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The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Thursday, November 24, 2022

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

[English]

Prayers.

[Translation]

[English]

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO VICKIE JOSEPH

Hon. Amina Gerba: Honourable senators, every year on November 19, we celebrate Women's Entrepreneurship Day, which is intended to give women the means to actively participate in our country's economic life.

I rise today to pay tribute to a Vickie Joseph, a female entrepreneur and diversity success story. Vickie is a graduate of Montreal's International Academy of Design, a serial entrepreneur and a philanthropist. She worked for many businesses before she created !Nu.I by Vickie in 2006, a fashion company known for its original creations designed for women who want clothing that is both elegant and comfortable.

Vickie is also the co-founder and president of V Kosmetik International, which specializes in the manufacturing and distribution of beauty products. Her makeup line, V Kosmetik, has 50 shades for darker skin tones and is available in Canada and around the world, including the United States, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, Benin, Saudi Arabia and South Africa.

Vickie believes that with success comes a responsibility to help others. For that reason, she co-founded, with her husband, Frantz Saintelmy, Groupe 3737, an important entrepreneurial incubator that promotes newly emerging businesses.

She also co-founded FemPreneurs to help women develop their businesses with special programs for women of diversity.

Recipients of several awards, Vickie and I are members of the first cohort of Excellence Québec, which I invite you to learn about online.

Colleagues, as I have often said, the prosperity of diversity contributes to the prosperity of our country. We must do everything we can to support female entrepreneurs, and Black ones at that. As a Black female entrepreneur myself, I know the systemic barriers Vickie had to overcome to get to where she is today. She deserves our recognition.

Please join me in honouring an inspiring female entrepreneur and diversity success story, my friend and sister, Vickie Joseph.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Mackenzie Klyne. He is the son of the Honourable Senator Klyne.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

THE LATE GILLES LOISELLE, P.C., O.Q.

Hon. Claude Carignan: Honourable colleagues, I would like to pay tribute to a great servant of Quebec and Canada, Gilles Loisel, who passed away on September 29.

Mr. Loisel was born in Ville-Marie, in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region. Although his career took him all around the world, he never forgot his roots. He always made a point of returning to Abitibi from time to time.

Mr. Loisel began his career as a journalist at *Le Droit* and later became a correspondent for Radio-Canada. He was known as a hard-nosed journalist. While covering international politics in the 1960s, he, along with so many other illustrious journalists, participated in exploring the world that francophone Quebecers were creating.

Gilles Loisel was then recruited by Daniel Johnson to join Quebec's public service. He first started as press secretary for the Délégation générale du Québec in Paris and then became a diplomat, serving as Quebec's delegate general in London during the talks on the patriation of the Constitution. Of note, Mr. Loisel worked for three different political parties, which is a testament to his professionalism and his expertise.

It was Brian Mulroney, together with his old friend Marcel Masse, who convinced Mr. Loisel to enter politics. He was elected as a member for the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada in the federal riding of Langelier in 1988. He served as Minister of State for Finance and President of the Treasury Board in Brian Mulroney's cabinet and as Minister of Finance in 1993, in Kim Campbell's cabinet.

Mr. Loisel's major accomplishments include the consolidation of laws governing major financial institutions, which helped the economy withstand the global financial crises that followed, and the modernization of the public administration, together with the establishment of a stricter expenditure control regime.

After his defeat in 1993, he was an advisor to Paul Desmarais for approximately two decades. Mr. Loiselle thus participated directly, and in several different roles, to Quebec's remarkable development since the 1950s. This man from a large family that lived in a remote area represented Quebec in the great capitals of Europe, in Paris, Rome and London. He helped put in place major consequential policies for the Canadian economy as well as the free trade deal with the United States and the creation of the GST.

He tried, much like his Progressive Conservative colleagues in Quebec, to correct the mistakes of the elder Trudeau and enable Quebec to sign the Constitution with honour and enthusiasm. After a very full public life, he became an advisor to one of the greatest businessmen Canada has known.

On behalf of myself and the Senate, I extend my sincere condolences to his wife, Lorraine, his children, Frédéric and Anne, and all his family members and friends.

Thank you, Mr. Loiselle, for your contributions to Quebec and Canada. Rest in peace.

• (1410)

[English]

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Camilla Keller Olsen, an Arctic Intern at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Denmark in Canada. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Anderson.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

JAMES EETOOLOOK, O.C.

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: Honourable senators, today I have the honour of paying tribute to James Eetoolook, a giant among Inuit leaders. James was a pioneer and leader in the long struggle for the creation of Nunavut.

James began his long career as a leader working as a clerk for the Hudson's Bay in what was then Spence Bay in the Northwest Territories, or the N.W.T. He became the co-op manager and then settlement secretary of the settlement of Spence Bay, now Taloyoak, in 1975. He then became senior administrative officer when the community became one of the first hamlets in the N.W.T. in 1976. He was elected president of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association in 1989 and president of Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, the predecessor to Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., or NTI, in 1992.

That was the time we had to settle a dispute with the Dene over the western boundary of Nunavut. I worked with James and other Inuit leaders as we recommended mediation that led to the so-called Parker Line. We then had to work to secure, for the

second time, majority support in the N.W.T. for the boundary for our new territory. This was the second plebiscite in which Inuit leaders put everything on the line to democratically pursue our dream of Nunavut — the first being in 1982 when we managed, by high turnouts in what is now Nunavut, to secure 56.4% support for division of the Northwest Territories.

James has been a rock-solid leader of Inuit for all those years. Since that time, and as elected vice-president of NTI for 29 years, he has worked tirelessly, advocating for and supporting the rights of Inuit as a land claim negotiator. His signature is on the Nunavut Agreement of 1993, he was president of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association and Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut and, for the last 29 continuous years, the vice-president of NTI. He was the driving force of Inuit-led DEW Line and environmental cleanups all across Inuit Nunangat and fought for Inuit subsistence hunting rights against animal rights groups at Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, or CITES, meetings, travelling all over the world from his isolated and remote home in Taloyoak on the Central Arctic Coast. He also led successful negotiations with Canada on parks, heritage rivers and protected areas.

James Eetoolook, thank you so much for all you have done for the territory, Nunavummiut and Canada.

I am thankful for this opportunity to share with you, my dear Senate colleagues, just some of his many achievements.

Qujannamiik, James. Taima.

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 Evgeny Afineevsky, Natalya Nagorna and Hanna Zaitseva. They are the guests of the Honourable Senators Dasko and Kutcher.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

UKRAINIAN FAMINE AND GENOCIDE ("HOLODOMOR") MEMORIAL DAY

Hon. Donna Dasko: Honourable senators, the Ukrainian Holodomor is recognized on the fourth Saturday of November each year, and I rise today to remember the millions of victims of this genocidal famine that was perpetrated against the Ukrainian people in the 1930s. Under dictator Joseph Stalin, the Soviet government launched a policy of collectivization that involved the brutal confiscation of grain and all foodstuffs from the Ukrainian rural population. Villages were blockaded, and during the worst year — 1932 to 1933 — thousands died every day. Many millions of Ukrainians died of enforced starvation during the Holodomor.

In a tragic example of how history can repeat itself, today we are witnessing nothing less than another genocide perpetrated on the Ukrainian people by another tyrant. The crimes committed by the Russian army, commanded by Russian president Vladimir Putin since the illegal invasion of Ukraine began on February 24, include mass atrocities in the invaded territories: the systematic, willful killing of Ukrainian civilians; the desecration of corpses; identifying and killing local leaders and widespread instances of physical and mental harm and rape. Young children are kidnapped, forcibly removed from their families and stripped of their language and culture. Some are inducted into modern slavery.

These examples of genocide have been independently verified by the New Lines Institute, the Raoul Wallenberg Centre and others. Indeed, Putin has framed this as a genocidal war right from the beginning. Like his predecessor Joseph Stalin, Putin despises an independent Ukraine. His goal is to destroy this democratic and peaceful nation and return it to the dark days of authoritarian rule.

In the 1930s, the Soviets were especially successful at denying their crimes against humanity. Although a few brave journalists — including the trailblazing Canadian Rhea Clyman — were eyewitnesses to those events, and although many survivors shared their accounts, the story of the Holodomor remained covered up for over five decades.

Today, however, there is no hiding. The whole world knows about the illegal invasion of Ukraine and the crimes perpetrated there by Russian forces. I am proud that our government, Canadians across this country and democracies around the world are standing strongly and steadfastly with Ukraine in the face of this new genocide. Brave Ukrainians are fighting for their lives and for their country, but they are fighting for our freedoms too.

Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[Translation]

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Jayden Paquet-Noiseux. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Audette.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

JAYDEN PAQUET-NOISEUX

Hon. Michèle Audette: Good afternoon, honourable senators.

[Editor's Note: Senator Audette spoke in Innu.]

[Senator Dasko]

Colleagues, I rise today to introduce you to my young guest. When I first met him, I thought he was 18, but no, he's just 16 years old.

I met him on July 15, 2022, at a gathering about online safety held in Quebec City. It was such a pleasure to hear him speak, and I was especially honoured to meet him.

Jayden Paquet-Noiseux attended the meeting as a spokesperson for Children First Canada. I heard what he had to say and I admired his leadership. His contribution to the meeting was lauded not only by me, but also by other adults, other moms and other *kokum*. I knew right away that this young man would go far in life.

I was so impressed that I invited him, as I invite others every time I visit a primary or secondary school, or a university or college, to come and meet us in the Senate of Canada, since this chamber also belongs to them.

It finally happened on September 8, 2022. Jayden emailed me to ask if he could do a placement with me, which, of course, I accepted.

I was happy to know that, at 16 — he is in grade 11 — he is already very involved indeed. He is involved in his community. He is involved as a member of Children First Canada, known in French as Les enfants d'abord Canada, and he was also a member of the Young Canadians' Parliament and the National Youth Advisory Panel.

He has already had the opportunity to introduce and debate bills, which is something I have not yet done. Bravo! He debated a bill on mental health and had media appearances on CBC Kids News, Radio-Canada and elsewhere. He was also the bilingual services coordinator for Children First Canada.

I would like to thank our colleague, Senator Moodie, for organizing a round table recently that Jayden participated in.

Guess what? Jayden is going to come study at the University of Ottawa. Jayden, I hope we will have the privilege of seeing you again, and I wish you all the best in your political science and communications studies.

When I was young, I dreamed of becoming a senator, and I hope to see you here one day. *Tshinashkumitnau*.

Some Hon. senators: Hear, hear!

• (1420)

QUEBEC GAMES

Hon. Chantal Petitclerc: Honourable senators, in just 100 days, 3,300 young athletes competing in 20 different sports will meet for a celebration of amateur sport, the 56th Quebec Games.

The event will take place in Rivière-du-Loup, in the senatorial division of Grandville, which I have the privilege of representing. Young people representing 19 regions of Quebec will experience nine days of achievement, sports performances, perseverance and camaraderie.

Since 2016, Rivière-du-Loup has been preparing to host this celebratory event in the heart of winter. The Quebec Games have been part of our provincial athletes' careers for over 50 years and are a unique opportunity to promote healthy lifestyles and sports.

I'm going to bet that on March 3, when the athletes make their entrance during the opening ceremonies, emotions will be running higher than usual. The Lower St. Lawrence has been waiting for these games for a long time. Our young people are emerging from a time in their lives that has not been easy. This will be the moment to recognize their incredible resilience.

