SENATE SÉNAT

CANADA

DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION • 45th PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 154 • NUMBER 101

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, November 5, 2026

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,
Speaker

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Publications Centre: Publications@sen.parl.gc.ca

Published by the Senate
Available on the Internet: http://www.parl.gc.ca

THE SENATE

Thursday, November 5, 2026

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

VETERANS' WEEK

Hon. Yonah Martin (Acting Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, Veterans' Week invites us to pause and look upon the fragile gift of peace with profound awe and sacred gratitude. We honour the more than 2 million Canadians who have stepped forward in uniform throughout our history, bearing the weight of our highest ideals, and we grieve the precious souls who did not return.

Remembrance lives deeply within our own shared Canadian story, in the memories of grandparents and loved ones who answered the call in world wars, conflicts and peacekeeping missions across the globe. We honour the quiet dignity of those who returned home, the steadfast hearts of those currently serving in uniform and the hidden sacrifices of military families whose lives have been forever shaped by service.

Like millions of people of Korean heritage across Canada and around the world, I owe my very existence and every breath of freedom I take to the veterans of the Korean War, who crossed an ocean to defend a land they had never known. Their selfless courage changed the course of history in so many ways.

One of our most sacred duties is to pass these truths down to our children and grandchildren, ensuring they understand that our peace was bought with a heavy price.

Tomorrow in this chamber and wherever we gather on November 11, we stand not merely to look back but to pledge our living loyalty to their memory. When the silence falls at the eleventh hour, may we hold their courage close to our hearts, never take our freedoms for granted and resolve to always be worthy of the sacrifices that made our lives possible.

We will remember them.

Lest we forget.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY AND REMEMBRANCE DAY

Hon. Jane MacAdam: Honourable senators, next week, we mark both Remembrance Day on November 11 and Indigenous Veterans Day on November 8. These designated days in November give us the occasion to remember and honour those brave individuals who have sacrificed during some of the darkest chapters in our human history. We also acknowledge and honour those who continue to serve in the Canadian military as well as their families.

In April this year, I had the opportunity to witness some of my own family history up close when I visited the Books of Remembrance in the Visitor Welcome Centre here on Parliament Hill. In one of those moments that seemed fated, I inquired about the names of my uncle Earl O'Hanley, who perished in the sinking of the S.S. *Maplecourt* in 1941 at the age of 21 during the Battle of the Atlantic, and his cousin Albert O'Hanley, only to discover the book would be turned to the page containing their names two days later.

Every day, the pages of the Books of Remembrance are turned so that the names of those lost are displayed to the light. The calendars are set up so that every single page of each book is turned and displayed once a year to shine a light on every Canadian who gave their life in the service of this country.

The eight Books of Remembrance contain the names of more than 120,000 Canadians who gave their lives in the First World War and Second World War, the Korean War, the South African War/Nile Expedition, the War of 1812, the Merchant Navy, the *Newfoundland Book of Remembrance* and the *In the Service of CanadaBook of Remembrance*. The ceremony offers a proper moment of reflection and gratitude, with every due reverence to those named. The officer who conducted the ceremony did so with every bit of care and respect for the dignity of those honoured.

I cannot express the solemnity of such a singular yet shared experience. It is a very moving event, and I encourage all senators, and indeed all Canadians, to visit and experience it for themselves.

Dear colleagues, I cannot conclude my statement without recognizing, as I do every year, the brave individuals who served in the Battle of Hong Kong, where 290 Canadians were killed and 493 were wounded. Others, like my father, George Palmer, endured suffering and forced labour in prisoner of war camps for almost four years. More than 260 prisoners of war would die before being liberated.

Those who have made the ultimate sacrifice shall remain forever inked in our memories and hearts as long as we remember to honour them. Turning pages allows us to honour their chapters without erasing them.

We will remember them.

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 Dr. Margaret Woodman. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Ravalia.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Hon. Marty Klyne: Honourable senators, as we approach Remembrance Day next week, I rise to pay tribute to the men and women who have served our country and the families and communities who have stood behind them.

For me, Remembrance Day carries a deeply personal meaning. My mother, Alice McKay, was one of the first to sign up with the Canadian Women's Army Corps. My father, Lawrence Klyne, was a proud Canadian veteran whose military service spanned 25 years. He enlisted in the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps in January 1940, just months after Canada entered the Second World War. He served five-plus years overseas, including in the Italian and European theatres. He later served in Korea. He retired from the Canadian Army in 1966 as Sergeant Lawrence Klyne.

My father was a man of discipline, determination and quiet strength. To me, he was a hero. His service shaped the person he was, and he passed those values on to his family. I remain immensely proud of his contributions to our country.

His story is also a reminder to me that behind every uniform is a person, family and community. In Saskatchewan, we know this well. From our largest cities to our smallest rural communities, generations of families have answered the call to serve. Their names and stories are woven into the very fabric of our province.

Across Canada, in communities large and small, we remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice, those who returned home carrying the physical and emotional scars of war and the generations of Canadians who have served our country in uniform. We also recognize the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces who continue to serve today, both at home and abroad, in defence of our security, our values and our allies.

We must also recognize the families who endured long separations, uncertainty and loss and the communities that welcomed veterans home and continue to carry their memories forward.

• (1340)

Remembrance is more than an annual ceremony. It is an opportunity to reflect on the freedoms, democracy and peace we enjoy and on the extraordinary sacrifices made to defend them. It is also a responsibility to protect these values, to stand up for one another and to ensure that future generations understand the price of the freedoms they inherit.

As we prepare to mark November 11, let us take a moment to remember those who served, to honour those who continue to serve and to express our gratitude to all who have sacrificed so much for Canada.

Lest we forget. I know I will raise a glass and cheer "The Johns" of the Royal Regina Rifles, and I hope you do as well. I will toast today, "Up the Johns!"

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Melanie Doucet, Executive Director and Project Lead for the National Council of Youth in Care Advocates. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Bernard.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Rick Hansen, Canadian Paralympic track and field athlete, disability rights advocate and philanthropist. He is accompanied by Jessica Maughan, his executive assistant. They are the guests of the Honourable Senators McBean, Petitclerc and Deacon (*Ontario*).

