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Wednesday, February 5, 2020

The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,  
Speaker

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## THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 5, 2020

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

Prayers.

### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

#### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I received a notice from the Leader of the Opposition who requests, pursuant to rule 4-3(1) that the time provided for the consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable David Tkachuk, who will retire from the Senate on February 18, 2020.

Is it agreed, honourable senators?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I remind honourable senators that pursuant to our rules, each senator, other than Senator Tkachuk, will be allowed only three minutes and they may speak only once.

#### TRIBUTES

##### THE HONOURABLE DAVID TKACHUK

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, in about two weeks, on February 18, our friend and colleague Senator David Tkachuk will retire from the Senate of Canada after almost 27 years of service.

As the longest-serving senator in this chamber, Senator Tkachuk is the dean of the Senate, a distinction that he will be passing on to Senator Furey on his retirement. He has proudly represented the province of Saskatchewan in the Senate and will be the last of the 57 senators appointed upon the advice of the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney to take his leave of this place. Simply put, it is difficult to imagine the Senate without him.

David Tkachuk's life experience before he came to the Senate has served him well in navigating Parliament Hill. As a teacher who launched sports such as basketball and volleyball at the school where he taught, he knew the value of teamwork. As a concert promoter and the owner of a direct marketing company, he understood the importance of connecting with people. And, of course, there was his long and successful experience as a political organizer and executive director of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan.

Over the course of his years as a senator, our colleague has chaired five different Senate committees, including National Finance, Internal Economy, Transport and Banking. Under his guidance and leadership, these committees tackled important

matters of public policy, issues such as interprovincial trade barriers, intellectual property rights and the movement of our energy products by tanker and by pipeline.

Senator Tkachuk has also served for many years as our Conservative caucus chair and our national caucus vice-chair. He is perhaps most proud of the work he did with the Canadian Coalition Against Terror on his justice for victims of terrorism private member's bill, which was ultimately passed as a government bill under the previous Conservative government in 2012.

While our colleague has faced many challenges in his life, perhaps none was greater than being diagnosed with bladder cancer in 2013. Throughout his years of treatments, Senator Tkachuk continued to do his Senate work to the very best of his abilities, under some very difficult circumstances, no doubt. He has been very open with sharing his personal story to help raise awareness about this disease, the fifth most common cancer in our country. I know all honourable senators join me in expressing sincere best wishes for our colleague's continued good health.

Senator Tkachuk has been blessed to have the support of his loving family — they're here today — through all the ups and downs of a life in politics. He and his wife Sharon celebrate 55 years of marriage this year, a tremendous achievement. I know they are both looking forward to spending more time with their son, daughter and grandchildren.

David, to say your Senate colleagues will miss you is an understatement. We thank you for your frank advice, unfailing loyalty and, above all else, your friendship. On behalf of the entire Conservative caucus, and indeed all honourable senators, I wish you and Sharon a happy and healthy retirement.

**Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to our esteemed colleague Senator Tkachuk. I will speak English, senator, especially for you.

**Senator Tkachuk:** You don't have to; I'm used to this.

**Senator Saint-Germain:** Well, I like it. Dear Senator Tkachuk, while writing this tribute, the first thing that came to my mind was some of our differences, which may, at first glance, appear to set you and me apart. I'm a French-speaking Canadian from Quebec, and you are an English-speaking Canadian from Saskatchewan. You have dedicated your career to politics, whereas I spent mine in the neutrality required of public administration. It is what it is. While political sparring has always been second nature to you, I have little talent for it.

Yet in just over three years of sitting together on various committees, we have gotten along well and respected one another. Our relationship has perfectly embodied the old saying that respect goes both ways, and I wish to thank you for being so considerate in all our interactions.

We are actually quite similar in some ways. Our attention to detail is definitely one of them. Although I must admit that we sometimes obsess over certain imperfections and inconsistencies, we are steadfast in our commitment to correcting them, even if it means upsetting people at times. I can recall an episode in December when we were being driven from the Senate of Canada Building to the Victoria Building. You will remember that. That poor driver must have been so relieved when he finally dropped us off. Of course, we were not wrong to point out — five times in as many minutes — what little sense the route made and how we could have done a lot better had one of us been in charge.

• (1410)

Senator Tkachuk, you have overcome health issues and other personal challenges throughout your career and showed every senator in the chamber that great things can be accomplished through strength of character. Your personal victories, Senator Tkachuk, have inspired many.

I also wish to acknowledge your contribution as a diligent and actively involved member of CIBA's Subcommittee on Human Resources. I sincerely appreciate how you have dedicated so much time to the subcommittee despite your busy schedule and how difficult it can be to travel back and forth between Saskatoon and Ottawa. Thank you for all those times you hurried to our meetings straight from the airport, hat and coat in hand and always right on time.

Lastly, your insightful contribution to the Human Resources Directorate's work plan and the Senate's policy on preventing harassment helped us better understand and address certain sensitive issues. I will even say that your disdain for political correctness enabled you to clearly express your opinions to the members of the subcommittee, who were then better equipped to deal with these delicate issues in a pragmatic and comprehensive way. You have always been a pragmatic man and I'm grateful to have learned from your wealth of experience and invaluable institutional memory.

After a 47-year-long career, with more than 26 in the Senate, you deserve a peaceful retirement, and I know that you are well prepared for it. On behalf of the members of the Independent Senators Group, I wish you many years of happiness with your loved ones. Thank you.

**Hon. Scott Tannas:** Honourable senators, not long after joining the Senate seven years ago, I met and befriended David Tkachuk. It's an easy thing to do, to make friends with David Tkachuk. He's a friendly and open guy. He's got a great sense of humour and he's lots of fun to be around. We had common interests; we're both prairie boys. We also discovered that we had early careers that were the same: We were in the rock and roll concert promoting business, oddly enough. We love Maui, we love golf and we love golfing in Maui.

But over the past years, I have slowly — more slowly — and steadily come to appreciate the depth and the strength of my friend as I've watched him discharge his duties in the past quarter — the last quarter — of his time here in the Senate and the seven years I've been here.

In his duties as the Honourable David Tkachuk, senator from Saskatchewan, he's a passionate, partisan warrior. He was an organizer with the party and served at that level. He served in the provincial government in Saskatchewan as a principal secretary to the premier. He's been active in countless provincial and federal elections. He's a brilliant strategist and adviser, and like all good warriors he's always had a healthy respect and, occasionally, admiration for partisans on the other side.

Over the years, I've witnessed, as I think we all have, his professionalism and dedication to his committee work. It amounts to a staggering contribution to the country. He was exceptional in his attendance at committee both in terms of his body and his mind. So many of us are doing two and three things. We've got our machines in front of us and we're talking to people. David was always attentive and focused on the proceedings of the committee. It's a discipline that I wish I had and I'm determined to acquire. It's an example to all of us.

He was a firm and respectful chair when he was in the chair, and when he wasn't in the chair he was a valued team member on many committees and subcommittees. He took his job, role and perspective seriously and, in my opinion, he applied his skills and talents rigorously and bravely. He hated hypocrisy, and he demonstrated this often with witnesses in committee, with interventions in this chamber and sometimes even with colleagues at caucus. He created more uncomfortable moments in this chamber than anyone else that I can think of — always with a reason and always with a goal.

Colleagues, we must not lose this. We should commit to our colleague that we will all work harder to channel our inner Tkachuk to make the big decisions that we make for millions of Canadians that David appreciated are uncomfortable decisions. They should be uncomfortable. We should approach them with the rigour, dedication and application of values that Senator Tkachuk always displayed.

David, I wish you the best. Enjoy your retirement; you've surely earned it. From a grateful friend, from a grateful country and from our Canadian Senators Group, cheers.

**Hon. Dennis Dawson:** When I arrived here 15 years ago, David told me, "Dennis, if you're patient, one day you'll make it to the front row." By the time I made it, which is today, my front row is in the second position. But I was patient, David. I am here.

I plead guilty to my colleagues in my progressive caucus that we always got along even though we didn't always agree.

When I was asked to volunteer, I said I'd consult my colleagues to see if they had anything nice to say about David. As you can see, that's a resumé of what happened. I'm not going to read the emails they sent me, Your Honour, because you will call me in line.