The 100-day countdown to the games is a crucial, intense period that generates a lot of emotions, and it is a magical time. It comes with the realization that all the work done over the years will finally bear fruit, and the athletes will have the chance to give it their all, to challenge themselves to do even better.

I leave you, senators, with the words of Isabelle Charest, an Olympian and Quebec's minister for sport, recreation and outdoors. She said the following and I quote:

I absolutely adored participating in the Quebec Games, where I made important contacts that influenced my career. I am convinced that the spirit of friendship that I felt so strongly there is still alive and well today, and that is partly thanks to you, dear organizers, volunteers and stakeholders in the sports community. We have been through some challenging times over the past few years, but you kept the flame alive.

Dear athletes, volunteers and organizers, I stand firmly behind you and wish you all the best as the 100 day countdown begins.

Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

[English]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

JUSTICE

CHARTER STATEMENT IN RELATION TO BILL C-32— DOCUMENT TABLED

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a Charter Statement prepared by the Minister of Justice in relation to Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, pursuant to the *Department of Justice Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. J-2, sbs. 4.2(1).

LEBANESE HERITAGE MONTH BILL

TENTH REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Ratna Omidvar, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, presented the following report:

Thursday, November 24, 2022

The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology has the honour to present its

TENTH REPORT

Your committee, to which was referred Bill S-246, An Act respecting Lebanese Heritage Month, has, in obedience to the order of reference of November 3, 2022, examined the said bill and now reports the same without amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

RATNA OMIDVAR

Chair

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

(On motion of Senator Cordy, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading at the next sitting of the Senate.)

[Translation]

PENSION PROTECTION 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-228, An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985.

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on December 7, 2021, Question Period will begin at 2:30 p.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, pursuant to the order adopted December 7, 2021, I would like to inform the Senate that Question Period with the Honourable Gudie Hutchings, P.C., M.P., Minister of Rural Economic Development, will take place on Thursday, December 1, 2022, at 2:30 p.m.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, we're just a couple of minutes away from 2:30 and the minister arriving. May we suspend to await the minister's arrival?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(The sitting of the Senate was suspended.)

(The sitting of the Senate was resumed.)

• (1430)

QUESTION PERIOD

(Pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on December 7, 2021, to receive a Minister of the Crown, the Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, appeared before honourable senators during Question Period.)

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, we welcome today the Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, to ask questions relating to her ministerial responsibilities.

Pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on December 7, 2021, senators do not need to stand. Questions are limited to one minute and responses to one-and-a-half minutes. The reading clerk will stand 10 seconds before the expiry of these times. Question Period will last one hour.

MINISTRY OF INDIGENOUS SERVICES FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY FOR NORTHERN ONTARIO

LONG-TERM DRINKING WATER ADVISORIES

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Let me add my welcome as well, minister.

Minister, part of your mandate as Minister of Indigenous Services is to:

Eliminate all remaining long-term drinking water advisories on reserve and make sure that long-term investments and resources are in place to prevent future ones . . .

Back in 2015, the Prime Minister promised to put an end to these advisories by March of 2021. Yet Canada still has 34 long-term drinking water advisories in 29 communities across the country.

Minister, why has your government failed to follow through on its promises to Indigenous peoples to end these advisories?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much, Your Honour, and thank you very much for welcoming me into this very honourable place.

On the issue of water, let me first start that by saying that the commitment remains to work with First Nations communities and partners to lift all boil water drinking advisories. In fact, since 2015, we have lifted 136 long-term advisories and, importantly, prevented 231 short-term advisories from becoming long-term advisories. I expect that the majority of the remainder — 31 is the actual number remaining — will be lifted within the next 12 months.

Having said that, I will also tell you — and it's something I have learned in my journey — that it isn't the federal government that has the final say on whether a long-term drinking water advisory is lifted. That remains in the control and decision-making power of the chief and council. We do a lot of work with communities that have new plants and a water system that is delivering water but which are not ready yet to lift that water advisory. We have programs to help community residents, who have been subjected to boil water advisories sometimes for the entirety of their lives, to trust the water that's coming out of the taps.

This was something that, immediately upon hearing it, I recognized how it could be true, but hadn't thought through prior to this position. We continue to work with those remaining 28 communities and the 31 advisories, and I know that our government will not rest until we are able to make that work.

Senator Plett: Well, minister your government reaffirms its commitment to reconciliation, and I think we can both agree that ensuring clean tap water for every First Nation is a very crucial part of achieving just that. Yet your government's verbal affirmations contradict its failure to meet the 2021 deadline. I

appreciate what you are saying about your commitments, but these commitments don't seem to take effect. Has your government now put a firm deadline on its commitment to end these drinking water advisories? If so, when is it? I'm sure that most chiefs and councils would be happy to assist you in getting this done.

Ms. Hajdu: Again, through you, Your Honour, thank you for the question. I will say, absolutely, we remain firmly committed. As I said, we expect the majority of the remaining 31 to be lifted within the next 12 months. There is a concrete and transparent graph and an outline of the work that is happening across the country, which you can follow on the Government of Canada website. It will tell you specifically the stage of each project. The majority of the projects are in the building stage or in the finalization of the testing stage. There are a few that are still in the stage of conducting feasibility studies to prepare the planning for the alleviation of those boil water advisories.

I can also tell you that the government is confident that we have enough money to be able to complete this work, and that the money is there and accessible as we continue this work.

I believe — in fact, I am profoundly certain — that no community wants to be, as the honourable senator has said, under a boil water advisory. However, I will also reflect on the comments of leaders who have said that they do not want to prematurely lift boil water advisories — in fact, the chief in Neskantaga told me this just a couple of days ago — if they don't have confidence that the system will continue to deliver water. It is because of the lack of confidence that their community members have.

This is an exercise in true self-determination, working with communities at the speed that they determine, which is why it makes it difficult to set another deadline.

The Hon. the Speaker: Time has expired. Minister, I probably should have advised you in the beginning, when you see the clerk standing, you have 10 seconds to finish your answer, okay?

Ms. Hajdu: I am complete with that answer. I have more time than in the other place, so thank you very much for that.

The Hon. the Speaker: Thank you, minister.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Welcome, minister. Last week, the Auditor General of Canada tabled a fairly scathing report on your department's poor performance in supporting First Nations communities with respect to emergency management. The report stated:

Overall, Indigenous Services Canada did not provide the support First Nations communities needed to manage emergencies such as floods and wildfires, which are happening more often and with greater intensity.

The report also found that the department's approach was reactive rather than preventative which cost taxpayers 3.5 times more money as a result. First Nations communities identified many preventative infrastructure projects to mitigate the impact of emergencies, yet 112 of these projects that have been approved by the department have yet to be funded.

So, minister, who is responsible for this gross mismanagement costing taxpayers 3.5 times more money? Why is your government not acting on the 112 prevention-focused infrastructure projects identified by First Nations communities?

• (1440)

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you.

First of all, I take issue with the term "gross mismanagement." In fact, the Auditor General found that the department was extraordinarily responsive to helping communities in times of crisis, which, as most of the honourable members in this place will know, is more expensive than prevention work, although prevention work is also expensive.

So the challenge the government has in front of it, not just on the Indigenous Services file but all infrastructure files, is how to both respond to increasing climate-related emergencies while also supporting the investments that we need in appropriate infrastructure and in community capacity to prepare and adapt to those climate-related emergencies.

It's relieving to hear members of this house that are Conservatives talk about the need to acknowledge climate change and to address the ongoing onslaught of climate-related emergencies. I can tell you that this is the challenge in front of governments worldwide. Certainly, for the department, we will be seeking additional funds to help communities have the resilient infrastructure they need, which often means more expensive infrastructure, as well as the capacity to do that planning so that communities have the ability to withstand the onslaught of the primarily climate-related urgent incidents.

[Translation]

DIABETES PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Hon. Marie-Françoise Mégie: Welcome to the Senate, minister.

As I'm sure you know, diabetes has a significant and disproportionate impact on Indigenous and Inuit communities. Currently, access to continuous glucose monitoring systems is limited under the Non-Insured Health Benefits program for First Nations and Inuit in Canada.

Given the current drug benefit list, when will you be able to change your policy to make sure Indigenous children get the care and services they need to effectively treat and prevent diabetes?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you, senator. That is a very important question.

[English]

It is actually related to the previous question, which is about flipping from treatment — often very expensive treatment — to prevention. I see those glucose monitors you're speaking of as an important prevention tool to help people control their diabetes and get better outcomes that reduce the need for more extreme interventions.

I had an Indigenous pharmacist actually teach me about this type of glucose monitor. So I'm working now with the department to understand how we can add that type of glucose monitor to the formulary so that more Indigenous people can have access to that particular tool. That will, indeed, eventually alleviate costs on the treatment of severe diabetes and diabetes-related complications.

ACCESS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING

Hon. Paula Simons: Minister, Call to Action 11 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report calls for adequate federal funding support for Indigenous students seeking a post-secondary education, but according to the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, only 19% of about 25,000 eligible Indigenous learners received funding from the Post-Secondary Student Support Program each year.

Can you tell us what your government is planning to do to increase funding for Indigenous students? Can you also tell us whether you would be open to expanding the terms of the ISET Program — the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program — so it is less strictly tied to labour market outcomes?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much.

I was proud to be the minister of the former department of employment, workforce development and labour when the ISET Program received a historic increase — 58% more funding and a 10-year commitment — that allows adult education and ISET's programs, which is Indigenous secondary education training programs, to have a longer runway to help people achieve their education and training goals.

I'm interested to hear more about the flexibilities the honourable member is talking about, and she can certainly share them with the current minister under whose portfolio that falls.

In terms of the shortfall for post-secondary education supports, our government has taken historic measures to make post-secondary education more affordable. Often, First Nations and Indigenous students still have barriers to attending because of lives, quite frankly, that include poverty. That makes going to school and staying in school very challenging.

So I share her ambition around increasing access to post-secondary education for First Nations students. I think every student who has the capacity, an acceptance letter and an ability to attend post-secondary should have a smooth passage to those studies and that training. Not only is that good for the individual, but it is good for communities. It certainly is good for Canada. We need every ounce of talent as we face these enormous challenges together.

So I will be focused on working with my colleagues, the Minister of Finance and others, to ensure that the department has better capacity.

CHILDREN'S MEDICATION SHORTAGE

Hon. Brian Francis: Hello, Minister Hajdu.

Last week in *The Globe and Mail*, Tanya Talaga reported that last September, an Ontario regional pharmacist for the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, which is a part of Indigenous Services Canada, sent a memo asking nursing staff to save expired children's pain and fever medication due to ongoing shortages.

Not only is there no evidence of a similar directive being made in other jurisdictions, but Health Canada has advised against doing so since safety and effectiveness are not guaranteed. This is yet another unacceptable example of First Nations children being provided with a different standard of care than their peers.

Could you confirm whether the directive to stockpile expired medication for First Nations children remains in effect in Ontario or elsewhere? Could you also tell us what percentage of the foreign supply of medication recently secured by Canada will be allocated to Indigenous children, including those in rural and northern communities, where the need is greater?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much, senator. I asked that question myself of the department when I read Ms. Talaga's report.

I will start by first reassuring people that we do not have a shortage of children's medication in First Nations. It's very important that we understand that is not the case, and that community health centres not only have children's pain medication in stock, but we also have many of the compounds needed should we get to a place where we need to compound those medications, obviously with professionals at hand.

