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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH

Hon. Baltej S. Dhillon: Honourable senators, I rise today to recognize Dyslexia Awareness Month and to lend my support to a movement that seeks to raise awareness and understanding and to break the stigma surrounding a neurological condition that is little understood and too often dismissed.

According to Dyslexia Canada, this genetic condition — the most common of all learning disabilities — is estimated to affect 5% to 20% of Canadians.

Between one and four children in every Canadian classroom have dyslexia. That means virtually every teacher, every school and every community has a stake in ensuring these children receive the support they need. Without proper support, individuals with dyslexia can face significant challenges in reading, writing and learning. These barriers can undermine confidence, limit educational opportunities and affect their long-term social and economic well-being.

Too often, it is not dyslexia itself but the lack of early identification and appropriate support that holds people back. With early identification, effective reading instruction and appropriate support, children with dyslexia can thrive in school and beyond.

The real issue is not their ability to succeed, but whether we are giving them the tools and opportunities to do so.

Colleagues, every child deserves the chance to learn in a way that works for them. We must ensure that our children have the support they need to properly exercise a recognized human right: the right to learn to read.

Certain provinces and cities across Canada have proclaimed October as Dyslexia Awareness Month, but more needs to be done.

This is a matter of national significance. I therefore strongly support the call for the Government of Canada to officially recognize October as Dyslexia Awareness Month and to continue supporting the educational and community initiatives that provide the learning support that so many Canadians need.

Colleagues, raising awareness is an important first step, but awareness alone is not enough. What matters is identifying dyslexia early, ensuring access to effective reading instruction and giving children the support they need before they fall behind.

Honourable senators, let's give our children a fair chance to reach their potential. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Hon. Krista Ross: Honourable senators, I rise today with great pride to celebrate Small Business Week, an opportunity to recognize the entrepreneurs, innovators and community builders who are crucial contributors to our economy from coast to coast to coast.

The business community is made up of inspiring individuals who represent the very best of our communities. Entrepreneurs invest not only their resources but also their time, energy and passion. They take risks, create opportunities for others and contribute immeasurably to the social and economic fabric of our communities. Their success strengthens families, neighbourhoods and local economies across the country.

The past several years have presented significant challenges. Economic uncertainty, changing consumer expectations, labour shortages and rising costs have tested businesses in every sector.

Yet Canadian entrepreneurs have continued to adapt, invest and grow. Their ability to overcome obstacles and seize new opportunities is a testament to the strength of Canada's entrepreneurial spirit. It is not an easy task, but the passion and commitment of Canadian entrepreneurs never fail to inspire me.

Small businesses are also drivers of innovation. They identify emerging needs, develop new solutions and contribute to Canada's competitiveness in a rapidly changing global economy. Whether operating in urban cities, rural communities or remote regions, these businesses help build a more prosperous and inclusive future for all Canadians.

Small- and medium-sized enterprises, or SMEs, are truly the backbone of the Canadian economy. They make up 48% of our gross domestic product and employ over 8 million Canadians. With over a million small businesses across the country, they touch every industry and every region.

I'd also like to recognize the important role that organizations like chambers of commerce and local business associations play in supporting these businesses, from advocating on municipal, provincial and national bases to helping build connections and foster networking.

I encourage you to support your small businesses this week and every week. Our local business owners are more than just entrepreneurs. They are our neighbours, our friends and integral members of our communities. By supporting them, we strengthen our local economies and help keep our communities vibrant and resilient.

Whether it's your local bakery, convenience store, bookshop, family-run farm or print shop, small businesses are central to our daily lives.

Let's show our support this week and beyond. When small businesses succeed, we all do. Buy local and buy Canadian.

Thank you. *Wela'lin*.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of our former colleague the Honourable Dan Christmas and his daughter Gail.

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

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 Innu Nation Grand Chief Jodie Ashini. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator White.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

ALBERTA

Hon. Karen Sorensen: Honourable senators, before I begin, I too want to offer my condolences to all those impacted by the tragedy at CFB Wainwright. My heart is with the victims, their families and all members of our Armed Forces.