I consulted a list of 50 other Liberals who sat with you to show that your partisanship did rub them the wrong way. None of them had very nice things to say about you. But yesterday my leader told me to have a little bit of humour. He told the two new senators, "Have some humour while you're here." I'm trying to have it, David.

After consulting my caucus, I asked Siri, Google and Alexa, “What about Tkachuk?” Still not a good source, David. They had things about Liberals being run over and things like that.

So I had to go back to my own experience with you. Also, as dean, which maybe one day I’ll be because I’ve been here a long time, I hope that somebody is going to have something nice to say about me. But in my case, the speeches will probably be shorter.

I must say, we did a lot of work together. I’m a little bit like those who sat with David. When I arrived here, I started sitting with David on the Transport Committee. We shared the chairmanship of that committee over the years. We didn’t always get along, but we did some marvellous work on studies.

We did a serious study on containers. We travelled to the North, we went to Halifax and we presented a very progressive report.

We did another one later on the management and governance of airports, which I was quite proud of having worked on with David — again, not always agreeing but always being sure that this is our commitment.

Obviously, some people say sometimes he goes too far. Comments have been made. We had the experience on Bill C-69 and on the shipping bill on the coast of B.C., where you didn’t enlarge your fan club.

**Senator Tkachuk:** Bill C-48.

**Senator Dawson:** Bill C-48. You didn’t enlarge your fan club, but on Bill C-49, you chaired and we had the bill on transport. It was one of the first bills that was sent back to the house repeatedly to get amendments passed. You did it successfully with the cooperation of senators on both sides. But you always did it — yes, with a bit of success sometimes — with commitment to your province. Bill C-69 and Bill C-48 were good examples.

Senator Tkachuk was talking on behalf of his province. I didn’t agree with him and I thought he was wrong, but I encourage everyone here to have that same commitment. It might not make you friends — it might make you a few enemies — but at least you will be respected. David, when I leave here, I hope that I will have the same respect for what I did as I have respect for what you did while you were here.

• (1420)

He’s like Frank Sinatra, he did it his way. I’m not recommending this to everyone else. This place would obviously be very different if everybody was a David Tkachuk. There is only one David Tkachuk, and he is leaving. David, I want to thank you for being a cooperative senator with me. I consider you a friend.

**Hon. Denise Batters:** Honourable senators, I am honoured to rise today to give a tribute to my good friend and colleague Senator Dave Tkachuk. Senator Tkachuk has been instrumental in my life. In fact, I have known him longer than I have known anyone else in the Senate, about 35 years.

From the time that I was 13 years old, Senator Tkachuk and his family were friends with my own family. I was a kid obsessed with politics, and when the Tkachuks came to visit, the kids would be in one room and I would be in the other room with the adults talking politics.

Senator Tkachuk was then the Principal Secretary in Saskatchewan Premier Grant Devine’s government, and he regaled us with fascinating tales of life in the premier’s office and the time he spent on the campaign trail with former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker. I knew then, as we all know from having spent time with Senator Tkachuk in this place, that he was a man of great wisdom.

From the time I was 12, I knew that I wanted to be a senator one day, but little did I know it would be Senator Tkachuk who would walk me into the Senate for the first time and I would have the incredible honour of serving in the Senate as his colleague for six years.

Throughout his long career in the Senate, Senator Tkachuk has advocated passionately for the people of our province of Saskatchewan. He is a true son of Saskatchewan, full of common sense, wisdom and fight. While some people might lose some of that fight as they near retirement, thankfully Senator Tkachuk did not. Most recently, he led the fierce opposition in the Senate against Bill C-69 because he recognized the devastating impact that legislation would have on the resource sector in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Senator Tkachuk’s unwavering commitment to representing the people of our region is an example to us all, honourable senators.

Senator Tkachuk is fiercely partisan but also incredibly wise. His opinion is highly respected by his colleagues in Conservative Saskatchewan, the Senate and National Caucus. When he talks, people listen, because he was always prepared and always insightful. As such, Senator Tkachuk has held many positions of leadership in the Senate, including serving as the chair of Internal Economy, Finance, Banking and Transport Committees. Although I still can’t quite imagine a Senate without you in it, Senator Tkachuk, you leave behind some big shoes for us to fill.

Prime Minister John Diefenbaker once said:

I am asked . . . are there rewards in public life? There are — not monetary but there is a tremendous satisfaction to being able to say I tried, I stood.

Senator Tkachuk, thank you for your willingness to always take a stand. You have served the people of Saskatchewan and indeed all Canadians well through your life of public service. I will miss you terribly, but I hope your retirement brings you all the rest and rewards you deserve, including more time spent with your kind and loving family: your wife, Sharon; daughter, Teri; son, Brad and, of course, your grandchildren. My best wishes to you all as you fill your next chapter. Thank you. *Dyakoyu.*

**Hon. Peter Harder:** Honourable senators, I'm delighted to join in bidding farewell to Senator Dave Tkachuk. Some will say my delight is motivated by his departure; not true entirely. Senator Tkachuk is and has represented a long tradition of Senate appointments. A lifelong partisan, activist, staffer, adviser and loyalist and, as Senator Plett mentioned, he was among the last of the 57 Senate appointments made by former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, and today he is the last person standing.

I've known the senator for over 40 years. When I was chief of staff to Joe Clark, a younger Tkachuk was a field organizer in the prairies. While I didn't always agree on policy issues with the senator, I developed a respect for his political acumen and an affection for his love of country.

It's no secret that I'm a fan of the new appointment process and the objective of a less partisan, more independent Senate. That does not stop me, though, in paying tribute to and working with those who came to this chamber as deeply committed partisans. In his 27 years of service in this chamber, as has been mentioned, Senator Tkachuk has served on and chaired a number of committees, and others have spoken to this.

My memory, which I will briefly share with you on this occasion, is his final speech on Bill C-14, medical assistance in dying. It was June 17, 2016. The final vote was about to be taken when Senator Tkachuk rose to speak. He ended his speech with the following:

I have been enriched by the debate on this bill, and I thank all senators for that. We are, after all, an appointed body, and this is a government bill of major consequence. We cannot — and I will not — thwart the will of the elected members of Parliament. We have done our job, and although it breaks my heart, I am going to continue to do my duty by voting for this bill in the form that it has been sent back to us by the peoples' representatives.

Senator, I was grateful for your words then, and I believe they remain relevant for all of us today. I wish you all the best and hope that you and Sharon are able to travel more, take in the odd football game and enjoy your family. Best wishes.

[Translation]

**Hon. Percy Mockler:** Honourable senators, today we are losing a champion, an icon.

[English]

Honourable senators, much has been said about our colleague Senator David Tkachuk. Let us remind ourselves that when David received his bachelor's degree in history and political science back in 1965, I am sure he never thought that one day he would become part of the history of Canada as a political giant who served in the Senate of Canada for 27 years.

That is quite an accomplishment as a parliamentarian. There is no doubt in my mind he has never deterred from the common denominator that binds all of us. He always strives to make his region, his province of Saskatchewan and his Canada — his

country — a better place to live, a better place to work, a better place to raise our children and also a place to reach out to the most vulnerable.

Who is Senator Tkachuk? Senator Tkachuk is a spouse, a father, a grandfather, a mentor and a great debater.

Honourable senators, across Canada, many premiers and many prime ministers alike have sought his wisdom as a teacher, as a guide and as an adviser on public policies. These leaders would all tell you standing here today that he does exhibit friendship, loyalty, principle and commitment. Senator Tkachuk, you have earned your wings, and believe me, you have given many wings to others.

As a Canadian senator, he has never shied away from taking on a debate to improve public policies. Believe you me, some of his own colleagues, including myself, have also been on the receiving end of the oratory skills of Senator Tkachuk.

Some members of committees have told me, "Percy, he was aggressive." I said that we could share many stories. However, it is fitting today to quote Muhammad Ali about David Tkachuk:

Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee.

• (1430)

Senator Tkachuk, no one will deny, whatever role you were in, whatever vantage point you had, you stood apart as someone special, passionate and caring. You, sir, served Canada very well.

Senator Tkachuk, the scripture says:

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens . . . a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away . . .