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SPORT IN CANADA

Hon. Marty Deacon: I have such fond memories of the man in motion.

Honourable senators, today I'd like to use my time to update you on the playground to the podium and back. Summer began full on with the FIFA World Cup, which has left a legacy we continue to learn about to this day. During the summer, I also saw playground structures installed in parks that were cutting edge, inclusive, safe and welcoming. Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities partnered to bring equipment to parks, waterfronts and recreation areas across Canada.

I was overjoyed to see our daughter's childhood park, Hespeler Optimist Park, in Cambridge, Ontario, turned into a multi-sport facility. This space includes a full basketball court and a second court that accommodates pickleball, tennis and volleyball. The focus on fun, trying new activities, feeling welcome and ensuring inclusion was so great to see in action. The laughs, the smiles, watching people helping people — that is a community.

As we move along the sports pathway today, I am overjoyed to share a first on the international sports stage. Dakar, Senegal, is hosting the first-ever Olympic competition on the African continent. Team Canada has 28 athletes competing in the Summer Youth Olympic Games, which run until November 13. Off the field of play, our athletes will spend time learning about the cultures of their host and the 207 delegations that are present.

If you are looking for a quick and happy clip, search for Canada's welcome in the opening ceremonies. As our athletes entered the opening ceremonies, local Dakar youth chanted, over

and over, “Canada, Canada, Canada.” It was a beautiful moment and a beautiful reminder of the esteem in which the Maple Leaf is held across the world.

While the games continue, closer to us, two very significant celebrations took place in Ottawa last night. On the Hill, Mr. Rick Hansen was here. He’s a tremendous Canadian icon. His new documentary, *Man in Motion: The Rick Hansen Story*, was released first at the Toronto International Film Festival and then shared here on the Hill last night. It was a wonderful evening and a wonderful celebration.

Across the river at the Canadian Museum of History, the seventieth annual Order of Sport Awards were held. This year, we celebrated three trailblazers who have contributed to reshaping the landscape of sport in Canada: the 1990 Women’s World Championship hockey team; Chief Dr. Wilton Littlechild for his second order; and Jay Triano, a basketball hero of mine, whom I first watched play when we were both in Grade 13.

The Community Champion Award is a new national recognition program created in partnership with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities and Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame. It’s time to finally spotlight the often unsung heroes in Canadian sport: grassroots coaches and sports builders who make sport possible at the community level for children and youth. Legacy awards were bestowed to Larry Tanenbaum, the Southern family, the Canada Games Council and Special Olympics Canada.

Finally, senators, your work was included as part of this celebration. Nineteen senators contributed to the sport as a nation-builder inquiry that was in the Senate last spring. This was bound into a beautiful booklet. On Tuesday and Wednesday nights, we presented your inquiry book to all 22 award recipients. Your stories are valuable, and we continue to share them where possible.

Thank you. *Meegwetch*.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of members of the Canadian Armed Forces. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Patterson.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Hon. Rebecca Patterson: Honourable senators, next week, on the eleventh day of the eleventh month at the eleventh hour, laments will be played, flags will be lowered and two minutes of silence will be observed.

On Remembrance Day, we remember the day and time the guns fell silent after the First World War. Canadians gather to remember those who gave their lives in service, to honour those who returned and to recognize the families whose lives have been forever shaped and changed by service and sacrifice. Behind every name on a memorial is a person: someone loved, someone missed and someone whose future was left unfinished.

When we think of veterans, we often think of the old man, perhaps in a wheelchair now, wrapped in blankets and wearing a heavy overcoat, struggling to stand and salute, but Canada’s veterans are not just these mighty elderly souls; they are also the middle-aged and the young among us. Canada’s veterans are not just grandfathers, fathers, brothers and sons; they are mothers, sisters, daughters and people of all genders.

Not unlike 1914, 1939 and 1950, Canada faces an uncertain world where peace requires constant vigilance and care. Conflict, aggression and threats to the rules-based order are ever increasing. In February 2022, Russia launched the largest land war in Europe since the Second World War. Every day, hundreds of Ukrainians pay the price of the Russian invasion. We know this threat is not just to Ukraine. Aggressive attempts to undermine Western values, like democracy and the rule of law, abound. Nefarious state and non-state actors threaten Canadian values and security every day.

Who is the modern veteran?

For Canada to remain sovereign and secure, we need a capable military. Canada needs a military that operates in modern, generational domains and ecosystems, which are scalable to meet new threats as they evolve and to confront an adversary we have yet to imagine. We need to be able to detect and deter threats and, when necessary, defend Canada and Canadians now and into the future, just as we have done for all these decades.

It has been 75 years since the Canadian Armed Forces first deployed to Europe under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO, banner. Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces continue to stand up for our shared values in the face of ongoing and renewed threats. Recently, the Canadian-led multinational NATO brigade has positioned itself closer to the Russian border in Latvia, ready to defend it. The commitment of those Canadian Armed Forces members and that of our allies reaches into each of their homes, where families shoulder uncertainty, long absences and the quiet strain of waiting for a battle and hoping it never comes.

On November 11, let us renew our commitment to those who serve, those who have served and their families. May we honour the fallen through our actions, may we stand beside the living and may we help build the peace for which so many have sacrificed by remembering these words from First World War veteran and former Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson:

> . . . the destiny of Canada is to unite, not divide; sharing in cooperation, not in separation or in conflict; respecting our past and welcoming our future.

We will remember them.

[*Translation*]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Gaston Desrosiers and Monique Marois. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Forest.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

• (1350)

[*English*]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

CHIGNECTO ISTHMUS DYKELAND SYSTEM BILL

SEVENTH REPORT OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. David M. Wells, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications, presented the following report:

Thursday, November 5, 2026

The Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications has the honour to present its

SEVENTH REPORT

Your committee, to which was referred Bill S-216, An Act to declare the Chignecto Isthmus Dykeland System and related works to be for the general advantage of Canada, has, in obedience to the order of reference of February 10, 2026, examined the said bill and now reports the same with the following amendment:

1. *New clause 6.1, page 4*: Add the following after line 7:

"**6.1** For greater certainty, nothing in this Act affects the rights or obligations of the parties under an agreement entered into before the coming into force of this Act between His Majesty in right of Canada, the Government of Nova Scotia and the Government of New Brunswick respecting the design, construction or improvement of the Chignecto Isthmus Dykeland System or related works.".