In terms of the report, what I understood from the department's briefing to me was that the information that Ms. Talaga had was incorrect. There was that directive by other provincial health authorities to save medications that were out of date for potential use. Again, we are not there by any stretch of the imagination, and I am glad for that. We have a very sophisticated team at the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch that regularly monitors medication shortages and works closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada and provincial partners to make sure that we will have the supplies we need.

As of today, we are certain we do.

TUBERCULOSIS COUNTERMEASURES

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: Thank you, and welcome, minister.

I believe you are aware that in the community of Pangnirtung in Nunavut, there are active cases of tuberculosis, or TB; there are 35 active and 126 latent cases that could become active. A lack of screening facilities means the accurate number could be much higher.

We know that a study published by the Canadian Medical Association found that Nunavut Inuit transferred to Ottawa from my home region have a 25% higher chance of dying after surgery due to what the authors note as systemic barriers in accessing timely and culturally appropriate care.

However, federal monies granted through ICPC — the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee — meant to aid in the screening and treatment of TB are not being spent due to a dispute between NTI — Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. — and the Government of Nunavut.

Are you willing to take direct action, minister — this is your money — to ensure the money that was allocated to eliminate TB in Inuit Nunangat is spent?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. It's an excellent question.

I have been taking direct action. In fact, all summer and into this fall, I've been speaking with both parties. I'm pleased to say that they have signed their letter of agreement on how to move forward. That is a very positive step.

But I will also say that you're right: The Government of Canada has invested millions of dollars to combat and treat tuberculosis. Obviously, on the medical side, we do need provincial and territorial partners to do that work, in large part because they are the health care delivery providers.

But in addition to that, in Budget 2022, the historic investment of \$845 million for Inuit housing allows us build on some of the progress we have made. There still is a gap. It's important when we are talking about tuberculosis that we don't forget about the social determinants of health like housing and access to things like education and information that is culturally appropriate and in languages that people can understand.

• (1450)

We'll continue to work with our partners to deliver these funds and the supports that are needed so that this extremely urgent work can get done.

[Translation]

HOMICIDE RATE

Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu: Good afternoon, minister. According to data obtained from Statistics Canada, 190 Indigenous people were victims of homicide in Canada in 2021, including 45 women. This number represents 25% of murder victims in Canada. The homicide rate of Indigenous victims was six times higher than that of non-Indigenous people. This is a tragedy, and it happens year after year. Nevertheless, the Liberal government seems to have no plan to protect Indigenous communities from this endemic violence. Instead, it is adopting measures like Bill C-5, which will encourage crime. As usual, your government is turning its back on victims.

Minister, what concrete action is your government taking to reduce the number of Indigenous women, children and men who are murdered in Canada?

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. I'm pleased to hear this question because, in fact, it was one of the first pieces of work I did as a minister for this government, launching the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. I will note that there are senators in this room who were very active in that work as well.

Of course, it is difficult work. It is a multi-sectoral work. We need partners at the municipal level, the provincial level and the federal level.

The federal government, I often say, is very good at giving money. We don't necessarily know exactly what to do. Communities do, municipalities do, provinces do, and I see our role as an enabling partner.

We certainly do now have a national action plan that, as I said, partners have fed into. That is a plan for how we get to this place together. There are billions of dollars committed and invested. The national action plan is also what is considered an evergreen document, so it will be updated as we learn more, as we see what works and what doesn't work.

I will say, it is also something that the work that we're doing on housing, on homelessness, on supports for Indigenous people in urban settings is critically attached to. Just a few weeks ago, I was in Manitoba, announcing funding for a women's shelter to be able to have core permanent funding and additional space, dignified space, for Indigenous women who find themselves engaged in the streets, in violent situations, in risky situations. I spoke to some of the women in the shelter.

The federal government is increasingly becoming a very strong partner with municipalities, organizations, Indigenous-led organizations, friendship centres. It's an all-hands-on-deck piece of work, and I'm honoured to be able to do that with partners.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Minister, as a senator from Manitoba, let me thank you for what you have done in helping that women's shelter. As you know, you and I were on a flight coming back from Winnipeg the day that you came back from there, so thank you.

Minister, in the spring of this year, the Parliamentary Budget Officer published a report which analyzed the government's expenditures and results for Indigenous peoples through the creation of a second department. The report found the government was failing Indigenous peoples in a multitude of ways, noting a significant increase in expenditures, which is estimated to be several billions of dollars, and a "significant decline" in the results for Indigenous communities. The report concluded, "All organizations examined performed poorly in their ability to consistently maintain a target and date to achieve it"

Minister, how do you justify another report that your government is spending more and achieving less? In the six months since the report was tabled, what concrete steps have you taken to reroute the bulk of these expenditures from the Ottawa bureaucracy to Indigenous peoples directly?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much, Senator Plett. I will tell you that closing a gap, especially when that gap has been ignored for decades, if not generations, is extremely expensive. Turning a gap around, sometimes those early investments don't demonstrate the kinds of success that we want to see immediately. It's like closing any gap.

It's not closed, by the way. The government has a goal of closing the infrastructure gap, for example, by 2030. But the gap is so large that even with historic investments in infrastructure, over \$18 billion to date, we still see the need of communities far outstrips the investments made to date.

The structural change between the two departments, I believe, was important. It was very difficult to have a department that was responsible for the relationship, if you will — land claims, settling of long-standing treaty disputes — along with a department that simultaneously was responsible for administering services.

We are stabilizing as the two departments have become clearer in their roles, and I think having a department that is solely focused, like mine, on Indigenous service delivery allows for us to get better and better at doing that work through the principles of self-determination.

It's a huge shift for the government in the way that we think about this work, but it's an important one. I think it will have a legacy for many generations.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULTS REPORT

Hon. Tony Loffreda: Thank you, minister, for being here, and welcome to the Senate.

As a member of our National Finance Committee, I have noted that your departmental results report for the last year has not been provided, and the previous one was less than thorough. These reports should contain critical information for the Senate's National Finance Committee.

Will the minister provide a date when we can expect a report and ensure that it is thorough and complete, with verifiable performance indicators, beyond stating that the funding has been dispersed?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. I think the honourable senator is speaking in my language — measurement of outcomes is extremely important to me. However, we are also talking about measurement in a space where self-determination is very important and data has been used and misused. So there is a huge distrust, in some cases, by Indigenous peoples of the collection of data and of the way that the government will use the data. So this is delicate work. It is important work, and everyone agrees that we need to be able to show outcomes.

In terms of the date of the departmental results report, I'm thrilled that someone reads that because it's important. In fact, I would agree with the senator that the first year when I was the minister, that report was rather thin. I hope that you'll find that the report has improved this year. I recently signed off on it, so I would assume you'll have it in short order.

INDIAN STATUS CARD APPLICATIONS

• (1500)

Hon. Bernadette Clement: Welcome, minister. On behalf of Senator Pat Duncan, I want to ask the following question:

[English]

You have an understanding of health care, and with your current responsibilities of Indigenous Services, your mandate letter includes a whole-of-government approach.

Status First Nations can be identified through provincial-territorial health care numbers. Why is assisting the renewal of status cards through Indigenous Services at such a bottleneck and causing such difficulty for First Nations? Why have we not seen quantifiable improvements after the millions you have spent to improve the system?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much.

I agree. This is a complaint that I hear about. I would say it's the bread and butter, in some ways, of front-line work for members of Parliament, because when someone cannot get the renewal of their status card, of course, it creates all sorts of challenges for them.

Our government, as you note, has invested more money to increase the efficiency of status card renewal. I have asked and directed the department to look at automated ways to do this. I think part of the challenge is that it is a very laborious process that requires increasing numbers of individuals. Of course, as we work to amend some of the systemic discrimination in the Indian Act — I know that a number of senators have worked extensively on this — that means even more people seeking status cards.

This is a direction I have given the department — to look at ways we can use some automated process. I'm no tech expert, but certainly some way to facilitate a faster process that allows for people to get the critical information they need.

[Translation]

ENTITLEMENT TO INDIAN REGISTRATION

Hon. Michèle Audette: *Kwe*, minister. We'll start from the same principle of self-determination. Your government made a series of amendments — Bill C-3 in 2010 and Bill S-3 in 2007 — to announce its intention to address the issue of emancipated persons in order to eliminate gender-based discrimination in the entitlement to Indian registration. Where we part ways is that in my books, this is more about softening or reducing discrimination and maybe not eliminating it altogether. I would like your thoughts on that. What are you going to do for the thousands of people, men and women, who can be registered in Ottawa, but because of membership codes in section 10 of the Indian Act, will be excluded from their community? To me, that is not what it means to eliminate discrimination.

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: It's a very difficult question that the senator has posed to me. In fact, I find this space a challenging one because there is no question that people have been discriminated through the Indian Act. The entire act is discriminatory. The aspects regarding how the colonial state decided who is — or is not — Indigenous has been marked with gender discrimination and other forms of discrimination throughout its history.

As the honourable senator knows, we are working now on amendments that would allow individuals with family histories of enfranchisement to transmit entitlements to their descendants — to the same extent as individuals without family histories of enfranchisement. These came from the Bill S-3 three-year review and extensive partner outreach.

The honourable senator is correct that it is also a somewhat contentious space because, in fact, there is not consensus amongst First Nations leaders, in particular, about how to reincorporate people into the community. Having status is one thing. Being a member of the community is another. This work continues: to understand how we do this in a thoughtful way that doesn't impose obligations on communities — which some communities don't want — and, yet, also satisfy the rights holders, the individuals, in terms of their connection to their community.

NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: My question is about the Non-Insured Health Benefits, or NIHB, in Nunavut. There was a 6% increase of the 36,611 eligible clients under the NIHB administered by your department. This is all about Inuit: They are unable to access the full range of services that are meant to be covered under NIHB because many communities don't have regular access to professionals, such as mental health providers, dentists, opticians and other specialists. They have to come to Southern Canada to access these services.

Once they are here, without the means to pay upfront, they find it difficult to find providers who direct bill to NIHB. Many of those who can pay upfront have complained about being left seeking reimbursement — only to get lost in a maze of bureaucracy.

Does your department have a publicly available list of providers that are enrolled in the NIHB direct-billing programs which are translated into common Indigenous languages and broken down by province?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you.

I actually don't know the answer to that question. I will commit to the honourable senator to get back to him with the information. I think it's a very good idea, especially the translation aspect. We will be in touch with his office.

GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: Welcome, minister.

Will the proposed new amendment to the Indian Act follow the Indian Act Sex Discrimination Working Group's findings that the best way to end the Indian Act's extinction regime is to institute a one Indigenous parent rule for both male and female parents, thus getting rid of the generational cut-offs?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you.

I believe the honourable senator knows I can't talk about the legislation that will be tabled at some point in order to address the ongoing systemic discrimination.

I believe that the legislation that we will table will address some of the concerns, and likely not all of the concerns, because there is still more to do. There are still people who have some strong perspectives about what needs to happen.

I will say this: The government is committed to ending all sex-based discrimination. We will be looking forward to the comments from honourable senators in this place during the inevitable study of the legislation.

[Translation]

ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER

Hon. Renée Dupuis: Minister, welcome to the Senate. In your mandate letter of December 16, 2021, the Prime Minister asked you to do the following, among other things:

... collaborate with Indigenous partners — by working together to close socio-economic gaps and improve access to high-quality services.