Honourable senators, Honourable Senator Tkachuk, I will not sing the song because I cannot sing, but I will adapt some lyrics from John Denver. To Madam Tkachuk: Now is the time. Take him home. Take him home to the place he belongs. And may he be surrounded by his great family, his loved ones and all his friends across Canada.

[Translation]

David Tkachuk, thank you.

[English]

May God bless you. A job well done.

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

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Honourable senators, today is a sad day for us all as we bid farewell to yet another of our colleagues who has served this institution and the Canadian people with distinction and honour but, most of all, to someone who has been an incredibly strong voice for the people he was named here to represent — the very proud people of Saskatchewan. Today is also a celebration of Senator Tkachuk and all that he brought to the table during his time here.

David Tkachuk is the epitome of a partisan senator. For that he makes no apologies, nor should he. He wears it proudly and with full transparency. Senator Tkachuk was and always will be a staunch defender of the Conservative movement, of our policies and ideology and, of course, of our values and principles. David chose to be a Conservative because of who he is, not the other way around. Make no mistake; as loyal as he has been to the Conservative movement, he has never wavered in defending unequivocally the people of Saskatchewan first and foremost. He did it in this chamber. He did it in committee. And having seen it many times firsthand, he did it in caucus, in the Senate caucus and national caucus, both in official opposition and even more so and more vigorously when in government.

Trust me, colleagues. I saw it firsthand. When Dave Tkachuk went to the microphone, prime ministers, ministers, and MPs alike stood and listened attentively. That's why David believed so strongly in being part of a national caucus. He knew he could go there and be the voice for the people he represents. As much as David cares about the region and the people he represents, he also deeply cares about this institution and the people whom the Senate represents.

When I was appointed in 2009, I was very humbled and honoured as a new senator to learn about the Senate and its role, as well as our duty and obligations, from giants like Noël Kinsella, Lowell Murray, the late Pierre Claude Nolin, Serge Joyal and, of course, David Tkachuk, himself. I was struck by how open David's door always was to young senators who needed guidance and advice. Whereas many may see David as a very tough and rigid man, I see a man of deep conviction. I quickly came to learn that Dave Tkachuk is one of the warmest, funniest, affable and most generous people I have ever met.

That's what I'm going to miss the most. As much as I think the Senate and Canadians benefited from Senator Tkachuk's strong opinions and his insights and deep convictions, and as much as I will miss his continued guidance, it is Dave Tkachuk the man whom I will always miss. Senator Tkachuk is a deeply principled, deeply loyal Conservative, an outstanding parliamentarian.

Honourable senators, most importantly, in this place where many of us run for positions of leadership, Dave Tkachuk was a natural-born leader. When he walked into the room, by example, by his guidance, by his words, he just led, and we will miss that the most. And he did that while being an ultimate gentleman.

So, Senator Tkachuk, we wish you all the best. Enjoy your retirement. Enjoy your family. Thank you.

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

#### **DISTINGUISHED VISITOR IN THE GALLERY**

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of our former colleague the Honourable Marjory LeBreton, P.C.

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

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

#### **VISITORS IN THE GALLERY**

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of some of the Honourable Senator Tkachuk's family, including his wife, Sharon; his son, Brad; his daughter, Teri; his son-in-law, Keith; and his grandson, Brady.

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

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

#### **THE HONOURABLE DAVID TKACHUK**

#### **EXPRESSION OF THANKS**

**Hon. David Tkachuk:** Honourable senators, I'm sure when you saw all these papers, you thought, "Oh, my God," but in reality I just wanted to make the type large enough so I wouldn't have to wear my glasses. So it's not going to be as long as you think.

It's hard to believe that everyone here, except me and the Liberal caucus, were appointed after 2009. That's all there is left. After what Dennis said, I'm not sure how I should take that. Nonetheless, a lot of us have spent a lot of time together and had a lot of wars together, but we have had a lot of good times together as well.

I want to thank all of you for your kind remarks. I also want to thank Senator Furey for his kindness to me and my family, not only today but on many past occasions. Your ruling allowing the emergency debate on Kinder Morgan was appreciated by Western Canada and it got the debate started in the House of Commons. We began our friendship working together when you were the chair of Internal Economy in 2009 and I was appointed the deputy chair. That was very much appreciated. Those were difficult times, but we managed to weather them and we're still here today.

I joined the Senate so long ago that there were still two lifers in our caucus, Senator Orville Phillips and Senator John Michael Macdonald from Nova Scotia. The former retired at 75 and the latter died in office at 91. In Centre Block, right behind the Senate chamber, there was a little statue of Senator Macdonald who was the last "lifer." Both were active senators when I got here, in our caucus, right to the end. I feel fortunate to have served with them.

Just as they represented the end of an era, so do I. I am the last of Prime Minister Mulroney's appointments. I'll be forever grateful to him for sending me here.



This will be a difficult speech for me. Usually I try to make them difficult for those on the opposite side. Let me begin by thanking my family for their love and support, their patience, during my time here. They're the most important part of my life. When I was appointed at the age of 48, my parents were still with us. While they didn't come here for my maiden speech, they were able to come here for the Throne Speech in 1994 which was given by the first Ukrainian governor general. That was Ray Hnatyshyn who also happened to be the son of a fellow Saskatchewan senator appointed by John Diefenbaker.

My mother, Pauline, got to sit on the floor of the Senate, which is appropriate as she was the one who introduced debate at home during dinner. My father, George, was proudly content to sit in the viewing gallery.

I have come full circle in a way. In the gallery today are my daughter Teresa, who flew in from Green Bay last night, and my son, Brad, who flew in from Vancouver. They are joined by Teresa's partner, Keith Boye, and Teri's son, my grandson, Braden Benedetti.

Brad's wife, my daughter-in-law, Nancy Martin, and their two children, my grandchildren Fay and Max, were not able to join us today, but they will be celebrating with us this weekend in Saskatoon. And, of course, my wife, Sharon, is here. We were high school sweethearts and she is still my rock. All our lives revolve around her strength and wisdom.

I hope you will take the time to meet with them later in the day.

• (1440)

I want to thank my staff. When I was first appointed, I was lucky to be able to hire Rhonda Walker, who managed to work on a PhD and have three children while she was with me. I was busy, but she was obviously a lot busier than me.

Sitting with her in the gallery are Katarina Shave, my parliamentary assistant, who has worked for me for 22 years; and Robin Hay, my legislative assistant and director of parliamentary affairs, who has been with me for 15 years. They will both continue to contribute to the work of the Senate as I take my leave from this place.

All have contributed greatly to the work I have been able to do in the Senate and in politics. They have my everlasting gratitude.

I want to thank all those who work here in the administration — the clerks who manage our committees under the most trying circumstances, especially the committees that I have been fortunate enough — or, for them, unfortunate enough — to be on.

A special thanks goes to those clerks and library staff, past and present, who have worked on committees that I chaired. Your professionalism and advice were always appreciated.

I also offer my thanks to the security personnel who keep us safe. None of us who were here will forget October 2014, when they responded quickly and efficiently. We were all thankful for them.

As I said in my maiden speech almost 27 years ago, it is a wonderful country where the son of an electrician from Baie-Comeau, Quebec, who grew up in a semi-detached house, can reach out to a second-generation Ukrainian Canadian who grew up in the back of a general store in a small town called Weirdale, in the riding of Prince Albert, and appoint him to the Senate of Canada.

I arrived here on June 10, 1993. At that time, anger in the West resulted in a new Conservative voice in the country led by Preston Manning and the Reform Party. In the house, the Bloc Québécois, led by Lucien Bouchard, who won almost all the francophone ridings in Quebec, formed the opposition.

I leave the Senate with the political situation in the country somewhat echoing what it was when I entered it: the Conservatives lost the election, there is anger in the West and the Bloc has been resurrected in Quebec. This is where we are some four years after Stephen Harper, during whose government support for separation in Quebec declined and there was unity in the rest of the country.

Though I was disappointed in the result of the election of October 2019, I congratulate the Liberals on their victory. I can't call them "the progressives"; I just can't bring myself to, so if you'll excuse me, I congratulate the Liberals on their victory and savour the fact that the election gave me a little more time to prepare for this week.