Respectfully submitted,

DAVID M. WELLS

Chair

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

(On motion of Senator Wells (*Newfoundland and Labrador*), report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

COMMISSIONER FOR MODERN TREATY IMPLEMENTATION BILL

TENTH REPORT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Paul (PJ) Prosper, for Senator Audette, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples, presented the following report:

Thursday, November 5, 2026

The Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples has the honour to present its

TENTH REPORT

Your committee, to which was referred Bill C-10, An Act respecting the Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation, has, in obedience to the order of reference of October 6, 2026, examined the said bill and now reports the same without amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

PAUL (PJ) PROSPER

Member of the committee

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

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

CONTRIBUTIONS OF ATLANTIC CANADIANS

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Iris G. Petten: Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the vital contributions of Atlantic Canadians.

QUESTION PERIOD

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

CANADA-MERCOSUR FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald: Senator Moreau, Canada's beef and cattle industry is deeply integrated with that of the United States, with billions of dollars in cross-border trade supporting producers and processors on both sides of the border.

Yet, as the Canadian government pursues a trade agreement with Mercosur, the Canadian Cattle Association has warned that granting additional access to lower-cost South American beef could increase trade tensions with the United States. American producers could view increased Mercosur imports into Canada as a back door into their market, potentially prompting new restrictions on Canadian cattle and beef exports.

At a time when Canada is working to secure its trade relationship with the United States, has the government assessed the potential consequences of additional Mercosur beef imports, and will it commit to protecting the integrity of our North American cattle and beef trade?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. I had the opportunity to answer that question. I think Senator Ross asked me this question earlier this week.

The idea of having a trade discussion with Mercosur is to basically open the market to Canadian producers. If, during the process of those negotiations, it would appear that it would hurt the producer, the farmer or the rancher, it's certain that a deal wouldn't come into force.

The idea behind that is to help our Canadian producers open markets, and it's a part of our diversification, since we have trade issues with the United States, as you're well aware.

At the same time, the Prime Minister has reported lately that the discussion is ongoing with our United States partner.

Senator MacDonald: Senator Moreau, the Canadian Cattle Association doesn't really support the position you're articulating.

The Canadian Cattle Association has pointed to the history of U.S. concerns over beef import practices and warned that additional Mercosur access could, once again, raise questions about the movement of foreign beef into the American market through Canada.

Can the government assure Canadian cattle producers that it will not make any concessions on beef imports in a Mercosur agreement that could expose Canadian exports to retaliatory trade measures from the United States?

Senator Moreau: As I said to Senator Ross recently, it's absolutely certain that the negotiation with Mercosur is not aimed at harming any Canadian producer. This is to open new markets. It is part of the diversification of our economy, and it's certainly not to harm our own producers here in Canada.

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TECHNOLOGY CANADA

Hon. David M. Wells: My question is for the government leader in the Senate, Senator Moreau.

As you know, Sustainable Development Technology Canada shut down in 2024, and there was $51 million in funding for ineligible projects. The government stated at the time that further pursuit of recovery was not in the public interest.

Is it the position of the government that projects that were, in fact, ineligible for funding — yet were funded anyway — should not be repaid to the Treasury?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): At this time, I have no indication about anything that would have changed in the government's position concerning funding of ineligible projects, but if you have a specific project in mind, just let me know, and I will get back to you with an answer as soon as I raise the question with the department.

Senator D. M. Wells: Senator Moreau, all ineligible projects that were funded should be refunded.

Senator Moreau, the former chair of Sustainable Development Technology Canada, Annette Verschuren, participated in decisions that awarded more than $217,000 to a company she founded and in which she was the majority shareholder. The Ethics Commissioner found she violated the Conflict of Interest Act.

Does the government intend to recover that money, or does the government also believe that the recovery of that money is not in the public interest?

Senator Moreau: I have no specific answer to the specific question you have, but I will raise the question, and I will get back to you with an answer.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

AUTONOMOUS WEAPONS

Hon. Tony Loffreda: My question is for the Government Representative, and it concerns autonomous AI-powered weapons.

In two weeks, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs will host the Seventh Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. My understanding is that discussions will include whether to launch negotiations on a legally binding instrument to

prohibit and regulate autonomous weapons. At its core, this is about whether we are prepared to give artificial intelligence the power to make life-and-death decisions. This is an existential question that the international community can no longer afford to postpone.

• (1400)

Will Canada send a delegation to Geneva? More importantly, will Canada demonstrate the kind of international leadership it showed in the historic Ottawa Treaty to Ban Anti-Personnel Landmines 30 years ago, and support a UN mandate to negotiate a legally binding instrument on autonomous weapons?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, senator, for raising that very important issue. In an era of rapid technological advancement, the government recognizes the importance of responsibly leveraging artificial intelligence in the defence space.

Canada's position at the United Nations has been clear: The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons remains a vital forum for addressing weapons that cause severe humanitarian harm, including emerging technologies.

Additionally, Canada was clear that it welcomes the important work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and looks forward to the Seventh Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, which will happen this month, in November.

Senator Loffreda: Thank you for your answer.

I understand that approximately 130 countries, including 22 NATO allies, are ready to begin these negotiations. Maybe you can elaborate on Canada's position if it is clear.

Meanwhile, AI is already being used in warfare, with devastating consequences for civilians. A missile strike on a girls' school in Iran earlier this year killed 123 children. This is a tragic reminder of what is at stake, and Canada must act. Hopefully, you can elaborate on that. Thank you.

Senator Moreau: The government is aware of the tragic consequences of warfare and the immense responsibility we all have, as AI is increasingly being deployed by our allies and adversaries alike, which is why the government is adopting a comprehensive approach in alignment with defence partners, stakeholders and allies.

The government announced the release of the first DND and CAF Artificial Intelligence Strategy in 2024. This strategy will identify key capabilities required by —

[*Translation*]

The Hon. the Speaker: Thank you, Senator Moreau.