Today, as a proud Albertan and a proud Canadian, I was ecstatic to see the vast majority of Albertans vote in support of a united Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Sorensen: As a senator, I've had the privilege of travelling across the province, meeting with our farmers and energy workers, our artists and business people, our social workers and health care practitioners, young people and civic leaders. I've been awed by the immigrants who choose to make Alberta their home and quickly become local pillars, as well as the Indigenous leaders across Alberta who work every day to build bridges, and the young Albertans whose sense of duty and love for Canada inspires them to join our Armed Forces.

I have seen first-hand the industriousness, creativity and generosity of Albertans, and I know very well how much Alberta contributes to Canada.

I have also watched Canada come through for Alberta through fires, floods and other challenges. I know that when it comes down to it, Canada values Alberta, and Albertans believe in Canada.

• (1410)

This was exemplified by Albertans from all walks of life who spent the past months organizing, educating and getting out the vote: politicians and activists from across the political spectrum, lawyers, journalists, community and religious leaders and everyday citizens, all dedicated to protecting our time-tested institutions and shared future; Indigenous Peoples standing up for their treaty rights within a united Canada; and immigrant groups mobilizing their communities and getting new Canadians involved in the democratic process.

I am grateful that Albertans were not complacent in this pivotal moment and that we made our voices heard clearly and definitively. I want to take a moment to address the support for various measures targeting immigration, including restricting access to social services. In my community of the Bow Valley, these proposals were soundly rejected. Our residents know that immigration is essential to our local tourism industry, and our communities have a long track record of welcoming newcomers from around the world.

Alberta, too, has a long history of doing so. It is often said that you become an Albertan the moment you set foot in the province. At a practical level, immigration is essential for filling labour gaps in our agriculture and food production, health care, energy and tourism sectors.

We must not take these results as an excuse to scapegoat immigrants. Rather, we should redouble our efforts to fix gaps in our system, speed up application processing, bring in the workers we need to address labour shortages and support newcomers and their families as they integrate into Canadian communities.

Living in a municipality in Alberta within a national park, I've been privy to the complicated but often fruitful relationship between Albertan communities and the federal government. Co-existing alongside a vibrant mix of locals, tourists, Indigenous people, new Canadians, seasonal workers from around the world and families who have lived in Banff for generations, I've come to appreciate the diverse fabric of my town, our country and, yes, our province.

Alberta has a distinct identity and a rich history, but we are not an island unto ourselves. We wouldn't be nearly as great if we were.

Now that Albertans have made their wishes known, it is time to move forward and work together as a nation to create a better future for all Canadians, in every region of the country, safeguarding our sovereignty, growing our economy and helping all our communities flourish.

Thank you.

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 a group of Holocaust survivors from Montreal. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Housakos.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, today it is a privilege to welcome to this chamber a remarkable group of guests from Montreal: survivors who bear living witness to the Holocaust and who carry its truth forward. Hearing their stories, in their own words, is something that will always be seared into my memory.

Some remember with painful clarity what they endured. Some were born in labour camps across Europe. One was worn in Auschwitz. Others described looking down the barrel of a gun, waiting to be shot by a Nazi patrol in Germany.

Others, too young to remember, know the Holocaust through the life it left them, with parents stolen from them too soon, left crippled or left unable to speak of the horrors they endured.

One common thread that runs through all their stories is that they are survivors of the most unthinkable evils committed during the systemic persecution and genocide of 6 million Jews by the Nazi regime, an evil that was allowed to go unchecked for far too long because far too many chose to look away.

[*Translation*]

Everything these remarkable people went on to accomplish in their lives is a testament to the strength of the human spirit. Many came to Canada seeking refuge and gave back far more than they received. In Montreal, they helped establish businesses, synagogues, hospitals and schools, and they raised families. They became pillars of the city where I grew up. Montreal is a better place because of them.

[*English*]

Colleagues, with each year, there are fewer survivors with us. The window of time in which we can hear their stories in their own words is closing. That is why this visit today matters so much.

Their testimony is not simply history; it is a warning. I also think of what this moment must feel like for them, having witnessed the worst of humanity. I can't imagine they ever thought they would see October 7, the deadliest single-day massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, and I doubt they imagined they would again have to face anti-Semitism in the very neighbourhoods that once sheltered them here in Canada.

The fear many of them feel today is real. It is a fear they should never have had to feel again — not in Canada.