When I was appointed in 1993, the Senate was on the cusp of its summer recess; with the election that year, I did not give my maiden speech until the following year, on February 22, 1994. I began that speech, which was a reply to the Speech from the Throne, with the words:

I find myself with the unexpected freedom and inclination to say too much, forgetting as I wrote this that, God willing, I have another 26 years to say what I want to say.

Well, God was willing and here we are 26 years later. I have enjoyed every minute of it and I'm still speaking.

When I arrived here, I was no sooner sworn in than I was rushed to a Banking Committee meeting featuring the Governor of the Bank, John Crow. It was in the East Block and I got lost.

Over the next 26 years I was a member of 10 different standing committees and 4 special committees. I was a chair or deputy chair of one or another committee for all but a total of a year and a half of those 26 years.

Committee work is important because that is where we learn to — where we have to — play well with others. In all my 26 years there were maybe only three instances where I didn't manage to get along with my fellow Liberals on committee and only one instance with one individual where that never resolved itself. I have no regrets about that.

One of the things I tried to encourage as chair was for the committee to interrupt its business and embark on short studies — one to three meetings — if an issue arose that was newsworthy or of national importance. I encourage committees to continue that practice after I leave.

For instance, maybe Transport and Communications could invite Ezra Levant to appear to inquire about why investigators from Elections Canada hauled him in because he wrote a book critical of Justin Trudeau during the last election.

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

**Senator Tkachuk:** During my first decade here, I spent a good portion of my time working on Aboriginal issues. I was on the Aboriginal Affairs Committee and moved a private member's bill on First Nations self-government called Bill S-10. It was seconded by Senator Walter Tinn, Chief of the Sawridge First Nation, and it was supported by all the chiefs in the province of Alberta, and I think also in Treaty 8.

I was also made chair of the Finance Committee and served on the special committee looking into Pearson Airport. That was in 1995. In 1996 I became deputy chair of Banking, Trade and Commerce. I think there has been only a six-month period since then that I have not been a member of that committee.

My most rewarding experience was being co-chair of the Progressive Conservative Election Committee for the 1997 election. My co-chair was our late and lamented colleague Pierre-Claude Nolin, our former speaker.

For that election, I also recruited a young man named Percy Mockler to be campaign chair for New Brunswick. It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

We elected 20 members in 1997 and were restored to party status.

That would not have been possible if we did not have a Conservative Senate caucus that basically functioned as our national caucus. Senators volunteered to raise money, serve on the executive and work on the campaign. Senators like Gerry St. Germain, who was our party president, David Angus and Michael Meighen, our fundraisers, along with volunteers like Peter White, who was chair of our fund, worked tirelessly to repair the damage of the 1993 campaign.

Having only two members in the house — Elsie Wayne and Jean Charest, to whom we all owe an enormous debt — counting on party members in the Senate to carry on the work of the Conservative caucus is what made all this possible.

The Liberal Party experienced a similar situation when they were reduced to 35 members under Michael Ignatieff. The Liberal Senate caucus became important to that party's survival and revival. I am sure they have their stories.

In these two situations the Senate helped preserve our national parties that have served this country so well throughout our history.

My second decade here — the first of this century — began full of optimism. But as everyone remembers, that optimism was quickly interrupted by the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, and the world has never been the same.

I was privileged to serve on the Special Senate Committee on Anti-terrorism, and in 2005 I introduced in the Senate a bill called the "Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act."

Stockwell Day moved a sister bill in the house. Mine fell off the Order Paper several times. However, persistence pays off, because in September 2011, 10 years after 9/11, it was introduced as government legislation under Prime Minister Stephen Harper and it became law in 2012. For this I say thank you to Prime Minister Harper, as should we all.

Canadians also owe a big thanks to the Canadian Coalition Against Terror, and especially Sheryl Saperia and Danny Eisen, who encouraged me to introduce the bill and were with me and my office every step of the way.

In my maiden speech I said the following:

We know as parliamentarians that our system benefits from strong national parties . . . it is within the broad-based parties that people learn the skills necessary to govern, to debate, to sell ideas and to compromise. To give a little and, as Jesse Jackson put it, to find common ground.

I have never been convinced by the arguments put forth by this government that getting rid of party affiliations in the Senate makes for an independent Senate. The Senate has always been independent, and the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed that in its 2014 reference, when it wrote:

The contrast between election for members of the House of Commons and executive appointment for Senators is not an accident of history. The framers of the *Constitution Act, 1867* deliberately chose executive appointment of Senators in order to allow the Senate to play the specific role of a complementary legislative body of "sober second thought."

What the court said is that by virtue of their appointment and tenure, senators are thoroughly independent and able to engage in sober second thought. It has nothing to do with independence from a party.

The new definition of independence is a wilful misinterpretation of the original meaning of Senate independence to advance a policy agenda. We will lose something if we get rid of parties in the Senate.

As noted constitutional scholar David E. Smith wrote in his chapter on the Senate in his book *The Constitution in a Hall of Mirrors*:

. . . legislative bodies and political systems need the articulation of conflicting views if they are to be strongly democratic: the law of politics bids debate. . . . In the well-known words of Edmund Burke, “Our antagonist is our helper.”

• (1450)

The Senate requires patience and it should. Rather than getting rid of the official opposition and changing the rules to move legislation along at the speed a government likes, we should welcome dissenting opinions strongly made.

Opposing views within parties and within caucuses already force compromise. When we meet as a Conservative caucus, we practise the art of compromise because there are differing points of view. Just because members of a caucus enter the chamber or the house speaking with one voice, it doesn’t mean they are partisan. It means they are a team, made up of team players.

Independence from parties does not make senators independent. Tenure does. And if groups are together long enough, they will become as partisan as parties. Parties are an organizing mechanism and an effective one, no more, no less. You dispense with that mechanism at your peril.

The media bear a portion of that blame since they are the ones who do that the most. No one has a monopoly on identifying problems in a society. Our differences of opinion, strongly held, are always over solutions, not the problem itself in this great and wonderful country.

When our opinions and those of others are seen only through the prism of partisanship, the effect is to devalue them, discount them before they even have been expressed, as if nothing but blind allegiance could possibly lie behind those arguments, with no thought having been given to them whatsoever. I resent that. It is the worst form of identity politics.

What do we have on our side as a minority in this place? We have the rules, the right to oppose and an obligation to tell our story so that the people know there is more to the story than what the government is telling. It’s called debate.

I don’t oppose just to oppose. I oppose because I disagree. And I use the tools I have available to me. Defending the views of the political minority in the country is the responsibility of the majority. If you abandon that principle, you abandon democracy itself. And that is a fact.

Senator Joyal’s book *Protecting Canadian Democracy* was mentioned and recommended as required reading during the tributes to him. One of the contributors to that book, the historian Janet Ajzenstat, wrote that political thinkers and parliamentarians at the time of Confederation thought of Parliament as a system of checks and balances:

. . . it fell to the Senate to exercise “the power of the check” on Cabinet and the Commons. The Senate had the task of delaying or obstructing legislation when it appeared that a cabinet was attempting to use its majority in the Commons to silence dissent and suppress minorities.

What I fear now is a Senate that silences dissent and suppresses the minority in this place.

Henry Kissinger, a Jewish refugee from Germany during the Second World War, wrote in the 1950s that:

It is the essence of a democratic system that the loser can accept his defeat with relative grace. It is the essence of a totalitarian system that the victor assumes the right to proscribe his opponents.

I have very few regrets as I leave, but one of them is that I never spoke up when Allan Rock, the President of the University of Ottawa, wrote a letter effectively preventing Conservative commentator Ann Coulter from speaking at an event that had been organized there. I regret it not so much because I didn’t stand up for Ann Coulter, a Conservative speaker; I regret it because I didn’t stand up for free speech.

The whole Senate should be embarrassed. The press who represent the very concept of free speech sat on their hands. And I’ll tell you what, senators, if they don’t fight for her, they will not fight for me and they will not fight for you. And then God help us.

I am an optimist, though. I envy the future of my grandchildren. I appreciate this wonderful gift of a parliamentary democracy inherited from the geniuses of the past.