[*English*]

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Hon. Kim Pate: Senator Moreau, this week, more than 100 experts and equality rights organizations wrote to the Minister of Justice advising him of fundamental errors in the government's *Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology*.

The guide refers to a formal conception of equality that the Supreme Court of Canada has rejected since 1989, when, in the *Andrews* decision, the court ruled that substantive equality must be the governing principle. Substantive equality requires looking ". . . beyond the apparent neutrality of a law to consider a law's actual effects on disadvantaged groups." This is precisely because formal equality, that is to say, "identical treatment," ". . . frequently produce[s] serious inequality."

Can you please confirm that this incorrect definition of equality is being removed and replaced, with the assistance of Charter and human rights experts, as well as representatives of equality-seeking groups?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Pate. First, let me remind you that the government remains firmly committed to protecting Charter rights, advancing substantive equality and eliminating systemic discrimination.

My understanding is that the guide was developed through consultation with experts and equity-seeking groups to support a more inclusive federal public service. The government recognizes that language and our understanding of these issues continue to evolve. I believe that it is intended that this guide undergo regular updates. Government policy must recognize the different circumstances Canadians face and work to remove systemic barriers to equal opportunity.

Senator Pate: Thank you, Senator Moreau. First, what concrete steps are being taken to correct any misconceptions resulting from the guide within federal departments and agencies, in addition to members of the general public? Second, what steps are being taken to review previous policies, program design, reporting, funding and other decision making informed by the guide to ensure correct alignment with Canada's obligations with respect to the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and human rights law?

Senator Moreau: Through Gender-based Analysis Plus, the government examines how policies and programs affect diverse populations, including those facing systemic barriers. This work remains central to ensuring that federal decisions reflect Canadians' different circumstances, addressing inequality and upholding our obligations under the Charter. I have been to my office today to raise this issue directly with the minister's office.

Senator Pate: Thank you.

PUBLIC SAFETY

NATIONAL SECURITY

Hon. Andrew Cardozo: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. The government released the national security strategy a week ago, which presents its plan for a sovereign, resilient and prosperous Canada. In your view, what are the main threats we have to be concerned about, especially with regard to Canadian sovereignty?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): In an effort to bolster Canada's sovereignty and national security through the national security strategy, the government will build long-term economic strength through generational domestic investment. The government will develop a dense web of trading relationships to bolster our strategic capabilities, focussing its diplomatic efforts on practical cooperation and partnership that will help Canada influence the course of global events to serve the interests of Canadians.

There is no one specific threat. The government is working on a large scale to ensure that Canadians feel safe and our sovereignty remains untouched.

Senator Cardozo: Thank you, senator.

My supplementary question is with regard to Canada-U.S. relations. The Prime Minister hosted the EU-Canada Summit last week. Can you talk about the issues that are relevant to that and whether that summit helped in terms of our sovereignty and security?

Senator Moreau: The summit was the first step towards negotiations with the European Union, and its scope is still under discussion. It's part of the government's strategy to diversify our economy, increase commercial potential for Canadian enterprises and strengthen our general economic situation.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

ACCESS TO BENEFITS

Hon. Rebecca Patterson: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Moreau, we were all touched by the tragic events that took place at CFB Wainright. The Prime Minister has said that we will be there for families for as long as they need and that we will care for the injured through every step of their recovery.

I absolutely commend the Prime Minister for his commitment. However, under the law, there are differences in support and benefits afforded to Canadian Armed Forces members, depending on whether they are classified as being on Special Duty Service versus standard service, and whether they are in the Regular Force or the Reserve Force.

Exercise APOLLO SHOOTER was preparing soldiers to deploy to Latvia under Operation REASSURANCE, a Special Duty Operation, but not all the injured were training to be deployed. Many were there in a support role, providing the training, and, therefore, on standard duty. It was the same fire but different duty classifications and, therefore, different benefits.

Would the representative of the government speak with the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Veterans Affairs, and return with a written response as to whether the government is willing to examine and equalize the service classifications and benefits for all CAF members and their families, killed or injured during Exercise APOLLO SHOOTER?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Senator, you are raising a very important question. Our thoughts remain with the families of those who lost their lives and all those injured in this tragedy, first and foremost.

I want to reassure you that Veterans Affairs Canada provides a comprehensive range of benefits and support to Canadian Armed Forces members and their families, including those injured or killed during training exercises.

I have been told directly by Veterans Affairs Canada that benefits such as pain and suffering compensation, income replacement benefits and death benefits are available to eligible members regardless of Regular Force or Reserve Force status or Special Duty classification. Where Special Duty Service classification does come into play, it would determine whether an injury was related to service, which is not in dispute here.

Needless to say, my office has brought your concern directly to the minister's office, and I will advise this chamber if the government has any additional information to share in this regard. I will gladly —

[*Translation*]

The Hon. the Speaker: Thank you, Senator Moreau.

[*English*]

Senator Patterson: That is the first part.

• (1410)

The one thing I need to highlight came out of the 2020 Veterans Ombud's published report, which highlighted the inequalities and how the Income Replacement Benefit is applied to Reserve Force veterans as calculated on their work. That is an inequality. Now we know there were reservists who were part of Exercise APOLLO SHOOTER.

When the government representative speaks to his colleagues about duty classification, can he also ensure that injured Reserve Force veterans are afforded lifetime support and coverage equal to that of their Regular Force colleagues and include —

The Hon. the Speaker: Thank you, senator.

Senator Moreau: I assure you that I will raise that question with the minister. I will provide you with a written answer or information as needed.

Veterans Affairs Canada is committed to ensuring that all eligible veterans and their families receive the benefits and services to which they are entitled, regardless of Regular Force or Reserve Force status.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

SEAL PRODUCTS

Hon. Fabian Manning: My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Leader, Prime Minister Carney and the leaders of the European Union are aiming to finalize an agreement by June 2027 that will see Canada become the first-ever associate member of the European Union or receive ever-closer association status in the European Union.

From what I've read and seen in the media, if agreed upon, the partnership will aim to diversify Canada's trade relationships and decrease our heavy economic reliance on the United States, which is a lofty goal indeed.