Let us honour them, not only with our gratitude and respect but with our resolve. We owe it to them to listen to their stories and meaningfully commit to confronting hatred with action and not just words. "Never again" is a promise, and keeping it is our responsibility.

I want to thank Tanya Toledano, city councillor for Dollard-des-Ormeaux, and all the volunteers with them today for making this visit to this chamber possible. I want to thank Her Honour for being gracious enough to receive them. I also want to thank Senator Moreau, who also participated today, as well as Senators Simons, Patterson, Quinn, K. Wells, Adler, Francis and MP Baber. Thank you, all.

[*Translation*]

To our guests, thank you for having the courage to share your stories with us and for all that you have contributed to this great country. We hear you, we honour you and we will keep your stories alive.

Thank you.

[*English*]

Thank you very much.

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 Sasha Banka, high school student participating in Plan International Canada's Girls Belong Here campaign. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Coyle.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

CANADIAN YOUTH CLIMATE ASSEMBLY

Hon. Mary Coyle: Honourable senators, I rise today to recite a poem in both English and French.

This poem was written for the members of the Canadian Youth Climate Assembly by the Parliamentary Poet Laureate, the talented Winnipeg poet and lawyer Chimwemwe Undi, on the occasion of the first citizens' assembly on climate in Canada and the first in the world to target 18- to 25-year-olds.

The poem was expertly translated by Marie Frankland.

The members of the Canadian Youth Climate Assembly presented their report in this chamber a year ago and are continuing their work.

Now for Chimwemwe's poem "Pyrocumulus":

> Like the heat throughout July, the premonitions
> became commonplace. Weeks of atmospheric haze
> purple blots on the interactive map.
>
> That summer slipped past the window as it shrank.
> Our displaced neighbours bore the burden of our idleness.
> A new black snake split the land, every inch
> a betrayal. Like a spell, we once believed
> that the right angle of the truth had to work,
> would spur us to change, spark the necessary awakening,
> and convey the horizon's proximity.
>
> Now, we know hope is the thing with gritted teeth,
> a panic room doomed to repeat:
>
> our finite time is waning, like the light
> and, look, there's so much left we have to do.

[*Translation*]

Now, in French:

> Pyrocumulus. Like the heat throughout July, the premonitions became commonplace. Weeks of atmospheric haze purple blots on the interactive map. That summer slipped past the window as it shrank. Our displaced neighbours bore the burden of our idleness. A new black snake split the land, every inch a betrayal. Like a spell, we once believed that the right angle of the truth had to work, would spur us to change, spark the necessary awakening, and convey the horizon's proximity. Now, we know hope is the thing with gritted teeth, a panic room doomed to repeat: our finite time is waning, like the light and, look, there's so much left we have to do.

• (1420)

[*English*]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of the family of the late Young Sup Chung as well as Mike Manion, Pitt Meadows Councillor. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Martin.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

THE LATE YOUNG SUP CHUNG, C.M., C.Q.
THE LATE INHI CHUNG

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to a distinguished Canadian, scientist, educator, community pioneer and a man of deep faith, Dr. Young Sup Chung, who passed away on August 28, 2026, at the age of 89.

Born in Incheon in 1937, Dr. Chung lived through the hardships of the Korean War as a teenager, studying in tent classrooms in Busan. In 1955, carrying just $100 in his pocket and his father's solemn charge to never forget his homeland, he embarked on a remarkable journey. Overcoming language barriers through sheer perseverance, he joined his brother Do Sup at Purdue University in Indiana, earning his biology degree in 1960.

Drawn eastward to Germany to join two close high school friends, he earned his doctorate in microbiology at Justus Liebig University Giessen, becoming its first Korean doctorate graduate.

It was there that he met Inhi Kim, the university's first Korean female student. They married in 1965, embarking on 60 extraordinary years together, until her passing on September 5, 2025. She was his best friend and his true better half.

In 1969, en route to Yale, Dr. Chung was invited to speak at the Université de Montréal. Recognizing his brilliance, the university offered him the opportunity to build a new microbial genetics section, along with the position for his wife, in a city they instantly loved. He accepted, becoming the university's first full-time professor of Korean heritage, while Dr. Inhi Chung went on to lead the nutrition department at the Lindsay convalescent hospital and to train McGill University interns.