I do worry about the constant virtue signalling and the mob mentality that takes hold in our social media to shut down voices that are usually, but not always, Conservative. I worry about race baiting, and I worry about culture wars. I am proud of our culture; I really am. I am proud of what we have accomplished in our country. Many seek perfection, but there is no heaven on earth. All we can do is continue to confront our failures. That is called human progress. Culture wars and race baiting prevent us from getting to know each other and that, my friends, is a recipe for disaster.

I want to say how much I cherish my present and past caucus members and leaders, and how much I loved being with them.

My favourite meeting was always the Senate caucus because, agree with the other members or not, this was my team. I was fortunate enough to lead it for seven years as caucus chair. I will miss that meeting the most. The great leaders that I served under here were John Lynch-Staunton, Marjory LeBreton, Claude Carignan, Larry Smith and now Donald Plett.

My second-favourite meeting was the national caucus, and I will miss that as well. As Senate caucus chair, I was vice-chair of national caucus and got to chair a few of those meetings during that time. I will miss hearing the elected members debate with passion, composure and intellect. Every week I spent here is something I will always treasure.

To witness our leaders Andrew Scheer, Rona Ambrose, Prime Minister Harper, Peter MacKay, Joe Clark and Jean Charest confront problems of party and country was a privilege for me.

And, finally, to the people of Saskatchewan, my one and only home, thank you for the privilege of serving you. I have tried to represent my province and my region with as much fervour as I could muster. We will weather this latest storm of failed Liberal policies, of that I am sure. Your elected members will see to it.

My parting words of advice for this Prime Minister — as soon as I get a little partisan, I feel better — as he searches for western representation is to look no further than across the aisle to those elected members there, who he should listen to. His solution to western representation is staring at him every day, selected by the people of Canada.

And to all senators, it has been a privilege working with you. I mean that. You are here bearing a huge responsibility, and I believe you will pass the test. I will miss this place.

In preparing for a retirement party at home on Saturday, I created a slide show and had to choose music. The first song I chose was “Simple Man” by Travis Tritt. I thought that was perfect. The second one was Alabama’s “I Get Things Done.”

The last song was the easiest; it was “Closing Time,” by one of my favourite songwriters and wordsmiths, Leonard Cohen. I am sure when he wrote this verse that I am about to quote, when he painted that picture of days and time gone by, he was not thinking of the Senate. But they are words for all of us. He sings:

The fiddler fiddles something so sublime, all the women tear their blouses off, and the men they dance on the polka dots, and it’s partner found and it’s partner lost, and it’s hell to pay when the fiddler stops. It’s closing time.

I hope the picture I painted over 26 years will stand the test of time. Thank you.

**Hon. Senators:** Here, here!

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[ Senator Tkachuk ]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PUBLIC SAFETY

#### ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE’S USE OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT JUSTIFICATION PROVISIONS— 2018 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2018 Annual Report on the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s Use of the Law Enforcement Justification Provisions pursuant to the *Criminal Code*, R.S.C., 1985, c. C-46, ss. 25.1 to 25.4.

[Translation]

### THE SENATE

#### NOTICE OF MOTION TO INVITE MINISTERS OF THE CROWN WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE SENATE TO PARTICIPATE IN QUESTION PERIOD

**Hon. Raymonde Gagné (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, notwithstanding usual practice, the Senate invite any Minister of the Crown who is not a member of the Senate to enter the chamber during any future Question Period and take part in proceedings by responding to questions relating to his or her ministerial responsibilities, subject to the Rules and practices of the Senate.

• (1500)

### ADJOURNMENT

#### NOTICE OF MOTION

**Hon. Raymonde Gagné (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, February 18, 2020, at 2 p.m.

### MODERN SLAVERY BILL

#### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne** introduced Bill S-211, An Act to enact the Modern Slavery Act and to amend the Customs Tariff.

(Bill read first time.)

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

[Translation]

(On motion of Senator Miville-Dechêne, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

## INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY BILL

### FIRST READING

**Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer** introduced Bill S-212, An Act to establish International Mother Language Day.

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

[English]

## GIRL GUIDES OF CANADA BILL

### PRIVATE BILL—FIRST READING

**Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer** introduced Bill S-1001, An Act respecting Girl Guides of Canada.

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

## ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF RESOURCE EXTRACTION AND DEVELOPMENT

**Hon. Mary Jane McCallum:** 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 be authorized to examine and report on the cumulative impacts of resource extraction and development, and their effects on environmental, economic and social considerations, when and if the committee is formed; and

That the committee submit its final report no later than December 31, 2020.

## BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE NEED TO REVIEW THE BANK OF CANADA ACT

**Hon. Diane Bellemare:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That, the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, when and if it is formed, be authorized to examine and report on the need to review the *Bank of Canada Act* in order to:

- (a) specify that the Bank of Canada's mandate covers not only price stability, but also the pursuit of maximum employment or full and productive employment, as is the case in the United States, Australia and, recently, New Zealand;
- (b) provide for the signature of an agreement between the Bank of Canada and the Minister of Finance, as has been done since 1991;
- (c) provide for transparency measures regarding the procedure and choice of indicators for the setting of the key policy interest rate, as well as analyses of how the conduct of monetary policy affects the inflation rate, employment and income distribution, and report to Parliament; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than June 20, 2020.

[English]

## THE HONOURABLE DAVID TKACHUK

### MOTION TO PLACE INQUIRY ON NOTICE PAPER FOR LATER THIS DAY ADOPTED

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-5(j), I move:

That, notwithstanding rule 5-6(2), the following inquiry be the first item on the Orders of the Day, later this day:

“By the Honourable Senator Martin: That she will call the attention of the Senate to the career of the Honourable Senator Tkachuk.”; and

That, notwithstanding rule 6-3(1), during proceedings on this inquiry no senator speak for more than three minutes.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

## QUESTION PERIOD

### AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

#### MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR FARMERS

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, my question is for the government leader in the Senate.

Senator Gold, yesterday I, as well as many of our other colleagues, had the privilege of meeting and talking with dairy farmers who had come to Parliament Hill to raise a number of issues important to their industry, to their families and to themselves.

One issue that kept coming up in our discussions was mental health. Generations of farmers have never had the work-life balance we hear so much about in other professions. Their operations tend to be smaller and the cows have to be milked and cared for every day, year round. More and more dairy farmers are under a great deal of stress from new factors beyond their control imposed by this government, including trade deal concessions and carbon taxes, which have hurt their bottom line and added to their anxiety.

Senator Gold, dairy farmers contribute greatly to our society and our economy. What is the federal government doing to demonstrate that their mental health is a priority?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. I think all of us in this chamber, indeed all Canadians, understand how important the dairy industry is to our well-being and the well-being of our children. We grew up on milk. We stand here strong as a result of the work of so many families. I come from the province of Quebec, where the dairy industry is an important part not only of our economy but of our society.

I don't have particular information, senator, with regard to programs that may or may not exist and are specifically targeted to members of the dairy industry. Mental health problems — not only in the dairy industry but in all industries — are a growing and proper concern to all of us. I will certainly make inquiries as to whether any particular programs are in place and I would be happy to report back in due course.

**Senator Plett:** Thank you for that. We will await a response, hopefully in the near future.

• (1510)

Senator Gold, last May, the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food in the other place released a study on mental health. One of its recommendations was that the Government of Canada invest in educating business partners and other stakeholders who work with farmers to detect the signs of distress in order to refer them to resources that can help them.

As you may know, Senator Gold, some organizations and provinces, including your own province of Quebec, are setting up outreach teams to go from farm to farm, to check on farms and try to break the stigma around mental health.

Senator Gold, why isn't the federal government involved in more initiatives like this?

**Senator Gold:** I would be happy to inquire into the extent of the involvement of the federal government and its provincial counterparts — provinces having primary jurisdiction not only over agriculture but also health — and I would be happy to report back to the chamber.

### EMPLOYMENT, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LABOUR

#### CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Leader, as I ask my first question to you in your capacity as Government Representative in the Senate, I wish to add my congratulatory remarks to you and your team. I have had a chance to meet with Senator Gagné already at scroll meetings. She has come into the meeting and really led from the beginning. Congratulations on that.