With approximately 5 to 6 million seals off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador that consume thousands of pounds of cod and other species on a daily basis, can the leader tell us if the lifting of the seal product ban in the European Union is on the table for discussion?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): I will follow up on the answer I gave to Senator Cardozo earlier.

The substance, scale and scope of any arrangements have not yet been finalized with the European Union. At this time, I do not have information to share on whether the seal industry is specifically part of those discussions.

Any eventual agreement will be brought before Parliament, where members will have a full opportunity to review and debate it. I'm sure, as an important question for Newfoundland and Labrador, this will be raised at that time.

Senator Manning: The seal population off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador needs to be fed. I think we can all agree they're not eating Mary Brown's chicken and taters.

Hearing that the EU ban on seal products may be part of the discussion is good news. Knowing that the ban is definitely on the table for discussion would be great news.

Can the leader urge the government to include the ban as part of the negotiations and ask the minister if he would report back to the chamber on that?

Senator Moreau: I'm not an expert on a seal's diet, Senator Manning, but I will certainly raise your concern with the minister.

NATURAL RESOURCES

PIPELINE PROJECTS

Hon. Yonah Martin (Acting Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, according to Mark Maki, CEO of Trans Mountain, the company is ready to move an additional 90,000 barrels of oil per day through its existing pipeline system, provided that the necessary federal approvals are granted.

Your government continues to own the pipeline after investing billions of taxpayer dollars. Growing demand in Asian markets underscores the importance of getting more oil to our export terminals fast.

Given these circumstances, when will your government provide the regulatory approvals required to increase shipments through Trans Mountain and expand Canada's energy export capacity to British Columbia's terminals?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Senator Martin, you know a commitment of the government is to strengthen our economy and make Canada an energy superpower.

I have no specific date to give you as to when the approval will be made. I don't have the details of the request before the department. Therefore, I cannot provide you with any specific answers.

I can reassure you that the government is committed to standing behind those energy producers to ensure our economy benefits from their involvement.

Senator Martin: Yes, I know this is what the government says. You frequently speak about accelerating project approvals and building critical infrastructure at unprecedented speeds.

Leader, the customers are ready. The infrastructure is already in place. The additional capacity can be achieved through a regulatory approval.

Why does federal red tape remain the primary obstacle to expanding Canada's natural resource exports?

Senator Moreau: We're working on cutting red tape. You're the critic on Bill S-7; you should have a look at it. You will understand the government is committed to standing behind our energy producers, as I mentioned.

There's no policy involved in the admission of the document that is sought by the company.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

AUTONOMOUS WEAPONS

Hon. Yuen Pau Woo: Good afternoon, Senator Moreau. Senator Loffreda asked my question, but I wish to put a finer point on it because I'm not sure you answered his question. It has to do with whether Canada will agree to begin negotiations on a

new treaty to prohibit the use of AI weapons. Can you take that specific question to the department and get us an answer before the meeting takes place at the end of the month in Geneva?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): I will reiterate what I said to Senator Loffreda.

The government is aware of the risks presented by the use of AI in munitions involved during war. The minister will participate in the conference that will be held here in November. I'm sure your and Senator Loffreda's concerns will be taken into consideration.

Senator Woo: If the government is aware of the dangers, one would expect that the government would be willing to enter into negotiations to come up with a treaty to prohibit or regulate those kinds of weapons.

You will recall a few months ago I asked a similar question about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. There is a review conference taking place in New York, also at the end of this month. My question to you at the time regarded whether Canada would even attend the meeting, if not as a party, then as an observer. It's coming up very soon and —

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Woo, your time has expired.

Senator Moreau: I understand your question, senator. I will ask the question and get back to you with an answer.

RUSSIAN AND BELARUSIAN ATHLETES

Hon. Kristopher Wells: Senator Moreau, the Court of Arbitration for Sport's recent decision to overturn the International Ice Hockey Federation's ban on Russian hockey teams raises serious concerns, particularly given Russia's ongoing illegal war of aggression against Ukraine.

Earlier this week, Prime Minister Carney made Canada's position clear: Russian and Belarusian athletes will not be permitted to represent their countries at the World Junior Hockey Championship in Alberta while the war continues.

Can you explain what specific measures the government will take to ensure this commitment is upheld, including working with Hockey Canada, the IIHF and our international partners to prevent Russia's participation?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Canada has stood firmly with Ukraine since Russia's illegal invasion, committing to over $26 billion in assistance, imposing sweeping sanctions and working with our allies to support Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Canada remains opposed to the formal representation of Russia and Belarus in international sports while Russia's war of aggression continues.

To answer your question specifically, Senator Wells, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship will exercise her authority under subsection 22.1(1) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to individually assess and prevent Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials from entering Canada to compete under their national symbols.

An Hon. Senator: Hear, hear.

Senator K. Wells: The Prime Minister's announcement sends an important message about Canada's commitment to Ukraine and the principle that sport cannot be used to normalize an illegal war of aggression.

Will the government extend this position to other international sporting competitions hosted in Canada, including the 2027 IIHF Women's World Championship in Quebec City, and work with our allies to ensure a coordinated international response?

Senator Moreau: The government's commitment extends well beyond sports. Canada will continue supporting Ukraine through military, financial and humanitarian assistance in a coordinated international effort to achieve a just and lasting peace.

The government will continue to require that events receiving federal funding prohibit Russian and Belarusian athletes from competing under their national symbols.

• (1420)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

MILITARY PROCUREMENT

Hon. Rebecca Patterson: Senator Moreau, late last year, the government implemented its Buy Canadian Policy, which was well received by Canadian defence companies, who have historically had a hard time accessing Government of Canada contracts. Notwithstanding the government's clearly expressed intent to "Buy Canadian," the technical requirements on many contracts are still written in a manner that favours American and non-Canadian companies, since those requirements are based on existing technology.

Can the representative of the government assure the Senate and viewers of these proceedings that the political message of "Buy Canadian" is filtering down to those who actually set the technical requirements of these contracts?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): I can assure you that the government is committed to that. The government introduced the new Buy Canadian Policy to prioritize Canadian businesses in federal procurement for materials — from suppliers to workers. The government is working to diversify, moving away from the United States to become our own best customer. The government is doing everything possible to ensure that all departments are made aware of that policy and adhere to it.