I would like to come back to the drinking water issue, because it seems to me that it falls under at least three of the sustainable development goals that Canada has committed to achieving by 2030, namely sustainable communities, the resolution of the difficulties accessing drinking water and the elimination of discrimination. Closing socio-economic gaps means more than just investing money. We must also examine how we close the gaps with services provided to citizens in general.

My question is about the 27 or 28 communities you mentioned, where 31 drinking water advisories remain in effect. Are these 27 or 28 communities part of the First Nations that will be

compensated according to the provisions of the settlement between the federal government and the First Nations that have filed class action suits?

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: I think I understand the honourable senator's question.

The water settlement is one of the largest in Canada's history. Quite frankly, I hope that this country arrives at a place where we are not forced to do things through litigation, but, rather, we lean in and do these things as a country.

We know that when Indigenous people have a fair chance to succeed — when communities are healthy, and when people have access to drinking water and education — all of us will thrive as a country.

In terms of how the compensation will flow, I can't specifically say. I don't have that information in front of me, whether or not all of those community members are subject to compensation, but my suspicion would be yes.

It is a broad number of people who are owed compensation as a result of long-term drinking water advisories. That agreement, as I said, has been reached with the litigants. We look forward to flowing that compensation. It's being managed and administered by a third party.

The historic settlement also commits the government to the appropriate amount of money to be able to complete the rest of the long-term boil water advisories, as well as to provide equity in operating funds for the salaries of the water operators — that was one of the critical ingredients to having clean water in communities.

Not having people paid appropriately or equitably, compared to the province that they were in, meant that, oftentimes, communities could not retain qualified, skilled people to run the plants.

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry, minister, but your time has expired.

DIGITAL READINESS

Hon. Marty Klyne: Minister, my question is in reference to digital transformation, and the mobilization and readiness of young adults located north of the fifty-fifth parallel to compete in the new economy.

As you know, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada is working feverishly to connect all households and businesses in rural, remote and Indigenous communities with 50/10 internet speeds.

Minister, what levels of digital skills, training and readiness are our working-age Indigenous adults at? Are they ready to participate in the new economy? What efforts are being made to close any gaps before they widen?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you. The honourable senator raises a complex question with multiple moving parts.

In terms of capacity of communities, and our capacity as a government to close the digital divide, we have been making historic investments in broadband. We need, again, to work with partners to do that.

The federal government doesn't have its own broadband company — unlike, for example, in northern Ontario, where I come from, where we can hook homes up to it. In some cases, we have to work with regional providers and, in other cases, provincial providers. Frankly, I think we all have to work to push those regional and provincial providers to consider how they will be equitable in their approach with Indigenous and remote communities.

It can be a challenging conversation when many of those providers are looking at this through the lens of revenue and economic feasibility rather than of equity. That's where I hope that our investments at the federal level will help to close that divide.

You're right; access to the digital world is a critical ingredient — not just for education, but also for health delivery and economic capacity. Many communities are growing their own economic capacity, and they need access to high-speed internet and broadband to be able to market their services and goods. We will continue this work with our provincial, territorial and regional partners.

• (1510)

DEVOLUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Hon. Scott Tannas: Welcome, minister.

In 2015, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada — which was the full ministry before it was split in two — had just over 4,500 full-time employees. Over the last five years, your government has worked tirelessly to devolve responsibility of Indigenous matters to Indigenous governments. All the while, there has been a rapid increase in full-time employees in your department over recent years. As of this year, there are 8,800 full-time employees working in Indigenous ministries, and your department employs around 6,800. Before you mention this, I was aware that 1,400 employees were transferred into the Indigenous ministries from Health Canada. We have to take those out. It isn't just 4,500 to 8,800; there are 1,400 that need to be taken out. However, with the 1,400, it still doesn't explain the year-over-year growth.

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Tannas, my apologies, but your time has expired.

Minister, would you like to respond?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you, Your Honour. I think I understand the general direction of the question, and it's a question that I have recently asked of the department.

In fact, the Finance Minister's instructions to ministers is to look for reductions in expenditures by departments — reductions that are not directly related to outcomes. This is a hard thing for a minister to understand because it is a delicate balance.

We were talking about status cards a few moments ago. This is a space where we need more people in order to efficiently process the volume of renewals that are on people's desks right now. As I mentioned to the honourable senator, there may be ways to increase efficiency using a digital approach.

There are also employees in the department who are providing direct services. We are hiring more nurses, for example, and we would not want to in any way undermine the day-to-day functioning of communities by removing people who are essential to supporting First Nations.

The question is around program planning, and that is where it becomes difficult for ministers to understand because if we reduce capacity, it will reduce the ability for the government to deliver on its agenda.

I have a lovely new deputy minister, Gina Wilson. Many of you will have met her in your travels. I am confident that she is doing the analysis right now to make sure that where we decide to reduce our numbers of public servants, it does not in any way undermine the capacity of the department to deliver.

Finally, I want to thank the hard-working members of Indigenous Services Canada, especially over the last two years during a pandemic when we had extraordinary demands placed on the department from a variety of urgent situations. They really rose to the occasion.

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry, minister, but your time has expired.

SIXTIES SCOOP SURVIVORS

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Minister, this question is from my colleague Senator Mary Jane McCallum.

As the forgotten generation, Sixties Scoop survivors are still waiting for both acts of recognition and reconciliation from the federal government. Survivors were denied the right to share their stories as part of an independent assessment program. As there is no Sixties Scoop foundation, they have not received support for issues surrounding trauma, family reunification or language loss. The 60s Scoop Legacy of Canada has called repeatedly on the federal government to commission a national inquiry, but with no result.

Will the Liberal government commit to a Sixties Scoop national inquiry and provide reparations for those survivors today?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. I will have to defer the answer to my colleague Minister Miller, who is working actively in this space and is responsible for some of these decisions.

I am focused on preventing the next generation of Sixties Scoop. I will talk about the work we're doing on child and family services reform through Bill C-92. I want to thank this place for helping to get that important landmark legislation through last term. It is coming to fruition, and it is exciting.

I was in Wabaseemoong six or eight months ago, signing the first agreement in Ontario with that community to regain control over their child and family services. It is that work that I think will prevent the need for future inquiries about yet another generation of children removed.

That is the transformational work that I am proud to be a part of — not just addressing the harms of the past, but looking toward the future and creating the legislative and funding frameworks that, quite frankly, we, as a country, need to decolonize. In fact, there are many colonial practices that still exist today, that are still determining the lives of Indigenous people and that are still doing so inequitably.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Hon. Kim Pate: Thank you, minister, for being here and thank you for the work you have done since being in government, and also in the community before being in the government.

You spoke earlier about the importance of prevention. As you will well know, successive governments have spent hundreds of millions of dollars in legal fees fighting Indigenous people and communities in court.

Minister, could you please share with us the kinds of processes that are considered, and, in fact, how social, human, environmental and fiscal costs are assessed in terms of deciding whether to fight international charter and human rights decisions in courts versus the manner in which resources might instead be used to provide preventative services and avoid the sorts of litigation and court decisions that you have already mentioned?

If you are not able to share that, would you commit to requesting, say, the Parliamentary Budget Officer or another arm's-length body to do that kind of assessment?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you. I am afraid I wouldn't be able to answer that question because I am often not in those conversations and wouldn't have a direct line of sight in terms of how some of those decisions have been made.

I'll start with this: Our government has been clear that we would prefer not to litigate and that negotiated solutions are the best way to pursue reconciliation, quite frankly. This is an agenda of my colleague Minister Miller in his role within Crown-Indigenous Relations to settle, for example, land claims and treaty claims in a way that is built on the principles of negotiation rather than litigation. He has had some tremendous success over the last year, as did his predecessor. I am grateful for a Prime Minister who understands that this is the approach we should be taking.

Having said that, there are times when the legal advice to the Government of Canada is that there are questions that need to be answered from a legal perspective. In those cases, the government chooses a litigious path.

From my perspective in the work I am doing now — for example, with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, or CHRT — the door always has to be open to negotiated solutions, even if there are questions on particular rulings. That will be my direction as minister, and I will certainly work closely with my colleagues in that respect.

IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Hon. Patricia Bovey: Welcome, minister. First, I would like to say how impressive Canadian-Indigenous participation was at COP 27.

Since the 2019 report of the Special Senate Committee on the Arctic, climate change issues in the North have accelerated. The melting of the permafrost, in addition to melting sea ice, is posing critical problems with the building and maintenance of infrastructure, including airport runways essential to accessing northern communities. As you said to Senator Plett, the Government of Canada has committed to close the infrastructure gap by 2030.

Is there a status report on progress on these issues indicating where we stand now in 2022?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. In terms of whether there is a status report, there are a number of different gaps analyses, but I don't think there is a comprehensive gaps analysis. However, I did direct the department to begin that work when I was appointed a year ago, and we're starting to get a better sense from a fiscal perspective, at the very least.

You're right. Certainly, it is a lot about money, and, indeed, the costs are mounting. As the weather becomes more and more extreme and as we see global disruptions in the economy, in fact, infrastructure is becoming more and more expensive.

To your point, it is a sad reality that Indigenous communities are first and foremost on the front lines of climate change and are experiencing it more profoundly. They are seeing the changes.

The disruption in access to food is heartbreaking. I was in the Yukon visiting with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. I am wearing earrings from that region today. It was hard not to weep when people spoke about the loss of food — and it's not just about food. It's about a connection to the food and the cultural connection to that food. I like to say that over the past year, Indigenous people have taught me from a heart place what it means to think of the world and to think of ourselves as “being a part” of instead of “being a dominion over.” It is truly a profound shift for me. I also share with my colleagues that I have become somewhat of a raving environmentalist especially when I see the devastation in communities like Peguis, or in the B.C. Coldwater Creek area, or in northern Ontario, where forest fires are ravaging, or meeting the Tsilhqot'in out west and the work they're doing to protect their community; you can see I have a lot to say —

• (1520)

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry, minister, but your time has expired.

DEVOLUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Hon. Scott Tannas: I'd like to go back to my questions, minister, with respect to staff — 6,800 full-time employees. We heard about the status card bottleneck. We heard at committee a few days ago that it was taking up to two years to get a simple residential lease transferred.

Indigenous governments need to take up the jurisdiction. They want to take up their jurisdiction. You want them to have it. What is the plan? What does the “stop doing” list look like? How do you get your 6,800 people to back off and start planning an exit from the affairs of Indigenous people?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. The honourable senator is getting at the crux of something that I think is tricky but also important — namely, the transfer of self-determination and control which, ultimately, should result in reduced need from the department's perspective to micromanage the lives and affairs of Indigenous peoples.

There are some communities on what was called the 10-year block funding approach. They have a commitment of funding for 10 years, an escalator of that funding, predictability and they are managing their own affairs. I will take note of going back to see if it has reduced the need from the department's perspective to have “staff” working on those files. We want to be there for communities when they need support. However, increasingly communities are saying that they need to have those tools of self-determination.

I will end on this point, honourable senators. My colleague and my predecessor, Minister Miller, received funding in Budget 2021 for the tools of capacity building for communities in both financial and governance capacity. This is exciting work because

there are communities that want to do this and have need of some support to be able to have the tools to get there. I think that is transformational work.