My question to you as Government Leader in the Senate is: The employer application period for this year's Canada Summer Jobs program was finally launched last Thursday after weeks after delays. It will close on February 24, giving employers just three and a half weeks to apply. This government has not provided an explanation as to why the call for applications was delayed. Perhaps it has to do with the many different changes imposed on the program by this government. A briefing note recently released under the Access to Information Act showed a massive increase in requests from department officials to employers for clarification on their application, from 2,000 requests in 2018 to 12,000 requests last year.

My first question is a short one. In 2017, 2018 and again last year, the deadline for employer applications was extended. Senator Gold, given the confusion surrounding the program and the late start, will your government extend the application deadline again this year?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. I will make inquiries and report back to you.

**Senator Martin:** This year, the government has changed the priority areas that will be considered for funding, dropping organizations that give experience in the skilled trades and those

that provide services to seniors. It is unfortunate that many organizations that do good and necessary work in these areas will now be at a disadvantage in receiving support under the Canada Summer Jobs program.

Leader, could you please tell us why the government cut both the skilled trades and the services to seniors as priority areas under the Canada Summer Jobs program? Could you also please tell us if any consultations were undertaken prior to this decision, especially with those groups that would be most impacted?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you again for your question. Obviously, these are important questions that affect not only businesses and workers but the entire economy and our society. I don't want to make light of this in my answer. I don't have the answers to the questions that you asked. I will undertake to find them as quickly as possible. They are important. Although this sounds more like a question period than an answer period today, as compared to yesterday, I assure you that I'll do my best to get the answers to this chamber as quickly as I can.

[Translation]

## INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### MASTERCARD—CANADIAN CENTRE FOR CYBER SECURITY

**Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. About 10 days ago, the Liberal government proved once again that it lacks judgment when it comes to using our tax dollars. The government gave Mastercard \$49 million to put towards building a new cybersecurity centre in Vancouver. Did you know that Mastercard generated \$16 billion in revenue in 2019? Did you know that Mastercard made a profit margin of 54 per cent? Did you know that Mastercard does not take any risks and that the interest rate on its credit cards can be as high as 36 per cent for small investors? It is clear to average Canadians that Mastercard does not need government assistance to survive or grow.

Leader, could you please explain this unjustifiable decision made by the Prime Minister?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for that question. As you know, senator, one of the obligations and responsibilities of this and any government, regardless of party, is to attract investments and work with investors to ensure that we can benefit from investments that meet our needs here in Canada.

I was informed that the Minister of Economic Development noted that the Government of Canada delivered an investment of approximately \$50 million to support the creation of a new cybersecurity centre. This centre is truly important to the security of our financial information, which is a growing concern. The centre will also create close to 400,000 jobs, about 380,000, and help to create another hundred new co-op positions. This investment was made through the Strategic Innovation Fund. Once again, this decision must be understood in the context of our government's broader strategy to protect Canada, not just our

government institutions, but also our financial institutions and infrastructure, against the growing threats in cyberspace. That is the reason for this investment.

**Senator Dagenais:** Government Representative, don't you think it would have been fairer to give this assistance to the small and medium-sized businesses that truly need it?

**Senator Gold:** As you know, senator, the Government of Canada created a cybersecurity centre just two years ago. This centre is associated with the Communications Security Establishment and provides support and advice to organizations of any size and helps Canadian businesses and institutions better protect themselves against the increasingly serious attacks we face every day. The Government of Canada has accomplished a lot, not only by introducing the bills we have all worked on together and know very well, but also by creating institutions to support Canadian companies and organizations in this increasingly dangerous world.

[English]

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### EXPORT DEVELOPMENT CANADA

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Honourable senators, I would like to also congratulate Senator Gold on his nomination as government leader. I am looking forward to working with you.

I have a follow-up question to the one posed by Senator Dagenais with regard to the government being free and loose with taxpayers' cash. Each mandate letter from the Prime Minister to his cabinet ministers has stated:

I also expect us to continue to raise the bar on openness, effectiveness and transparency in government. This means a government that is open by default.

In contradiction to Prime Minister Trudeau's words, the Department of Finance and Global Affairs Canada are refusing to disclose any information about a loan this government has written off from Export Development Canada's account, worth just over \$196 million in taxpayers' cash.

Senator Gold, this is a significant amount of money to write off without a word of explanation to taxpayers in this country. Will your government provide taxpayers with the transparency they were promised and provide basic information, which all taxpayers are entitled to, involving this particular company and the writing off of this significant loan?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question.

In the last Parliament, we in the Senate had the opportunity to study and significantly improve legislation that was introduced to take further steps forward in open government. That included measures of proactive disclosure and the like.

• (1520)

I cannot comment on this particular loan to which you referred, but I will make inquiries to see whether divulgence of this will be deemed appropriate. But I can say it is the government's position, as reflected in a number of mandate letters, that the government continues to take seriously the transformation of our government into a more open, more digitally friendly environment for the benefit of Canadians. I am assured the government takes these responsibilities very seriously.

**Senator Housakos:** Government leader, it's nice to say that we take these responsibilities very seriously, but at the end of the day, all we've had as an explanation from Global Affairs and EDC is that this loan has been written off in the best interests of Canadian taxpayers. I think you will acknowledge that isn't a sufficient line of explanation. It's \$196 million being written off, and I think the Canadian public needs to know exactly why EDC came to that conclusion and why Global Affairs signed off on it. Just to say, "It was in the best interests of the taxpayer — take our word for it," I think we all believe, in terms of good governance, that just doesn't suffice.

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question, but I repeat, I'm not aware of the circumstances of that. I do have confidence the government takes these responsibilities seriously and is attempting to answer appropriately.

[Translation]

## DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

### SECURITY OF ELECTION PROCESS

**Hon. Claude Carignan:** Leader, to protect last October's election, the government put in place an internal team responsible for publicly sounding the alarm if it discovered evidence of interference or foreign influence.

Immediately after the election, some officials indicated that they had discovered attempts to spread misinformation. Additionally, notes obtained by the CBC revealed that there were still deficiencies in how Canada managed the security of its elections.

Leader, first of all, can you tell us what deficiencies were identified that threaten the integrity of the electoral system?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question, senator. As you may know, one of the greatest challenges facing a democratic system like ours is protecting our systems and institutions from attack without revealing how we do it.

If those who wish us harm know our game plan, that makes their job easy. With all due respect, I don't think it would be appropriate or in the interest of national security for the government to disclose everything it may have found. These circumstances demand that the government collaborate with the team of experts.

[ Senator Gold ]

Canada has top-notch teams of experts whose job is to detect breaches, close them, and employ every legal means to protect us, and I'm certain that is exactly what we're doing.

**Senator Carignan:** The last time I heard an answer like that — saying that we can't talk about security measures because that would be a breach of security — I was visiting the LG2 dam, whose offices were broken into a month later. That is not exactly a reassuring answer.

Last week I was at the Council of Europe where there were discussions of aspects of democracy that had been altered as a result of foreign intervention.

There was talk about various ways to prevent this type of situation, such as regulating information from web giants such as Facebook. The minister provided a protection plan before the election. For its part, the Trudeau government, which intended to have a plan to protect the electoral system, disclosed a good portion of that plan. It was made public.

Leader, I will repeat the question. Which parts of the protection plan didn't work?

**Senator Gold:** It's probably down to my French not being clear enough, but I think you might have misunderstood my answer to your question.

All I was saying was that when you find a problem within a system, the last thing you should do is reveal the problem publicly to anyone who could exploit it. That's what I meant to say.

You probably know that before and during an election, the government works regularly with a team of experts to make sure all systems are safe. Experts work 24/7 to search for potential problems and try to fix them.

Senator, again, it would be unwise and irresponsible to discuss the details of what the experts found, because doing so is not in the national interest.

[English]

## AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

### RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, as I mentioned earlier, in recent months farmers across Canada have had to contend with global trade protectionism, miserable harvest weather conditions, a rail strike and added costs due to the carbon tax.

A review of business risk management programs was announced in July 2017. Over two and a half years later, farmers are understandably frustrated by the absence of progress in this review. In December, they were told to wait until this summer when more talks will take place between the federal and provincial governments.



Senator Gold, could you please tell us, or get the information for us, as to why this is taking so long? Is there any way for your government to speed up the review process?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question. I will make inquiries as to the status of those discussions and be pleased to report back to the chamber.