Senator Patterson: As a follow-up, we know we will still have a partnership in certain cases, especially on the defence side, and we know that the U.S. military has seriously depleted their stocks of certain types of ammunition. In particular, they're running very low on high-end, defensive interceptors and long-range, precision-strike munitions, driven largely by the operations against Iran and the Houthi militia. Can the government indicate whether there are any talks currently under way with the U.S. government or specific U.S. companies about having Canadian companies participate in the munitions ramp up, which is —

The Hon. the Speaker: Thank you, Senator Patterson.

Senator Moreau: I will refer your question to the department. I don't have that information at this time. However, I am certain that the Buy Canadian Policy targets materials that are available in Canada or are manufactured here. Materials such as these have priority. There are probably ongoing discussions with U.S. partners as well, but I will provide you with an answer about that.

[*Translation*]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators,

I am now prepared to rule on the question of privilege raised by the Honourable Senator Manning on Thursday, October 29, 2026.

Senator Manning alleged that a confidential workplan prepared for the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure (the subcommittee) of the Special Senate Committee on the Building Canada Strong Act (the special committee), of which he is the chair, and the contents of in camera deliberations of that subcommittee had been improperly disclosed to an external stakeholder, thus violating the confidentiality of proceedings of the subcommittee. He further alleged that this unauthorized disclosure had resulted in one or more of the members of that subcommittee facing targeted harassment because of their involvement in the subcommittee's proceedings, exposing them to pressure and intimidation in the performance of their parliamentary duties. Senator Wilson described what had been communicated to him at an external meeting as a damaging misrepresentation of the in camera deliberations. Other senators added their support for Senator Manning's question of privilege.

Both of the allegations raised by Senator Manning are very serious. As I noted in my ruling of June 18, 2026, maintaining the confidentiality of committee reports, documents and proceedings is of fundamental importance in maintaining the trust required for the proper functioning of the institution. To that end, the Senate has established a well-defined procedure for addressing the unauthorized disclosure of such information, which is set out in Appendix IV of our Rules.

That procedure provides that the committee in question should first investigate the circumstances surrounding the alleged leak, determine the means, nature and extent of that investigation, then report the matter to the Senate. While following this process does not preclude a senator from raising a question of privilege in the Senate, it does provide that, if the Speaker finds that a prima facie case exists, consideration of any consequent motion would be adjourned until the committee tables its report on the leak. The committee's investigation into the circumstances is therefore not a mere formality, but a critical procedural first step in establishing the facts necessary to inform any subsequent decisions of the Senate.

Since Senator Manning raised this matter as a question of privilege, it must now be assessed in light of the four criteria set out in rule 13-2(1), which must all be satisfied in order to find a prima facie case exists. I would remind senators that these criteria are as follows:

1. it must be raised at the first opportunity;

2. it must be a matter that directly concerns the privileges of the Senate, one of its committees or a senator;

3. it must be raised to correct a grave and serious breach; and

4. it must be raised to seek a genuine remedy that the Senate has the power to provide and for which no other parliamentary process is reasonably available.

In addition, rule 13-3(1) requires a senator wishing to raise a question of privilege to give written notice indicating the substance of the alleged breach to the Clerk of the Senate at least three hours before the Senate meets. This notice allows the Clerk to advise all senators that a question of privilege will be raised and gives them an opportunity to prepare to participate meaningfully in any ensuing debate. Rule 13-4(a), however, permits a senator who becomes aware of a matter after this deadline, or during the sitting, to raise it without notice.

Senator Manning raised the matter without prior notice at the beginning of the Orders of the Day on October 29, 2026. However, during his intervention, he stated that he had learned of the unauthorized disclosure the previous evening, which should have afforded him sufficient time to submit a written notice, as required by rule 13-3(1). Although additional information may have influenced the specific approach chosen by Senator Manning, the debate on this question of privilege did not identify a distinct matter that was brought to his attention after the deadline to provide written notice had passed. The substance of the alleged unauthorized disclosure was known to him the night before, in time to give written notice. As such, since this matter was not raised in accordance with the written notice requirement in rule 13-3(1), I must find that the question of privilege does not meet the first criterion.

This finding does not in any way diminish the seriousness of the allegations raised by Senator Manning. Accordingly, I would like to return to the procedure for dealing with unauthorized

disclosure of confidential committee proceedings, as outlined in Appendix IV. That process calls on the committee that was the subject of the unauthorized disclosure to conduct an investigation and submit a report to the Senate. Senator Manning indicated that he felt this investigation should be conducted by the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament (the Rules Committee) due to the limited time that the special committee has to complete its mandated work. However, although the motion to create the special committee adopted on October 6, 2026, provides that it ceases to exist upon the presentation of its final report to the Senate, no specific end date was provided in the motion. In that sense, the special committee is in control of its agenda and, accordingly, retains substantial control over the timing of the completion of its work. Should it be necessary, it would also be possible for the Senate to amend its order if more time was needed to allow the special committee to investigate the alleged leak.

Based on the information provided by senators during the debate on this question of privilege, I am satisfied that the special committee still has a reasonable opportunity to examine the matter and report back to the Senate in a timely way. In keeping with the process in Appendix IV, the special committee's examination should consider both the facts surrounding the alleged disclosure and its consequences on the committee and its members. The existence of this process in the Rules also means that Senator Manning's question of privilege fails to meet the fourth criterion of rule 13-2(1), which provides that that there must be no other parliamentary process reasonably available to address it.

Therefore, while Senator Manning's question of privilege fails to meet the first and fourth criterion as provided in rule 13-2(1), Appendix IV provides a suitable process for the special committee to address the unauthorized disclosure. I believe the special committee is best placed to conduct the fact-finding exercise to determine, if it can, the source of the leak and report the full details to the Senate.

I would also like to address the allegations of harassment that have been raised and emphasize from the outset the seriousness and deeply concerning nature of those allegations. *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, on page 104 of its fourth edition, notes that "Speakers have consistently upheld that the House must protect its right to benefit from the service of its members against any intimidation, obstruction or interference."