HEALTH SERVICES FOR FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Minister, chiefs from four remote nations in northeastern Manitoba are calling for the federal and provincial governments to come together to build a local hospital. The Island Lake region chiefs have said their communities are in great need of proper infrastructure. These communities currently rely on nursing stations that can only provide limited treatments.

Chief Charles Knott said, “I think it's time the government come visit our community to see firsthand what we go through every day.”

And Grand Chief Scott Harper said:

We have been negotiating with Canada for decades to fund our hospital and related facilities while our members keep dying from preventable deaths.

Minister, I know this is near and dear to your heart. You live close to these communities. The riding that you represent is not that far away. Have you visited these communities, minister? What are you doing to ensure that the people in these remote communities get the health care they deserve?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. I don't know if I visited those specific communities but I was in Tataskweyak about a month ago; I am visiting God's Lake, Manitoba, tomorrow. I have visited some remote communities and I am aware of the challenges remote communities face in terms of accessing health care.

I will say this: The provinces and territories who are funded to provide health care must be partners in this work. Of course, the federal government funds, for example, community nursing stations that provide emergency or urgent care as well as preventative care. However, as you know, the federal government doesn't provide health care and relies on provinces to be supportive partners. I will point to Saskatchewan and Whitecap Dakota First Nation, where a clinic that is fully funded by the Saskatchewan government exists on that First Nation, where they deliver primary care services not just to residents of Whitecap but also to some of the farmers around the community. That is astounding. We need more of that. We need more communities, municipalities, provinces and territories to realize that we will all benefit when we work together and ensure that every citizen of this country, no matter who they are or what their status is, has a right to, and will do better with, equal access to services.

[Translation]

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

RING OF FIRE DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucie Moncion: Welcome, minister. My question relates to your role as the Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario. It is about the Ring of Fire.

Development of the Ring of Fire is subject to the environmental assessment process, regulatory processes and the Crown's obligation to consult. The Government of Ontario needs the federal government's support to ensure that the Ring of Fire's full potential can be achieved and to advance regional, environmental and economic development, which is of national importance.

Could you explain what financial and other supports the federal government is offering for these different projects?

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. The honourable senator is right. I am the minister for FedNor, which my community likes to remind me of because this is an important role that is of significance to northern Ontario.

The Ring of Fire, obviously, is a very important deposit. It's also a very environmentally fragile place. Many First Nations have a distinct interest and treaty rights in that area. It's delicate work and it's important that we do it in partnership with both the Province of Ontario and the First Nations communities that are closest to the deposit. We now have funding for a critical minerals strategy. That strategy will be announced shortly. It gives more detail about how it will support not only the Province of Ontario but also Indigenous peoples in areas like the Ring of Fire, where there is a significant interest not just nationally but globally.

We will have to be careful about how we do this not only from an environmental perspective but also from the perspective of full inclusion of Indigenous peoples. In the Ring of Fire, some communities are favourable to opening up the region to mining; other communities are not so favourable. All of those voices will be important in this work. It isn't quick or easy work, but it is important work. FedNor will continue to be there to support the engagement process, to support industry that's looking to develop those minerals and I will continue to be there with both my hats on to make sure it is done properly.

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Welcome to the Senate of Canada, Minister Hajdu.

Addictions and suicide are serious concerns, especially amongst Indigenous communities. In your mandate letter from the Prime Minister, you were asked to:

... co-develop and invest in a distinctions based Mental Health and Wellness Strategy ... including culturally appropriate ... services for addictions and trauma, suicide and life promotion ...

Where are we now on this pressing and urgent goal?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you very much. Just today, I was working with my department on understanding how they are making progress in pulling together the pieces of a distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategy. This is an area that is near and dear to my heart. It is related to my previous work prior to politics. I was really excited about the National Summit on Indigenous Mental Wellness we held several months ago in Toronto which brought together programs and solutions to mental wellness and substance use developed, designed and led by First Nations and Indigenous peoples. That is the way of the future.

We have distributed hundreds of millions of dollars to different Indigenous providers of mental wellness and substance use services. I am interested in increasingly ensuring those are culturally appropriate and designed by Indigenous people. Many people are in dire straits, not only in Indigenous populations, but also throughout the country; we have a crisis of astronomical proportions around opioid use, for example. Imposing western-based solutions, and healing solutions in particular, on Indigenous people is not working — I would hazard a guess that it has never worked — and I am excited about the movement that's happening led by Indigenous health care professionals and mental health specialists that is about designing culturally appropriate care.

• (1530)

Finally, let me just say that programs like Choose Life, developed by Nishnawbe Aski Nation, are showing great promise in reducing suicide and promoting life, which, as the people in that program will tell you, is the preferred way to talk about this. It's even about language when we talk about suicide prevention.

The Hon. the Speaker: Minister, I'm sorry, but your time has expired.

INFRASTRUCTURE IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Minister, in June, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs warned that Indigenous Services Canada is on track to miss its 2030 target to close the infrastructure gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. As I have outlined previously, it is clear that your government's approach to simply throwing more money at a problem in the hopes that it will magically solve itself is not manifesting in results for Indigenous communities. While funding is necessary, in the absence of an actionable plan and no strategic implementation of these funds, nothing gets done.

Minister, will your department commit to reviewing its approach and to producing an actionable plan to close this gap?

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: Thank you. First of all, I'll reflect back to my opening comment, which is that closing a gap that has been ignored for decades, if not multiple decades, is a huge, astronomical task. In fact, I asked the department when I first arrived a year ago to make sure that they began that work of assessing the gap and what it would take to address it.

I would say, with all respect to the honourable senator, it will take more money. It will take a lot of money to close that gap because, in fact, we have gaps in housing, in community centres, in schooling and in all kinds of infrastructure, including civil infrastructure. Communities are running out of lots to build houses on because, in fact, they are running out of land in some cases, or the land they have is unserviced, so it requires heavy civil engineering. I have learned more about infrastructure in the last year than I ever thought would be possible.

The government is committed to closing that gap. It will require strategic investments of financial resources, and it will require increased capacity, in some cases, in some communities to be able to plan. It will also require rigorous oversight to make sure that the contracted services that we, as a government, fund and that First Nations contract, deliver in a timely and sustainable way. We'll continue to do that hard work together.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the time for Question Period has expired. I'm sure you will join me in thanking Minister Hajdu for being with us today.

We look forward to seeing you again in the future. Thank you, minister.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FEDERAL LAW–CIVIL LAW HARMONIZATION
BILL, NO. 4

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Bernadette Clement moved second reading of Bill S-11, A fourth Act to harmonize federal law with the civil law of Quebec and to amend certain Acts in order to ensure that each language version takes into account the common law and the civil law.

She said: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill S-11, A fourth Act to harmonize federal law with the civil law of Quebec and to amend certain Acts in order to ensure that each language version takes into account the common law and the civil law. I'm proud to sponsor this bill and grateful for the support of Department of Justice staff; they have done so much heavy lifting.

Bill S-11 is a technical piece of legislation and a long read. It clocks in at 161 pages and 639 clauses. It amends 51 statutes under the responsibility of nine federal departments. It's also the result of several decades of work, and I'd like to give you an overview of the process that led us to this bill — the fourth in a series of harmonization efforts.

[Translation]

I would also like to tell you why I am sponsoring this bill.

I am a graduate of the University of Ottawa's Civil and Common Law program. I mentioned this in my speech on Bill S-215, sponsored by Senator Moncion and entitled An Act respecting measures in relation to the financial stability of post-secondary institutions. This unique gift, this unique opportunity to learn in French and in English, is something that I highly value.

Imagine my surprise when Bill S-11 was introduced in the Senate. When I heard the title, I suddenly looked up. I thought to myself, this is part of my history. As a former Quebecer turned Franco-Ontarian, this bill directly relates to the beginning of my legal career.

[English]

I remember my first day of law school. From that very first day, I learned about our country's two unique legal systems, and it was important for me to understand both. If Canada has embraced both common law and civil law, then so will I.

Our inclusion of two languages and two legal traditions and the legacy of two colonial founders means we're constantly grappling with complexity. This makes me hopeful for our country's ability to further embrace diversity and do the work necessary for truth and reconciliation. I'll come back to that in a moment. For now, let me tell you a little bit about the historical foundation of our current complex situation.

In 1774, the Quebec Act established and formalized the coexistence of civil law and common law traditions in Canada. After Britain's decisive victory, they laid the framework for a colony that included Catholics and Protestants, anglophones and francophones, common law and civil law. The common law is law that is not written down as legislation; it's law that has evolved into a system of rules based on precedent. This is a rule that guides judges in making later decisions in similar cases.

Civil codes contain a comprehensive statement of rules. Many are framed as broad, general principles to deal with any dispute that may arise. Unlike common law courts, courts in a civil law system first look to a civil code and then refer to previous decisions to see if they are consistent.

[Translation]

The coexistence of these systems was confirmed by the Constitution Act, 1867, which gives the provinces substantial residuary power in the areas of property and civil rights.

In 1993, the federal Department of Justice created the Civil Code Section, which examines federal legislation to ensure that it accurately reflects the legal traditions of both common law and civil law. The section was created prior to the coming into force of the new Civil Code of Quebec, which replaced the Civil Code of Lower Canada in 1994.

[English]

Since then, civil servants have been reviewing hundreds of statutes that regulate matters of private law. Private law deals with relationships between individuals or institutions rather than relationships between governments and individuals or institutions. Private law includes contracts like wills and marriages.

We're making progress in harmonization efforts: Bill S-4 amended more than 50 statutes, Bill S-10 amended 26 statutes and Bill S-3 amended 12. Luckily, since 1995, new legislation follows the federal Department of Justice's policy on legislative bijuralism. This ensures that bills are drafted with terminology, concepts, notions and institutions of both of Canada's private law systems. New bills won't be added to our list of statutes in need of harmonization.

I'll pause a moment to stress that. The goal is not to have to harmonize statutes forever. New bills are written with bijuralism in mind.

[Translation]

Legislative bijuralism, as you have heard, is a project involving decades of work on hundreds of laws. It is worth the trouble. We are making sure we speak to Canadian citizens in English and in French in both legal traditions. The Charter Statement in relation to Bill S-11 emphasizes the importance of

this work. We know that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees equality of status of English and French. The Charter Statement offers this reminder:

[English]

This bill contributes to the respect of the equal use of both official languages by seeking to ensure that federal laws are equally understandable in both English and French from a provincial and territorial private law perspective. It also facilitates access to justice by making legislation more accessible for all Canadians, whether they are English-speakers or French-speakers, and whether they belong to the common law or the civil law legal tradition.

Since my appointment to this place, I have resisted the notion of a language binary: that French and English are our founding languages and the only ones worthy of recognition. Let me take a moment to make the same case here and remind us all that Indigenous languages and laws are worthy of recognition and revitalization too. Our common law and civil law tradition are a legacy of colonization by France and Great Britain.

• (1540)

We should not forget what came before, and what still exists — a tapestry of Indigenous laws and traditions that are valued by hundreds of unique communities.

Indigenous law is as diverse as the communities on Turtle Island. It is not static. Elders and knowledge keepers have carried and protected the laws of their communities — despite colonization, and despite residential schools.

Indigenous language revitalization is so important. Legal concepts are rooted in language. Language and law are connected. We can't understand one without the other. As we promote language revitalization, we're opening doors to the revitalization of law, too.

