our changing climate and ever-evolving energy sector. Let's take advantage of that opportunity.

I remind senators that many stakeholders were asking for changes to be made to CEAA 2012. Many believe the current system is broken. If it is, it is our job to assess that and fix it. I hope all colleagues will vote in favour of sending this bill to committee where it can be examined more closely.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

• (1600)

ELECTIONS MODERNIZATION BILL

BILL TO AMEND—MOTION TO REFER SUBJECT MATTER OF BILL TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AND TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC AND PHOTOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AND THE COMMITTEE TO REPORT TO THE SENATE NO LATER THAN TWO HOURS AFTER IT BEGINS,
AS MODIFIED, ADOPTED

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of October 25, 2018, moved:

That, without affecting the progress of any proceedings related to Bill C-76, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments, at the start of Orders of the Day on Monday, November 5, 2018, the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole in order to receive the Chief Electoral Officer, the Commissioner of Canada Elections and officials from their offices respecting the subject matter of the bill;

That the committee report to the Senate no later than two hours after it begins;

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

That any vote and the ringing of the bells that would conflict with the meeting of the committee be deferred until the committee has reported to the Senate; and

That the provisions of rule 3-3(1) be suspended on Monday, November 5, 2018.

He said: Honourable senators, before I move a slight modification to the agreements that have been reached outside of this chamber, let me also put on the record for the chamber that I would fully expect that the officers that we will hear from, should this motion be passed, would also make themselves available for review of this bill at committee should the committee wish. This is an additional measure, not a replacement measure for due committee consideration.

MOTION IN MODIFICATION

Hon. Peter Harder (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 5-10(1), I ask leave of the Senate to modify the motion so that it reads as follows:

That, without affecting the progress of any proceedings related to Bill C-76, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments, at the end of Question Period on Tuesday, November 6, 2018, the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole in order to receive the Chief Electoral Officer, the Commissioner of Canada Elections and officials from their offices respecting the subject matter of the bill;

That the committee report to the Senate no later than two hours after it begins;

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

That any vote and the ringing of the bells that would conflict with the meeting of the committee be deferred until the committee has reported to the Senate; and

That the provisions of rule 3-3(1) be suspended on Tuesday, November 6, 2018.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, as modified.)

(At 4:01 p.m., pursuant to the orders adopted by the Senate on February 4, 2016, and October 31, 2018, the Senate adjourned until 1:30 p.m., tomorrow.)

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