While the provisions of Appendix IV exist to address the unauthorized disclosure of confidential proceedings, the alleged intimidation could be seen as a direct result of the alleged disclosure and should therefore fall within the scope of the committee's investigation. Beyond illustrating the impact of the unauthorized disclosure of confidential documents and deliberations, the allegation suggests that confidential information may have been used to attempt to influence committee decisions, which could reasonably be perceived as interference with the committee's proceedings and with senators in the performance of their parliamentary functions.

Individual senators who feel intimidated in the course of their duties should not hesitate to raise a question of privilege at the earliest opportunity, or even as a substantive motion outside of the question of privilege process, as provided for in rule 13-2(2). The circumstances giving rise to this allegation of harassment underscore that protecting confidential information is a shared responsibility, and that breaches of that responsibility can undermine the trust, integrity and proper functioning of the institution.

This disturbing allegation should also serve as a reminder to senators that such unauthorized disclosure can have real and tangible impacts on colleagues, and that protecting confidential proceedings is more than an administrative or procedural matter. Trust in the integrity of confidential proceedings allows senators to deliberate freely. An unauthorized disclosure can undermine that confidence and expose colleagues to pressure in the performance of their duties.

As I noted in my ruling of December 5, 2023, the ability of senators to vote and decide issues free from intimidation and threats is fundamental to our work.

I would like to thank senators for raising these important matters and encourage all senators to continue to be diligent in doing so.

• (1430)

CUTTING RED TAPE FOR ALL CANADIANS BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

> Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Petten, seconded by the Honourable Senator Moreau, P.C., for the second reading of Bill S-7, An Act to modernize certain regulatory and administrative processes.

Hon. Danièle Henkel: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill S-7, which seeks to cut red tape for Canadians and businesses. I will address this bill from the perspective of a woman who has started and run businesses and who knows what it is like to be an entrepreneur.

When a person is running a small or medium-sized enterprise, or SME, they quickly learn that time is one of their most precious resources. Every hour spent filling out forms, looking for information or waiting for approval is an hour that cannot be devoted to clients, employees or business development. Unlike large corporations, SMEs do not always have specialized teams to meet administrative requirements or the financial means to do so. That is what I want to talk about today.

[*English*]

According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, small- and medium-sized enterprises spent an average of 256 hours dealing with avoidable red tape in 2024 across all levels of government. That's the equivalent of 32 working days.

Think about that. It is 32 days that an entrepreneur could have spent finding new customers, developing a product or growing their business.

This should concern us all. Administrative complexity comes at an economic cost. But there is also a human cost, especially for those who shoulder much of the responsibility for running a business on their own.

This is why I welcome the government's commitment to tackling this issue.

[*Translation*]

Bill S-7 proposes a number of useful amendments. In particular, it would remove outdated requirements, simplify certain procedures and enable greater use of digital tools. For instance, it includes provisions that would eliminate over 160 agricultural marketing regulations that are now obsolete. It also includes measures that would make it easier to recognize certain reliable foreign regulatory systems in order to speed up access to products our farmers need.

[*English*]

Food, Health & Consumer Products of Canada has welcomed the improvements proposed in Bill S-7 but makes an important point. It said, "The real measure of success will be whether implementation delivers simpler requirements, faster and more predictable service."

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has also welcomed Bill S-7, while also emphasizing that ". . . regulatory modernization must be an ongoing priority, not a one-time exercise."

Let me highlight a few provisions that illustrate both its potential and its limitations.

[*Translation*]

First, the bill would modernize the Boards of Trade Act. At first glance, these changes may seem far removed from the day-to-day concerns of entrepreneurs. However, boards of trade play an important role in our communities. They bring businesses together, advocate on their behalf and contribute to regional economic development. Yet some of the rules by which they operate are outdated and unnecessarily burdensome.

From a very practical perspective, Bill S-7 would reduce the minimum number of council members, replace quarterly general meetings with one annual meeting and allow for terms of office of up to three years. It would also authorize electronic notices of meetings, facilitate the amalgamation of boards of trade, tailor financial audit requirements to their size and remove the requirement for prior ministerial approval to amend their bylaws.

• (1440)

These measures would allow them to devote fewer resources to their own administration and more to representing businesses.

[*English*]

Another issue deserves our attention: the insolvency of small businesses. We often talk about starting businesses, but we must also consider the resources available to help them weather difficult times.

A company can face financial difficulties without being beyond saving. Yet, current bankruptcy and restructuring procedures can be complex and costly, particularly for small businesses. Bill S-7 proposes simplified procedures for certain small companies in financial distress.

The objective is a reasonable one: to make it easier for viable companies to restructure their debts, whilst allowing those that can no longer continue operating to wind down at a lower cost.

This approach is consistent with the position of the Canadian Bar Association, which argues:

> The cost of a standard bankruptcy or proposal process is often disproportionate to the debt levels involved, and the procedural requirements were designed for larger, more complex insolvencies. . . .

[*Translation*]

The Bar Association supports these simplified procedures, which could help more small businesses get back on their feet rather than shutting down. It does, however, call for one safeguard: When a business obtains temporary protection from legal action by its creditors, it must continue to pay its day-to-day bills during that period.

This proviso seems essential to me. Protecting a small business in distress must not mean imperilling its suppliers and creditors, as they too might be SMEs. I do think, however, that it is too bad that these new procedures are reserved for incorporated companies, to the detriment of sole proprietors. Furthermore, we don't yet know which small businesses will be eligible, since the asset and debt thresholds will be set later, by regulation. If these criteria are too restrictive, this reform may fail to reach the small businesses that need it most.

I would also like to address the issue of digitization, which is an important part of this bill. Bill S-7 seeks to streamline procedures between businesses and various federal government departments. In the areas of food inspection, the environment and fisheries, it would expand the use of electronic documents, applications and communications.

That is a good thing, but digitizing a procedure does not necessarily make it simpler. Putting a complicated form on a screen does not make it simple, and an automated system does not necessarily provide better service if the entrepreneur doesn't understand the decision, can't get an explanation or still has to wait the same amount of time for an answer.

What SMEs want are procedures they can understand, deadlines that are reasonable, and someone they can contact when they run into a problem.

[*English*]

These examples show that Bill S-7 offers useful improvements. But there is still much more work to be done. The short title of this bill, "Cutting Red Tape for All Canadians Act," suggests a reform of considerable scope, even though the measures before us are limited.