**Senator Plett:** The timing of the review, a report due in April and another meeting in July suggest there will be no changes in the upcoming federal budget to AgriStability or other business risk management programs.

Senator Gold, our farmers cannot keep waiting. Why are they being asked to wait? They need support now. Will your government put in place the help our farmers need?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. I'm advised that the government is working very hard on many fronts and has, in fact, provided support in many areas to Canadian farmers in light of all the challenges those farmers face. Many of them you've mentioned; others, including challenges with our relationship with China, are well known and need not be elaborated.

The Government of Canada has advised me that there are many measures in place, including those that were negotiated and are in place and will be in place once we ratify the legislation implementing CUSMA.

Again, I repeat that I will be happy to look into the status of those negotiations and discussions and report back to the chamber.

## JUSTICE

### LEGAL LEGISLATION TO PROTECT FARMERS

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, another topic that came up during my discussions with dairy farmers and, indeed, in discussions with other farmers is the threat to their farms and their animals posed by animal rights activists who trespass or occupy farms in protest against the treatment of animals.

• (1530)

While no one should be deprived of the right to protest, these incidents raise serious concerns surrounding the safety of animals and respect for the rules currently in place regarding biosecurity, biosafety and farm animal exposure to disease or contamination.

Senator Gold, what is your government's position on this? Has there been any discussion within your government to look at changing the Criminal Code so that these actions will be considered criminal?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. I'm not aware of any discussions within the government on this particular issue, but to the extent that they are taking place and will become public, I'd be happy to report back.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### THE HONOURABLE DAVID TKACHUK

#### INQUIRY—DEBATE CONCLUDED

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition),** rose pursuant to notice of earlier this day:

That she will call the attention of the Senate to the career of the Honourable Senator Tkachuk.

She said: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to our dear colleague and a parliamentarian of great distinction, the Honourable David Tkachuk, on the occasion of his retirement from our esteemed Senate chamber after 27 years of steadfast service and leadership.

I have had the distinct honour of working closely with Senator Tkachuk for over a decade. I have seen firsthand his determination, passion and unwavering commitment to represent Saskatchewan and all Canadians. Be it during the fiercest of debates in the chamber or chairing or serving on a range of committees, David Tkachuk is one of the clearest and most convincing of voices for his province, for our party and for Canadians.

As a senator, he has served on a number of committees which others have outlined and as chair or deputy chair or as a member in good standing. His profound influence and contributions to our Conservative caucus, Senate committees and this very chamber, from his maiden speech to his impassioned speech we heard earlier today, are all archived in the annals of Canadian history.

On a personal level, I don't know a life on Parliament Hill and in Ottawa without you, David. As members of the same caucus but also as sort of housemates in our Ottawa home, along with other members in this chamber, we have in the past decade had a chance to dine together, to talk about the day's debates even more vigorously outside of the chamber and to hear stories you have shared with us.

You were the first caucus chair when I and other members of the chosen 18 were appointed in 2009, and you always looked out for us, sharing sound advice that can only be gained through experience both in government and opposition. I've heard some of the best stories more than once, like the time you defeated a budget bill at committee while you were in opposition, because the government was flat-footed and you took the opportunity that just landed in your hands. Of course, the report was defeated and everything went well.

I sincerely appreciated the encouragement and respect with which you always spoke to me as your house leader and as a colleague and friend. There aren't enough words to express how much you have given to all of us and how much you will be missed in this chamber. Our Conservative family is losing a true leader, an invincible warrior, a giant in politics, and a mentor to me personally and to many others. Your wisdom, knowledge and determination will continue to inspire us even after you retire from this place.

I want to acknowledge Senator Tkachuk's family: his wife Sharon, son Brad, daughter Teri, son-in-law Keith, and grandson Brady, and other grandchildren who are not here. Those who are with us today, thank you for your steadfast support and for sharing him with us and all Canadians for so many years — decades.

As he prepares to take his senator's hat off on February 18, I know the hats he loves to wear above all are those of devoted husband, father and grandfather.

Your love of country and politics that has inspired your long and illustrious political career is second only to your love of your family, which is immeasurable. Thank you for everything. We will miss you, and God bless you.

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

**Hon. Douglas Black:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to an effective parliamentarian, a proud Western Canadian, and, above all, a good friend.

Senator Tkachuk has become part of the fabric of this institution, and again today we saw why. We'll all miss his honesty, his political courage and his easy laugh.

I've had the pleasure of working closely with Senator Tkachuk since I arrived here, particularly during our time together on the Banking, Trade and Commerce Committee. I watched him as chair, and I learned from that opportunity. When I had the privilege of serving as chair of that committee, Senator Tkachuk was always generous with his counsel whether I requested it or not.

I want to say something about Senator Tkachuk that many of you already know but which deserves to be reflected in the public record. Everything that David Tkachuk has done, in my experience in the Senate, he did for everyday Canadians, the Canadians that Senator Neufeld used to refer to warmly as "Fred and Martha."

David Tkachuk never forgot who he works for, and he never forgot that what we do in the Senate affects people's everyday lives. That is why he has been such a strong supporter of the natural resources industry and stands shoulder to shoulder with the women and men in this country who have been so deeply affected by government policies. That's why he pushed back on Statistics Canada's invasive data collection plan during our Senate Banking Committee. That's why he was motivated to ensure tradespeople in Canada had effective lien protection. That's why he took the point of view of Canadian consumers during both our bitcoin and our open banking hearings. That's why he insisted the Transportation and Communications

Committee, which he chaired, travel to Western Canada to ensure that Canadians' voices could be heard on Bill C-48. We owe Senator Tkachuk a debt of gratitude.

While we aligned on many matters, we, like all of us from time to time, didn't agree on everything, but I would say to you that you always disagreed agreeably.

Finally, Senator Tkachuk is a very skilled practitioner of politics. I know some in this chamber have the view that politics is not a good thing. I disagree. Politics is people and the art of advancing people's needs while respecting and navigating others' views. That is what we're here to do. In my opinion, David Tkachuk was a master at advancing interests while always keeping "Fred and Martha" very firmly in mind.

I thank you, David, for your contribution to the Senate, to Saskatchewan and to your country. I have absolutely no doubt that as you move forward in whatever you choose to do, you will keep these interests firmly in mind. Thank you, my friend, and good luck.

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

**Hon. Paula Simons:** Honourable senators, this is wonderful. This is, I think, the first time in all my dealings with Senator Tkachuk when I'm going to get the last word.

Our popular culture is full of stories of odd couples, of two people who meet and clash and argue, and who end up learning to appreciate each other, even if grudgingly: Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy, Rick Blaine and Captain Louis Renault, Rory Gilmore and Paris Geller.

When future historians tell the tangled tale of Paula Simons and David Tkachuk, they may not put it in the same category as *Pride and Prejudice* or *Casablanca* or even the "Gilmore Girls," but today I do want to acknowledge the debt I owe to Senator Tkachuk, my most unexpected and surprising mentor.

Some of you may be surprised to see me standing here today in praise of Senator Tkachuk, and I know why. After all, all Edmonton Oilers fans know — and if you are from Edmonton, you are an Oilers' fan by default — it is not easy right now for any Edmontonian to say anything nice about anyone named Tkachuk — or T-chuk, as the other guy says it. The senator's namesake who plays for the Calgary Flames has a reputation for instigating trouble and then running away from a fight. But our Senator Tkachuk is not a man to turtle or one to back down. That is one valuable lesson I have learned from him.

• (1540)

He had lots of other good advice for me. Once when we were stuck together storm-stayed at the Toronto airport, he strongly advised me to start working out at a gym to deal with the senatorial poundage — advice I have taken, by the way, which is why I can now fit back into this suit.

The real lesson I learned from him came one evening when we were in the thick of the debate over Bill C-48. I told him I was being attacked by people on both sides of the debate on social media. I may have even whined a little bit. “Who told you politics is easy?” he asked me with that wicked chuckle. “Politics is hard.” We had our disagreements and sometimes our antagonist is indeed our helper, but not always.

But from him I learned how to stand up for my principles, how not to turn a political disagreement into a personal quarrel, how to maintain a certain sense of humour about the rough-and-tumble game we play here, how to apologize when I make a mistake and how to get back up after being knocked down. Most of all, he taught me how not to turtle.