Together, in 1978, they founded the Korean Language School of Greater Montreal, serving as co-principals, in rain or snow, for 45 years.

Dr. Chung's scientific contributions achieved international recognition, particularly his pioneering discovery of how ozone alters the genes of E. coli bacteria and its link to DNA repair.

In 2001, he became the first Korean Canadian appointed as a Member of the Order of Canada and later became the first Asian Canadian named a Knight of the Ordre national du Québec.

Though a descendant of one of Korea's early Catholic martyrs, Dr. Chung acknowledged that it was his wife's unwavering faith that ultimately led him to Catholicism. Baptized in 1985, he attended daily mass and helped secure a permanent home for the Korean Catholic Mission. In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI made them the first Korean couple invested into the Order of St. Gregory the Great.

Honourable senators, please join me in honouring the late Dr. Young Sup Chung and the late Inhi Chung and in extending our deepest condolences to their family. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Ndiallo Aw Badji, Chief Executive Officer of the Mamy Kaya Group. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Gerba.

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 Christian Provost, Executive Vice-President, and Philippe Parent, Senior Negotiator and Risk Manager at Boscus Canada. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Moreau.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*English*]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

LIVING DONOR RECOGNITION MEDAL BILL

SIXTH REPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Paulette Senior, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights, presented the following report:

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

The Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights has the honour to present its

SIXTH REPORT

Your committee, to which was referred Bill C-234, An Act respecting the establishment and award of a Living Donor Recognition Medal, has, in obedience to the order of reference of June 2, 2026, examined the said bill and now reports the same without amendment but with certain observations, which are appended to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

PAULETTE SENIOR

Chair

(*For text of observations, see today's* Journals of the Senate*, p. 1233.*)

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION

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

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 2 p.m.

[*Translation*]

EXCISE TAX ACT

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-38, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act (extension of the federal fuel excise tax relief).

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

[*English*]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO EXTEND DATE OF FINAL REPORT ON STUDY OF THE COMMERCIAL FISHERIES LICENSING REGIME ON THE PACIFIC COAST

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

> That, notwithstanding the order of the Senate adopted on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, the date for the final report of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans in relation to its study on the commercial fisheries licensing regime on Canada's Pacific Coast be extended from December 31, 2026, to April 30, 2027.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO EXTEND DATE OF FINAL REPORT ON STUDY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF COMMERCIAL INSHORE FISHERIES IN ATLANTIC CANADA AND QUEBEC

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

> That, notwithstanding the order of the Senate adopted on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, the date for the final report of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans in relation to its study on the independence of commercial inshore fisheries in Atlantic Canada and Quebec, and the policies and legislative tools used by the Government of Canada to preserve it, such as the Owner-Operator Policy, be extended from December 31, 2026, to April 30, 2027.

• (1430)

[*Translation*]

QUESTION PERIOD

FINANCE

INTEREST COSTS ON FEDERAL DEBT

Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed that debt charges are the country's fastest-growing expense at over $1 billion per week. This is truly a case of willful blindness. We are currently in a situation where the government is spending more on debt interest than on health care transfers.

When will the government stop mortgaging the future of young Canadians?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Canada is in a very enviable economic position, perhaps the most enviable of all the G7 countries. When the government makes decisions, it does so to improve the lives of Canadians, particularly given the current geopolitical situation, where we are facing significant challenges in our trade with the United States. The government is making decisions to guarantee the quality of jobs in Canada and to support families, especially when it comes to affordability, housing, employment assistance and assistance in all other areas related to social welfare.

In light of the current international situation, decisions must be made. Governing is about making decisions. The government is making bold decisions that will ensure that, with our economic capacity, we will be able to get the public finances back in order and —

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

[*English*]

Senator Housakos: Government leader, for most Canadians and most senators, $1 billion a week in order to service a debt doesn't sound like a success story. That's number one. Number two, the Prime Minister replaced the previous prime minister, and we have now had 11 years of Liberal governments with no fiscal anchors that they respected. But we assume that the new Prime Minister, with his fantastic CV, has promised more success, but he doesn't seem to respect fiscal anchors either. The Parliamentary Budget Officer is saying that Canada has a problem and that we are spending more now on interest on —

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

Senator Moreau: Having the best fiscal situation among the G7 countries is a measure of success, Senator Housakos. I'm sorry you don't recognize that. Over the last 10 years, there have been several general elections, and each time Canadians prefer a Liberal government over a Conservative government. It means that in the last 10 or 11 years, something good must have been done by the government.