The bill does not address the administrative burden across all sectors of our economy, nor will it directly benefit every Canadian or every business.

The government estimates that this bill will generate at least $264 million in savings over 10 years for businesses and the federal government. Given the scale of the administrative burden, I find that figure rather modest.

Last week, our colleague Senator Batters asked Senator Petten how this estimate had been calculated. I share her concerns. I would also like to know how much of these savings will actually benefit businesses, particularly small- and medium-sized enterprises. I, therefore, hope that the committee's study will not only provide clear answers but also give us an opportunity to hear directly from those affected and determine whether the proposed measures truly meet their needs.

Ultimately, what matters is not just the savings announced on paper, but the results on the ground: fewer unnecessary procedures, shorter processing times and lower costs for businesses.

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, I support this bill's objective, even though the proposed measures are still insufficient. We need a comprehensive strategy for cutting through red tape for all sectors and businesses of all sizes. The organizations I have spoken to are ready to chip in. We should listen to them and let our entrepreneurs focus on business rather than on paperwork.

Thank you. *Meegwetch*.

(On motion of Senator Osler, debate adjourned.)

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): , pursuant to notice of November 4, 2026, moved:

> That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 17, 2026, at 2 p.m.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

• (1450)

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE POSTPONED

On Other Business, Senate Public Bills, Second Reading, Order No. 10:

> Second reading of Bill S-240, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (declaration of exception pursuant to subsection 33(1) of the Charter for mandatory minimum sentences for child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences).

Hon. Yonah Martin (Acting Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, on behalf of Senator Housakos, I adjourn in his name for the balance of his time.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Debate postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.)

NATIONAL BLANKET CEREMONY DAY BILL

SECOND READING

On the Order:

> Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator Batters, for the second reading of Bill S-245, An Act respecting a National Blanket Ceremony Day.

Hon. Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler: Honourable senators, I rise today as the friendly critic of Bill S-245, An Act respecting a National Blanket Ceremony Day, to provide what this chamber does best: sober second thought, constructive analysis and a desire to ensure legislation achieves its highest potential.

[*Translation*]

I want to thank Senator McCallum for this important bill and for her work with Indigenous Peoples.

[*English*]

The preamble of the bill reminds us that the Sixties Scoop — the removal of Indigenous children from their families — disrupted relationships and severed connections to identity, language, culture and belonging. The intergenerational trauma of those policy decisions continues to be felt by survivors and their families.

Today, I see and honour the leadership of all Sixties Scoop Survivors and, in particular, Mr. Troy MacBeth Abromaitis, whose hard work and dedication helped bring this bill forward. In her second reading speech, Senator McCallum shared his journey and the significance of the blanket ceremony where he was welcomed by his family and community.

For Mr. Abromaitis, that blanket represented:

> . . . far more than recognition. It represented belonging, protection, love, identity, and a reminder that despite everything I had experienced, I still had a place among my people.

His story reminds us that reconnection offers hope and an opportunity for healing.

As a physician, I learned that healing requires looking beyond a person's immediate circumstances. Healing requires an understanding of their trauma, history, family and community.

I believe this also applies when we reflect on the legacy of the Sixties Scoop and where a national blanket ceremony day is an opportunity — an opportunity to recognize Survivors, acknowledge the lasting consequences of the Sixties Scoop and reaffirm the importance of belonging, protection, love, identity and family.

Honourable senators, the principle and spirit of Bill S-245 are not in question, but, as senators, we must ask tough questions. How do we guard against commemoration fatigue? How can a symbolic day of recognition translate into substantive change?

Both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 79 and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry's Calls for Justice explicitly demand public commemoration. To ensure Bill S-245 achieves its highest potential, I support its referral to committee for many reasons and now offer three for consideration:

First, to hear from a range of Sixties Scoop Survivors to understand what this day should represent and how they would like it to be observed. Survivors must have a meaningful role in shaping this commemoration.

Second, to understand cultural protocols from First Nations, Inuit and Métis representatives, Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers. The committee should learn about the cultural significance of blankets from coast to coast to coast to better understand the protocols around ceremony.

Third, for public education and awareness. June 30 places national blanket ceremony day between National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21 and Canada Day on July 1. The committee should consider if the date of June 30 creates a reflective bridge for national consciousness, or if it risks being overshadowed by the July 1 statutory holiday.

Honourable senators, Bill S-245 offers an opportunity to do more than establishing a commemorative day. It invites us to reflect on what was lost, to listen to Survivors and to act on our responsibility to future generations.

[Senator Osler]

[*Translation*]

I support this bill. Every Survivor deserves recognition and respect.

[*English*]

Thank you to Senator McCallum for bringing this legislation forward, and I encourage all honourable senators to support Bill S-245 and allow it to proceed to committee.

Personally, I look forward to learning from Survivors, Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers during the committee's study.

Thank you. *Meegwetch*.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time.)

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

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

(On motion of Senator McCallum, bill referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples.)

• (1500)

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO EXTEND DATE OF FINAL REPORT ON STUDY OF ROLE OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR IN FOOD SECURITY

Hon. John M. McNair, for Senator Robinson, pursuant to notice of October 28, 2026, moved:

> That, notwithstanding the order of the Senate adopted on Wednesday, October 22, 2025, the date for the final report of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry in relation to its study on the role of the agriculture and agri-food sector with regard to food security in Canada be extended from December 31, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

HUMAN RIGHTS

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY CANADA'S BLACK JUSTICE STRATEGY AND DEPOSIT REPORTS ON STUDY WITH CLERK DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Paulette Senior, pursuant to notice of November 3, 2026, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights be authorized to examine and report on Canada's Black Justice Strategy, including outcomes that have emerged to date and what will be delivered during the remainder of the 10-year plan;

That the committee be permitted, notwithstanding usual practices, to deposit reports on this study with the Clerk of the Senate if the Senate is not then sitting, and that the reports be deemed to have been tabled in the Senate; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than December 31, 2027, and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings for 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(*At 3:01 p.m., the Senate was continued until Tuesday, November 17, 2026, at 2 p.m.*)

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