While Bill S-11 does not promote the use of Indigenous laws in Canada, there is plenty of work happening in other areas. For example, the national centre for Indigenous laws at the University of Victoria, once open, will provide space for learning, practice and research. This is one example of communities receiving support in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 50. This Call to Action speaks to the need for equity within Canada's legal system. The commission calls for the federal government to collaborate with Indigenous organizations:

... to fund the establishment of Indigenous law institutes for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws and access to justice in accordance with the unique cultures of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

I hope that when we speak about harmonization in the future, we think about harmony as more than binary, but as a complex collection of traditions.

[Translation]

The Department of Justice is working to create a formal consultation process for future bills, since Indigenous communities were not formally consulted regarding Bill S-11. A formal consultation process with Indigenous Canadians will be put in place as part of Canada's commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The consultations on Bill S-11 were completed in 2017. As we all know very well, although these consultations were completed four years ago, this bill was shelved for many years while the government responded to the urgent priorities brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2017 consultation process for Bill S-11 involved over 400 stakeholders sharing materials. Justice Department staff received comments, met with banking institutions and heard from key stakeholders such as the Government of Quebec. Some groups recommended minor changes, while others stressed the importance of the harmonization efforts.

[English]

Indeed, as we look to pass this fourth harmonization bill, I'd like to take a look back at the first three bills, and highlight how significant this work is, both at home and around the world.

In 2001, Senator Pierre De Bané spoke to Bill S-4:

Harmonization will also benefit Canada internationally. The bijural nature of Canada requires respect for two great contemporary legal systems: the civil law and the common law. Globalization of markets and Canada's ever-growing openness to some very diversified countries continue to have an impact on Canadians. Bijuralism, honourable senators, gives us a better understanding of the laws of countries operating under one or the other of these systems, and such countries account for almost 80 per cent of the countries in the world. It gives Canada a leg up when developing and negotiating international rules embodying concepts from either of these systems and makes it easier to adapt to these rules.

In addition, other countries with a dual system will be able to follow Canada's lead, which has no equal or precedent. We are becoming a model for the entire world.

In 2004, while speaking to Bill S-10, the Honourable Serge Joyal told his colleagues:

We must recognize that the desired result of the overall exercise is that the civil code and the common law tradition will develop, both in accordance with their own genius and so that both will achieve something in common. Essentially, that is in keeping with the philosophy of this country, that is, we maintain our identity while we move forward together. We want to join our respective genius, talents, resources and diversities in creating a multi-ethnic and diverse society in which we can live and thrive together.

Finally, Senator David Angus took a different tack when, in 2011, he described Bill S-3 as a "gripping page-turner." Folks, I'd argue Bill S-11 is even more interesting.

Senator Angus also said that:

... all Canadians benefit from harmonization. Not only does harmonization enable Quebecers to identify more with federal legislation, but it also clarifies federal statutes, which become more respectful of institutions proper to the civil law or the common law. In addition, it makes the application of federal legislation more efficient, which should improve the overall effectiveness of the administration of justice in Canada.

I've told you about my experience. I've given you the history. Now, let's dive a bit into the bill. Truly, there is something for everyone. Bill S-11 is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're going to get.

I have to keep you invested in this speech. It's dry, folks, but I'm trying.

As you flip through its many pages, you'll see amendments to everything from the Privacy Act to the Dry Docks Subsidies Act. Senator Omidvar may be interested in the amendments to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. Senator Cormier, the Official Languages Act is also amended by Bill S-11. Senator Simons may have noticed the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Act is on the list of amended acts. And Senator Black may be interested to know that the Agricultural Marketing Programs Act is amended.

[Translation]

The objective of Bill S-11 is to ensure that the appropriate terminology and concepts from civil law and common law are used when federal legislation is based on provincial or territorial private law rules. For example, it adds the English term "hypotheque" more than 100 times to various laws.

Many of the changes made by Bill S-11 are typical bijural changes, involving adding, deleting or changing a word to ensure that it respects the traditions of common law and civil law.

[English]

For example, some federal statutes respecting contract law are missing the civil law term "mandatary." The solution is to twin the words "agent" and "mandatary" in the English texts.

Another example is replacing terms that we don't use anymore, or that are incompatible with a new private law concept. For example, English texts use the word "letting" or "hiring" when they're referring to leasing. Those terms are not applicable in civil law anymore. We're replacing them with the term "lease," which is the appropriate word in both civil law and common law.

[Translation]

Colleagues, thank you for listening. As we continue studying this bill, I hope that we will bear in mind the advantages of this process for Canadians, the decades of work accomplished by Justice Department staff, and the harmonization efforts that still lie ahead.

[English]

Harmonization makes statutes easier for all Canadians to understand. It's an important modernization process that ensures accessibility and proper application of federal legislation where it refers to provincial and territorial private law.

I hope you join me in efficiently sending Bill S-11 to committee for further debate and discussion.

Thank you. *Nia:wen*.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of November 23, 2022, moved:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 29, 2022, at 2 p.m.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

BUDGET 2022

INQUIRY WITHDRAWN

On Government Business, Inquiries, Order No. 2:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Gagné, calling the attention of the Senate to the budget entitled *Budget 2022: A Plan to Grow Our Economy and Make Life More Affordable*, tabled in the House of Commons on April 7, 2022, by the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, P.C., M.P., and in the Senate on April 26, 2022.

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 5-10(1), I ask leave of the Senate to withdraw the government's Inquiry No. 2.

[Senator Clement]

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

Hon Senators: Agreed.

(Inquiry withdrawn.)

• (1550)

[English]

CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Patterson (*Nunavut*), seconded by the Honourable Senator Tannas, for the second reading of Bill S-228, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (property qualifications of Senators).

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

JANE GOODALL BILL

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Klyne, seconded by the Honourable Senator Harder, P.C., for the second reading of Bill S-241, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act (great apes, elephants and certain other animals).

Hon. Tony Dean: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill S-241, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act, which relates to great apes, elephants and certain other animals. This is more simply titled the Jane Goodall act.

I want to speak briefly on the process and the timeline of the bill and add my support for the bill receiving further study at committee. As you will recall, the bill has three key goals: first, to protect wild animals in captivity; second, to improve public safety; and third, to promote wildlife conservation.

The bill, in the absence of meeting new requirements, would prohibit the acquisition and breeding of over 800 species at roadside zoos, including for big cats, bears, wolves, many primates, seals, sea lions, walruses, crocodiles, anacondas, venomous snakes and more. It would also phase out elephant captivity in Canada. With our cold weather, it's not hard to see why keeping them in captivity is not the best practice for elephant welfare.

For those wild animal populations currently in captivity, the bill would grandfather them in, and they would remain in place. New captivity breeding and exports would require permits from the federal or relevant provincial government, with only the federal government able to authorize transport across boundaries. Such licences could be granted for animals' best interests regarding individual welfare and conservation or for non-harmful scientific research, and there would be conditions applying.

The bill would also ban performance for entertainment and elephant rides unless licensed by a provincial government, also subject to potential conditions.

In addition, Bill S-241 would create a transparent and accessible legal framework for animal care organizations, such as high-quality zoos, aquariums and sanctuaries which must meet five criteria in order to obtain a federal licence to breed or relocate individuals of affected species. These five criteria include the following: first, administering the highest professionally recognized standards and best practices of animal care; second, providing whistle-blower protection; third, refraining from activities that misrepresent or degrade captive wild animals, such as performances for entertainment; four, acquiring wild animals in a manner that does not harm wild populations; and five, maintaining any other standards established by the minister following expert consultations based on the best available scientific veterinary animal care or animal welfare information.

Our former colleague Senator Sinclair introduced the Jane Goodall act two years ago. Senator Klyne, our sponsor of this new version, spoke to Bill S-241 in March of this year. We have heard eight speeches on the bill since then, with debate time totalling over two and a half hours.

Colleagues, this makes Bill S-241 the most debated non-government bill at this stage in the Senate in this Parliament. To put it simply, we could describe here the zoo bill moving at a snail's pace. I'm just checking to see if you were listening there.

Our debate will soon benefit from a critic's speech as we move forward to the first vote. I acknowledge and appreciate that our friend and critic Senator Plett has been visiting many zoos in preparation, as he has indicated, but in considering the bill, we will also need to hear the views of animal scientists and other experts. This includes the world-renowned Dr. Jane Goodall and many other scientists and experts eager to contribute, including representatives of animal welfare organizations.

As with any other bill, the appropriate venue for fair and open consideration of evidence is a committee study; a study would help us wrap our arms around the key issues, and there are some big ones that this bill lays out.

As Senator Cordy noted on October 4, our committees are available to hear from witnesses now, and we should take this opportunity while we can. For that reason, I'm in favour of moving this bill expeditiously to a second reading vote and committee study. The Jane Goodall act continues the good work of this chamber for wild animals, and that includes the work of Senator MacDonald on shark fins and that of former senator Wilfred Moore and Senator Sinclair with Bill S-203, the Ending the Captivity of Whales and Dolphins Act.

If passed, this bill would create the strongest legal protection in the world for wild animals in captivity. I would also note that the greater protection for wilder animals in captivity is reflected in the Minister of Environment and Climate Change's mandate letter, as is attention to wildlife trafficking, reflecting Canadians' democratic support for these policies.

We know from correspondence and social media that many Canadians and people around the world, including young people especially, are following the Senate with a close interest in the Jane Goodall act. The public is wondering about next steps, as are some of us in here. As such, this bill is an opportunity to demonstrate to Canadians and members of Parliament the Senate's thoughtful work and collegial process.

Before his retirement, Senator Sinclair spoke to this chamber again of his vision for a Senate that becomes Canada's council of elders. To realize this, he told us we should bring greater fairness and transparency to our debates and decisions on behalf of Canadians. Let's live up to that ideal, colleagues, in our deliberations on the only legislation that Senator Sinclair singularly authored. It has since been further developed by Senator Klyne, who has our thanks. I add my voice to those of many colleagues eager to move to our first vote and a committee study on the Jane Goodall act. Thank you for your attention.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): I do have questions, if Senator Dean would take a question or two.

Senator Dean: I will do my best.

Senator Plett: Thank you, Senator Dean.

It struck me as a bit odd that Bill S-241 basically turns over the accreditation standards of Canadian zoos to an American accreditation body known as the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, or AZA.

There is currently a bill, Senator Dean, before the U.S. House of Representatives called the SWIMS Act. This bill would prohibit the breeding and the importation and exportation of orcas, beluga whales, false killer whales and pilot whales for the purpose of public display in the U.S. This is very similar to rules which Canadian zoos and aquariums are already required to abide by. The U.S. is not, however.

The AZA, Senator Dean, is opposing this bill in the U.S.

Senator Dean, can you tell me why you would want to turn over the accreditation standards of Canadian zoos to an American accreditation body that does not even support the existing Canadian standards?

Senator Dean: I could simply say, Senator Plett — thank you very much for the question — that the AZA is considered to have higher standards than its Canadian counterpart. The proponents of the bill and those who support it were very much in favour of adopting the AZA standards. I have no idea why the AZA takes this position, if indeed they have so. I can't help you on that.

• (1600)

On the question of why the AZA is mentioned in this bill, it offers the highest standards available, and that's what the proponents were looking for.

Senator Plett: Well, of course, there are people saying that AZA meets a higher criterion. CAZA, Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums, are strongly denying that, and there is no evidence of any kind that AZA, in fact, does that. I want to continue, at least if for no other reason than getting this on the record, and I will speak to this in due course.