Senator Tkachuk got his professional start as a teacher, and he certainly taught me some tough lessons. I hope I will be a better senator as a result. I will miss his fierce work ethic, his joy in the cut and thrust of the debate and his passion for the West, the region we both so love.

I wish him well in his retirement, though I doubt he will ever be retiring. You just have to promise me one thing: Don’t let anyone in Edmonton know — and especially don’t let Zack Kassian know — that I said anything good about anyone who spells their name T-k-a-c-h-u-k. They may never let me come home.

**Hon. Fabian Manning:** Honourable senators, I’m delighted to have the opportunity to join my colleagues in paying tribute to a man who has certainly left a mark not only on this place, but on ourselves.

Shortly after I received the call from the Prime Minister welcoming me to the Senate of Canada in January of 2009, I received a call from Senator Tkachuk welcoming me and telling me if I ever needed any help on anything that he was just a phone call away or to drop by his office. I had never met the man up to that point in person.

I wasn’t here very long before I had to go to his office. That reminded me of, when I was in high school, being called to the principal’s office. I went to him and we had a little situation, and he gave me some good advice that day — advice that is still with me today — that I think has made me a better senator, without a doubt.

We walk on the shoulders of giants here in the Senate, and certainly those of us left here are walking on the shoulders of giants like Senator Tkachuk.

I want to take an opportunity to say thank you for your service and contributions to the Senate of Canada and for your service and contributions to the many committees you have served on over the years, as you have heard here today. I want to thank him for his service and contributions to his home province of Saskatchewan. He wears it on his sleeve. I sat on many committees over the past number of years with Senator Tkachuk, and without a doubt Saskatchewan was where his heart was, and he didn’t mind telling you so if it was going the other way.

I also want to say thank you for your service to Canada and to Canadians from coast to coast to coast. It’s strong voices that we need here in the chamber to bring the concerns of our provinces to this bubble that we call Ottawa, and certainly Senator Tkachuk has done that in fine style over the years.

On a personal note, I want to thank him for his patience. When I was running late for a meeting over in his office, he would always say that it was a half-hour later in Newfoundland anyway so he never worried if I was running late. I want to thank him for his guidance to me as a young senator; certainly, from the experiences he has had, he was always willing to pass on advice and try to set you on that right path.

I also want to thank you, however, for your leadership at the committee level, at the Senate caucus and in the national caucus. As many others have said today, when he went to the mic, people listened to his experience and his leadership.

Most of all, I want to thank the senator for his friendship to me here in the chamber and, certainly, his friendship over the years.

And just to give you a story of how it is the little things that matter — sometimes we forget the little things — I happened to be in Senator Tkachuk’s office last year at a meeting we were having. On his wall there was a collection of Maclean’s magazines that he had collected over the years. One of them had a picture of John Crosbie on the front of the magazine after bringing in the budget in 1979 and the defeat of the Joe Clark government. John Crosbie was a Newfoundland giant of politics and a friend of my family. I said to David, “Whenever you retire, I want that magazine; I want that cover of John Crosbie.” He said, “I’ll take care of that.” I never mentioned it after that and never even thought of it again.

A couple of weeks before Christmas a package arrived in my office in East Block, and here was the magazine with John Crosbie on the cover from Senator Tkachuk. I was very happy with that. I told him yesterday that with the passing of John Crosbie just a few weeks ago, that magazine could be worth a lot of money. We’ll talk about that at a later date.

I certainly wanted to say a heartfelt thank you from me and my colleagues to you, senator, for your work here. I certainly wish you all the best in your future endeavours and hope you enjoy your retirement with your wife, Sharon, and your children and grandchildren. Being a grandfather myself now, I know what that means. As I’ve said to you many times in the last few days, some of the people who have left this place I won’t miss, but you, David, I will.

(Debate concluded.)

**INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION**

• (1550)

**MOTION IN RELATION TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP ADOPTED**

Leave having been given to proceed to Motions, Order No. 17:

**Hon. Yuen Pau Woo**, pursuant to notice of February 4, 2020, moved:

That, notwithstanding rule 12-5, the Honourable Senator Dean replace the Honourable Senator Gold as one of the members of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration provided for in rule 12-3(2)(a).

He said: Honourable senators, may I quickly explain the motion, if you will indulge me? Thank you for granting leave. The motion is self-explanatory. It is about replacing Senator Gold with Senator Dean on CIBA. I would like to explain why the motion is necessary in the first place.

Under ordinary circumstances, replacement of members on a committee is a routine matter, especially when the member is from the same caucus or parliamentary group. Senator Gold is no longer a member of the ISG and therefore we have to do this special procedure to replace him.

This is a pedagogical moment here. I wanted to let everyone know that there are other circumstances behind this special motion. Senator Gold wasn't even an original member on CIBA for the ISG. That person was Senator Dean, but we replaced him with Senator Gold because there was a meeting of CIBA during the intercessional period between the dissolution of Parliament and the start of the new Parliament. We had to do that because it was not possible for the ISG to replace our members once we entered the intercessional grey zone, if you will, between the end of one Parliament and the start of another.

That privilege, however, is given to the government and the opposition. In other words, some groups in the chamber have the right to replace their members on CIBA during a period between one Parliament and another Parliament, but other groups do not. That is why we were unable to immediately make the switch back from Senator Gold to Senator Dean at that time.

I bring this up only because it is an example of discrepancies, if you will, in the rules and the statutes that govern the Senate. In this particular case, that rule is in the Parliament of Canada Act. We are hoping that we can get changes to the Parliament of Canada Act that will restore, introduce and allow for some equality of Senate groups in the Senate. We are also hoping for changes in the *Rules of the Senate* that recognize groups other than the government and opposition and provide them with the same privileges and benefits that the government and opposition have.

That, of course, is the subject of the motion that I gave notice of some weeks ago, a subject for a different day, but I thank you for the opportunity to provide you with some background to this motion and a preview of the motion that I will be speaking to after the break. Thank you, colleagues.

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** If I may, since you did explain the reasoning behind this specific motion, even though we did give leave and it was actually adopted, because we understood what was happening, it actually demonstrates the flexibility of our current Rules which, in the previous Parliament and in this Parliament, will stretch for all of us as a chamber, if we give leave, we can make these changes and adjustments.

In terms of the motion you're referring to, senator, in my years in the Senate, I have never seen a motion that changes so many rules in one motion. Customarily we would refer the matter to the Rules Committee. The committee would have an opportunity to look at things in depth. However, we're not debating that motion, per se, but I want to point out that our current Rules have allowed these changes to happen and I think the Rules do serve us very well. I wanted to add that to today's debate.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

**ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS****FIRST REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED**

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Sinclair, seconded by the Honourable Senator Patterson, for the adoption of the first report (interim) of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, entitled *Developments and actions in relation to the committee's fifth report regarding Senator Beyak*, deposited with the Clerk of the Senate on January 31, 2020.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 12-30(2), a decision cannot be taken on this report, as yet. Debate on the report, unless some other senator wishes to adjourn the matter, will be deemed adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate.

Is that agreed, honourable senators?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Pursuant to rule 12-30(2), further debate on the motion was adjourned until the next sitting.)

[*Translation*]

#### THE SENATE

#### MOTION TO AFFECT WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY SITTINGS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CURRENT SESSION ADOPTED

**Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)**, pursuant to notice of February 4, 2020, moved:

That, for the remainder of the current session,

- (a) when the Senate sits on a Thursday, it shall sit at 1:30 p.m. notwithstanding rule 3-1(1);

- (b) when the Senate sits on a Wednesday, it adjourn at 4 p.m., as if that were the ordinary time of adjournment provided for in the Rules, unless it has been suspended for the purpose of taking a deferred vote or has earlier adjourned; and

- (c) if a vote is deferred to a Wednesday, or to later that same day on a Wednesday, it take place at 4:15 p.m., notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, with the Speaker interrupting the proceedings immediately prior to any adjournment, but no later than 4 p.m., to suspend the sitting until 4:15 p.m. for the taking of the deferred vote, with the bells to start ringing at 4 p.m.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(*At 3:55 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.*)

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