The AZA is vehemently opposing the SWIMS Act and is warning its members that if this legislation passes, it will soon be extended to include animals such as elephants, great apes, big cats and other species. They are urging their members to act now to communicate to Congress that this legislation establishes a dangerous precedent. This is AZA — the organization that is so much better than CAZA — warning their representatives in the U.S. that they do not want this to happen to elephants, big cats — something that Jane Goodall is coming into Canada to promote, but not the U.S.

Senator Dean, can you explain to me why we would turn over our accreditation standards that are not superior — that some people are telling you are superior but are not superior — to an organization that not only doesn't support our own current standards but is actively opposing the requirements opposed by zoos by Bill S-241?

Senator Dean: Thank you, Senator Plett, for the follow-up questions. They are very good ones. My sense is this: The bill is at second reading. We are here to discuss the principles of the bill and its goals and objectives, and I have tried to outline those for us today. I would welcome submissions from the AZA and its Canadian counterpart and experts in this matter to come to committee, debate, explore and educate us on these very questions that you raise.

Perhaps the best thing for us to do is to get to a second-reading vote, get us into committee, and then we can wrap our arms around these sorts of details. I would like to be able to answer those questions today but I can't. I think they can be adequately answered at committee, so let's move this thing along and explore those and other issues together in the way we should.

Thank you very much for raising these questions with me today.

Senator Plett: One final question, maybe more of a comment than question: You mentioned in your speech that I was travelling around to different zoos and aquariums, and I indeed have done that. I have been in Kelowna at the kangaroo zoo, the Calgary Zoo, the Assiniboine Park Zoo, Parc Safari, Granby, here at Parc Omega.

Every speaker in this chamber has the absolute right and, in fact, the duty to say the things that they believe, and so I'm not wanting to take anything away, but it seems there is always something being alluded to that somebody is maybe delaying this legislation. Do you not think that the proper way as well would be, though, Senator Dean, for both the critic and the sponsor to do what I have been doing and visit all of these zoos before we go to committee so that we have all the information that we can have before we go to committee? Because, indeed, I think over the years it has been shown here that I indeed support most of — if not all — legislation going to committee. I believe that is where this chamber does its best work, at committee.

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

Senator Plett: I'm going to do that, but not before I have visited as many zoos and aquariums as I think will help to educate people here about the zoos. Is Senator Dean's time up?

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: No, but we're looking for a question from you, Senator Plett.

Senator Plett: Are there others wanting to ask questions? I will finish.

Senator Dean, do you not think that it's appropriate to find as much information as we possibly can before we take it to committee so we can all speak with as much knowledge as possible?

Senator Dean: We all have to do what we have to do, and you must do that, too. I am sure I will not be able to discourage you from that. I would say again that I think it's important that we get this to committee. I'm happy for you to visit as many zoos as you wish, obviously.

Senator Plett: Maybe you want to join me.

Senator Dean: On this matter, I can tell you that I am much happier sitting here and hearing long questions than providing lengthy answers. You must do whatever you wish. I am not going to return to my snail's pace analogy, but yes, we do what we do. I believe that the place for technical questions and to examine the detail of a bill is at committee, but I don't discourage you from going wherever you like and looking at whatever you would like to look at.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Colleagues, the time has expired.

(On motion of Senator Clement, debate adjourned.)

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Wallin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Tannas, for the second reading of Bill S-248, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying).

Hon. Stan Kutcher: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak in support of Bill S-248, introduced by Senator Wallin in this chamber, a bill that would allow for the provision of advance requests for medical assistance in dying, or MAID, for competent persons who wish to avail themselves of this method of asserting their end-of-life choice.

I will not repeat the well-researched and clearly presented information provided by Senator Wallin on what we know about Canadians' opinions regarding advance requests or her discussion about Audrey's Amendment and the details of this bill. I will focus my remarks on a number of key items that I hope will be considered at the committee that studies this important legislation. Before I do that, I want to echo two key points that Senator Wallin addressed in her speech.

First, it is clear that this bill amends the Criminal Code to allow for advance requests. It is permissive, not prescriptive. There is nothing in this bill that compels or directs any person to seek MAID using an advance request.

Second, this bill does not promote MAID as an alternative to palliative care or a remedy for access to needed services and supports. As Senator Wallin put it, "MAID is not an alternative to poverty or treatment or support or family." I agree with both of these considerations.

That said, let me begin my contribution to this debate by considering what an advance request for MAID is and, equally important, what an advance request for MAID is not.

We can think of an advance request for MAID as a request made by a competent person, for MAID, in advance of a loss of decision-making capacity, to be acted upon under the circumstances outlined in the request after the requester's loss of decision-making capacity, following the requirements set out in federal legislation.

• (1610)

This consideration has a number of key components that can assist us in thinking critically and compassionately about advance requests for MAID. It can help identify areas that need careful attention as safeguards and standards are constructed to help manage the application of advance requests.

I will focus on four areas:

First, an advance request is not a directive. MAID providers are not obliged to provide MAID simply in response to a request. They must still follow their professional guidelines, best judgment and all legal stipulations in responding to an advance

request. Thus, the request itself must be clear, specific and stipulate the conditions under which it is to be considered by the MAID provider.

Second, the request must be made by a competent person, and as such, a clinically and legally defensible determination of competence should accompany an advance request.

Third, the advance request must be made voluntarily and be well considered. That means that the request cannot be the result of undue influence or coercion and that the person making the advance request has demonstrated that they have considered relevant information prior to them making the request.

Fourth, the request has been made in due consideration of the impact of the passage of time. It should be regularly updated so that the MAID provider has reasonable comfort that the request is current.

Before going into these four areas in more detail, I will address what an advance request is not and consider what some kinds of conditions are that we may expect that advanced requests would be made for.

An advance request is different than an advance directive. Advance directives already exist, are well established and are common in many different aspects of medical care. Senator Mégie raised this important issue in a question to Senator Wallin.

While an advance request for the federal regime for MAID would be governed by the Criminal Code, advance directives are governed by provincial/territorial regimes for other types of health care. Most frequently, they are given in the context of a choice or refusal of treatment.

For a personal example, when my elderly mother began to experience numerous and compounding health challenges, my brothers and I had many very emotionally problematic conversations with her about what kinds of treatments she would accept and what kinds of treatments she would not accept. These were difficult.

We wrote down her decisions and we all signed off on them. We made sure that we provided evidence of her cognitive capacity at the time of our discussions. We also all came to an agreement on substitute decision making. When the time came — and it did — we provided her medical team with her directives. They followed them.

I am certain that for many in this chamber, this is a situation not unknown to you. It can be very uncomfortable because it deals with the reality of the upcoming death of a loved one. But it is supposed to be uncomfortable because if it were not so, we would not be loving and caring people.

The same discomfort should and does arise in all of our discussions about MAID. Discomfort is a necessary part of this journey.

Advance directives can include preferences for treatment and stipulations for refusal of treatment. As such, they are logical extensions of the doctrine of informed consent for treatment and refusal of treatment.

They can range widely, from accepting palliative sedation while concurrently not accepting antibiotic treatment for a potentially life-ending infection to directing a “do not resuscitate” order, to refusing all foods and fluids administered via a feeding tube or by mouth, known as voluntarily stopping eating and drinking, or VSED, which usually — and we’ve lived through this — results in death in 7 to 10 days.

Thus, while an advance request for MAID is not the same thing as an advance directive, these different concepts share the acceptance of personal autonomy as it pertains to advance decision making, and we are underpinned by the doctrine of informed consent and the right to choose and refuse treatment, even if that choice results in or hastens death.

While it is anticipated that most advance requests will be made in the context of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer’s disease, other kinds of illnesses may also trigger an advance request. For example, a primary brain tumour, such as glioblastoma multiforme, GBM, as it is known in the medical community, is the most invasive type of brain tumour and is not curable.

People diagnosed with GBM typically live 10 to 22 months from the time of diagnosis. While most people are cognitively intact when diagnosed, decision-making capacity can decline very rapidly. End-stage GBM can include severe headaches, inability to swallow, delirium, hallucinations, delusions, loss of control over bodily functions, seizures and loss of consciousness. Knowing this reality, an individual may consider making an advance request for MAID at the time of diagnosis.

The challenge that this condition illustrates is that it is not possible to predict with any degree of certainty how long a period of decision-making competency will be in place before the changes — which can occur rapidly — happen, leading to an inability to consent to MAID even if that is the person’s end-of-life choice.

Incidentally, this uncertainty can lead to a person deciding to access MAID before they want to, a situation that is horribly unsatisfactory, to say the least.

Let us now return to the four points that I made arising from the definition of an advance request.

First, the issue of clarity, so that everyone, including the MAID provider, is certain about what the wishes of the competent person making the request are. It’s the wishes of the competent person.

Here, in my opinion, it is necessary to ensure that the request is made in written form and is specific to what the individual making the request considers to be their threshold that will

trigger a MAID request. The request should provide as much information as possible for others to be able to clearly understand the conditions under which MAID can be administered.

Statements such as “when I am no longer able to enjoy life” or “when I am not able to make my own decisions” or “when I can no longer recognize my family” should not be put forward as situations for MAID consideration. Specificity is needed. For example:

I would like to receive MAID under the following conditions, even if I am not in pain and regardless of what others think about how my life is going: if I can no longer recognize any member of my family at any time of their visits for a period of two months; OR if I can no longer toilet myself for a period of one month; OR if I do not know where I am, what day it is and what month of the year it is, daily, for a period of one month.

What is important to stress here is that these conditions are specific and are what the individual considers to be intolerable to them. They will vary from person to person and are not conditions that a third party decides.

Furthermore, if the individual is willing, family members and others can participate in the discussions as to what conditions the individual considers to be the threshold for MAID when the advance request is being developed. With such specificity, fulfilling the advance request for MAID becomes clearer for the patient, clinician and family members alike.

• (1620)

My second consideration was that the request be made by a competent person, and, as such, a clinically and legally defensible determination of competence should accompany an advanced request. This means that the advanced request for MAID should include an assessment of competency provided by a qualified clinician, and a note describing the assessment and its results should be signed, dated and affixed to the written advance request. For example, a clinical interview plus a mini-mental state examination could be considered to fulfill this condition.

That safeguard is useful to avoid later questions as to whether the person making the advanced request was or was not competent to do so at the time the advanced request was made.

Third, the advance request must be made voluntarily and be well considered. That means the request cannot be the result of coercion, and the person making the advance request has demonstrated they have considered relevant information prior to making their request. This issue may be addressed in the legislation or it may be addressed in clinical guidelines that need to be developed to assist patients, their families, clinicians and MAID assessors.

In my own professional experience in conducting numerous patient decision-making assessments, the issue of clarifying that there is no undue coercion is always part of how such assessments are done. If the clinician is not certain about coercion, the usual practice is to seek a second opinion from a colleague. If there continues to be uncertainty, further investigation may be required to clarify the situation.

Perhaps this is the issue that Senator Batters was trying to address with her questions to Senator Wallin about two independent witnesses whose purpose was to confirm that the advanced request was made voluntarily.

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry to interrupt you, Senator Kutcher, but the time has expired. Are you asking for five more minutes?

Senator Kutcher: I am.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Kutcher: Thank you.

Legislating two independent witnesses, as this bill does, may add an additional safeguard to mitigating the possibility of coercion. Alternatively, or as a complement to that, there could be guidelines embedded in standards of practice for MAID providers. These, and other options, need to be closely examined at committee.

My fourth consideration was that the request has been made in due recognition of the impact of the passage of time so that the MAID provider has comfort that the request is current. Proposed paragraph 241.2(3.22)(b) of the bill addresses this issue, requiring that an advanced request be no more than five years old. Senator Wallin has told us that the five-year timeline was chosen following consultations with various stakeholders, but that she is not wedded to that number. Personally speaking as a clinician, I would suggest a shorter time period, perhaps two years. However, whatever the window chosen, it would be essential that the updating be signed by the individual, clearly confirming the specificity of the intolerable suffering criteria for that individual and that a clinical assessment of decision-making capacity be appended to the update.

Honourable senators, this is an important piece of legislation, and it requires our careful and critical consideration. I recall in our debates during Bill C-7 that one reason presented for not legislatively addressing the issue of advance requests was that this issue had not had sufficient study in committee. Colleagues, now is the time for us to do just that.

Thank you, *wela'liq*.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

RCMP'S ROLE AND MANDATE

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Harder, P.C., calling the attention of the Senate to the role and mandate of the RCMP, the skills and

capabilities required for it to fulfill its role and mandate, and how it should be organized and resourced in the 21st century.

Hon. Marty Klyne: Honourable senators, this item is adjourned in the name of Senator Busson, and I ask for leave of the Senate that, following my intervention, the balance of Senator Busson's time to speak to this item be reserved.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Klyne: Honourable senators, I rise to speak to the inquiry commenced by Senator Harder on December 2, 2021, regarding the future of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It's an important discussion, and, by many accounts, one that is long overdue. I hope it's a discussion that leads to a clear and realistic picture of our RCMP and a bright future for the organization.

The RCMP is the most unique police force in the world. It's our national police force; it's our federal police force; and in some jurisdictions, it's the provincial or territorial police force, or the municipal police. It is also an international police force through its involvement in INTERPOL.

Depot Division, the RCMP Academy, is considered one of the most elite police training academies in the world. From 1885 to 1920, Depot was the headquarters of the North-West Mounted Police and then the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. Not only has every member of our national police been trained at Depot since the inception of the North-West Mounted Police in 1873, Depot has also trained police and investigators of many stripes from around the world.

Mounties in their dress uniform are collectively one of the most recognized symbols in the world, dressed in the red serge, Stetson hats, Strathcona boots with spurs and midnight blue stirrup overalls with a yellow stripe down the legs. Like Canada's multiculturalism, two official languages, the maple leaf, our Parliament buildings, maple syrup and the Rockies, the RCMP is a symbol of national identity.

We also know that those who serve in our national police force act with courage every time they put on the uniform, sometimes making the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. Last month, the death of Constable Shaelyn Yang in Burnaby, B.C., was a tragic reminder.

• (1630)

Suffice it to say the RCMP has an important place in our country's complex history and in our national culture, as well as in keeping us safe. However, there are concerns with our RCMP. There are questions about its mandate, its focus and its conviction to uphold the RCMP's core values. All of this lends itself to a question around the RCMP work environment, the influence of systemic racism, numerous cases of failure to adhere to proper protocols and decades of physical and sexual harassment, not to mention the difficulty in recruiting applicants and cadets. These concerns give rise to an overarching question

centring on the culture and organizational structure of the RCMP and whether the organization's mandate and core values will support its desired strategic direction and goals.

The RCMP must also demonstrate that it will proceed with values and actions of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, with an acknowledgement and understanding of the truth of Canada's history. I fully believe that this undertaking is not a quantum leap. The time has come to take a closer look at the issues that have been plaguing the RCMP for many years while building on its best attributes. That's what I will be speaking to today.

The problems with the RCMP are well documented. As Senator Harder noted last year in his speech, the RCMP was the subject of a heart-wrenching report in 2020 by the Honourable Michel Bastarache, a former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. The report was titled *Broken Lives, Broken Dreams*, and it was written following Justice Bastarache's review of more than 3,000 claims of sexual harassment and sexual assault submitted by female RCMP staff members under the Merlo Davidson Settlement Agreement. The results of his report were clear. It revealed toxic behaviour within the ranks of the police force and a broken culture that has permeated every level of its ranks. The problems were clear, systemic and irrefutable, and they continue to trouble the RCMP to this day.

Compensation was given to 2,304 women following the settlement of the Merlo Davidson class action lawsuit. More than \$125 million was paid out to female RCMP staff members who suffered gender-based abuse, harassment and discrimination.

The need for transformation lingers. Just this past June, another report was issued by three former federal judges following the settlement of the *Tiller* lawsuit, filed on behalf of women who worked in a close capacity with the RCMP and who had suffered abuse. In this case, 417 women were awarded close to \$20 million in damages for behaviour they were subjected to by RCMP staff members.

To give you a sense of the severity of the problem, I'd like to share a quote from Justice Bastarache's report which says:

... the culture of the RCMP is toxic and tolerates misogyny and homophobia at all ranks and in all provinces and territories. This culture does not reflect the stated values of the RCMP, and it is found throughout the organization. RCMP members and officers are forced to accept that they must function in the context of this culture to succeed. RCMP employees appear to blame the "bad apples" without recognizing the systemic and internal origins of this conduct.

Colleagues, the inability to address serious systemic issues must be addressed. This matter needs action, and the Senate is in a good position to assist on the issues that Justice Bastarache identified. It's not enough for the federal government to acknowledge the report and move on. To be clear, like many others, I want the RCMP to be the pride of Canada and I want other countries to be inspired by our national police force. This will require deep, transformational change — perhaps radical surgery — without losing the patient on the operating table.

As senators, we are in a strong position to help bring about that change. We should use that position to consider a review of the role and mandate of the RCMP, as suggested by Senator Harder's inquiry. Furthermore, to take that to another level, we can influence the creation of a positive, clear and realistic picture of the RCMP's future and contribute to resetting the RCMP's strategic direction, its mission, its vision and its culture and organizational structure and review and reaffirm its renewed core values of June 2022.

Despite the serious work that needs to be done, I want to highlight some of the positive contributions that the RCMP has made to Canada. Their presence in the Prairies is important, and my province of Saskatchewan has a long and celebrated history with the organization. I've seen it first-hand as the chief executive officer of the RCMP Heritage Centre, which is under consideration for national museum status, a proposal I strongly support.

The RCMP Heritage Centre is a magnificent building that is an incredible museum, exhibiting the long and storied history of the RCMP. The site tells the story of the organization's contribution to Canadian history and the development of Canada. It's a time capsule, and when you see people visiting the museum, it becomes clear just how much pride and regard Canadians have for the organization and how international visitors are inspired by the storied Mounties.

One of the great privileges of my life has been attending graduation ceremonies for RCMP candidates who have completed the training and are ready to become RCMP officers. Seeing the emotional reactions of parents, friends and family members as they watch graduates in the dress uniform that symbolizes the RCMP and all it stands for being sworn in to uphold their duties is something I'll never forget. Even more moving and unforgettable at a graduation ceremony is an active or retired member of the force presenting a badge to their adult-age son or daughter. Those ceremonies always remind me of the importance of this historic institution. It's a ceremony that I'm sure emphasizes the honour and responsibility being bestowed upon the graduate.

The RCMP Heritage Centre has also embarked on the path of reconciliation, collaborating with Indigenous leaders, elders and educators to build its truth and reconciliation strategy. The organization is committed to helping answer the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action as well as the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls — with specific calls identified for the Centre's focus from both guiding reports.

The RCMP Heritage Centre is also working with Depot Division to develop specialized Indigenous-led cultural teaching and education for cadets about the communities where they will be posted. This is promising.

Unfortunately, not all members of the RCMP have lived up to the RCMP's core values, honour and code of conduct. This leads me back to my main point: The time is now for transformational change. My belief, like Senator Harder's, is that we should take what we have learned from previous studies and testimony and help set our national police force on a new path: a path that acknowledges, honours and respects its legacy — the good, the

bad and the difficult; a path that restores the RCMP pride and reputation for being a national police force that operates with the utmost level of honour and respect for everyone — a police force that acts with integrity, shows respect, demonstrates compassion, takes responsibility and serves with excellence; a path in which Canadians' pride is unwavering and other countries are inspired.

I'm encouraged by the federal government taking some important steps. They've introduced Bill C-20, which, if passed, would establish a public complaints and review commission to replace the insufficient Civilian Review and Complaints Commission. This bill follows the 2021 report by the House Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security entitled *Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada*. An enhanced independent review and complaints body is one important step toward restoring public confidence in the RCMP. It's a good place to start, but more work needs to be done.

I know that the RCMP can become the paragon of excellence in policing. Of that, I have no doubt. There really is a solid foundation to build upon, and much off-balance-sheet equity in the symbol. However, as time marches by without transformational change, that off-balance-sheet equity diminishes.

• (1640)

I urge colleagues to support Senator Harder's suggestion to create a special Senate committee to study the future of the RCMP. This committee would be an important tool in helping to address past injustices and assist the RCMP in making a much-needed transformational change and better define its role in a 21st century Canada. We could draw from this chamber's experience and expertise in many relevant subjects, including law enforcement. As well, many of the legislators in this chamber have direct experience in making transformational change and collaborating with other leaders. I know that this is a challenging subject and would not be an easy task, but "hard" or "easy" has nothing to do with it.

I'd like to close with a recent and unforgettable moment for the RCMP on the world stage. As we all know, on September 8, Queen Elizabeth II passed away. Her death was mourned around the world. In the days that followed, tributes, memories and stories were shared, all celebrating the life of a remarkable woman and renowned monarch. Millions — perhaps billions — of people witnessed the state funeral.

For many Canadians watching from home, one moment stood out: As the funeral procession began, it was led by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police — Canada's national police — in their dress uniform, mounted on their magnificent black steeds. In that

moment, I believe Canada swelled with pride. That moment of pride represents everything the RCMP is, but it is not all that it can be. I hope we have the courage to help guide it back to a new path.

Thank you, *hiy kitatamihin*.

Hon. Denise Batters: Would Senator Klyne take a question?

Senator Klyne: Yes.

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry, Senator Batters, but Senator Klyne's time is about to expire.

Are you asking for five minutes to answer questions, Senator Klyne?

Senator Klyne: Yes.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Batters: Thank you very much for mentioning in your speech the RCMP Heritage Centre in our hometown of Regina. A year ago, during the last election campaign, the federal government promised to make that centre a national museum. That is something I know you briefly mentioned in your speech. I wonder if you have any update on how that is proceeding. Certainly, that's something that should be happening. The promise was made a year ago, and we would like to see it happen as soon as possible.

Senator Klyne: Thank you for that question. I agree with everything you said in your statement and question.

I wish I could tell you that there is an update. As you might recall, I asked the government, through our Government Representative, to provide us with an update. There was a mandate letter in 2019. It was a very simple mandate that said, "Make the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Heritage Centre a national museum." That was lost in 2020. I couldn't find it in anyone's mandate letter, nor in 2021. But, as I understand it, it's still a mandate that, nonetheless, was delivered by the Prime Minister. I'm still waiting to hear upon whose desk that lies.

Thank you for reminding us.

(Debate adjourned in the name of Senator Busson.)

(At 4:44 p.m., the Senate was continued until Tuesday, November 29, 2022, at 2 p.m.)

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