[*Translation*]

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

MAJOR PROJECTS OFFICE

Hon. Richard Martel: Government leader, as you know, in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, major industrial projects are vital to our economy and our workers. The government likes to talk about fast-tracking major projects to stimulate the Canadian economy. In our regions, what matters is not announcements; it is projects that get built, jobs that are created and the economic benefits that flow to our businesses.

Does the government intend to take concrete measures to ensure that our regions fully benefit from these major projects and that the wealth created by our resources also benefits our workers, our businesses and our communities?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Martel.

First, allow me to congratulate you on joining the Conservative senators' group. Your arrival in the Senate has not gone unnoticed.

Thank you for your question. It gives me the opportunity to reiterate that the federal government's primary focus is on delivering major projects. That's why one of the first pieces of legislation to be considered and passed by the Senate stems from Bill C-5. Furthermore, we're currently conducting a pre-study of Bill C-39 with the goal of accelerating the implementation of major projects across Canada.

I am counting on your cooperation to ensure that we can undertake a thorough review of Bill C-39. As you know, every major project begins with an announcement before becoming a reality. The announcements already made by the government are now translating into real projects, particularly in the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region.

Senator Martel: Will the government commit to measuring and publicly reporting on the economic benefits these projects generate for our regions?

Senator Moreau: When the government approves major projects through the Major Projects Office, those projects are, by definition, of both regional and national importance. It goes without saying that the government will have to account for the delivery of those projects. That's one of the reasons we have Question Period. I'm counting on you to ask the necessary questions if the information is not made available as quickly as you would like.

[*English*]

JUSTICE

MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE REVIEW COMMISSION

Hon. Kim Pate: Senator Moreau, in 1935, Daniel P. Sampson, an African-Canadian veteran, was executed in Nova Scotia for a crime that new evidence suggests he did not commit. Daniel's family seeks a posthumous review of his unjust conviction and consequent baseless execution.

Almost two years after Royal Assent of Bill C-40, the government has yet to establish the Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission.

As the then-Minister of Justice wrote to the Senate, the commission will take a "proactive and systemic approach," with a "departure from past experiences of systemic violence, racism and misogyny," which means that Black and Indigenous Peoples are overrepresented in prisons yet vastly under-represented — with women virtually invisible — among successful exonerations.

Other than designating Winnipeg as its headquarters, what concrete steps has the government actually taken to establish the commission?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): It is a very important issue. Thank you for raising the question.

The Criminal Conviction Review Group is a very small unit. Therefore, it does not have a specific programming or policy to address the under-representation of different groups in the applications. The Minister of Justice's powers to review a criminal conviction for miscarriages of justice has a long history, having been established in 1892, but the review group has noticed an increase in applications in recent years from women, Indigenous, Black and racialized people. Of the 20 wrongful conviction remedies issued in the past 10 years, 7 have been for Indigenous people, 2 of whom were women, and 1 was for a racialized applicant.

Senator Pate: Thank you for that information, but it actually doesn't help us to know when the commission will be formed.

Mr. Sampson's family has waited 90 years for justice. Odelia and Nerissa Quewezance have waited more than 30 years in prison and four years for a decision from the minister, and they are now awaiting court proceedings.

How much longer will they and countless other Black and Indigenous Peoples have to wait? When will the commissioners be appointed? Are there any other impediments to the commission being operational this fiscal year?

Senator Moreau: Thank you, senator. The creation of this important commission takes time and requires careful consideration, but the government is committed to establishing it as soon as possible. I think the Minister of Justice was here to reiterate that will.

I can tell you that the government is currently working on identifying and appointing a suitable chief commissioner as an important step forward toward full implementation of the commission.

PUBLIC SAFETY

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Hon. Mary Coyle: Senator Moreau, in June 2020, in the aftermath of the tragedy that claimed 22 lives in Nova Scotia, Senator Colin Deacon, Senator Stan Kutcher and I called publicly for a joint federal-provincial inquiry and insisted that the inquiry address intimate partner violence and gender-based violence. The Mass Casualty Commission highlighted in its final report how gender-based violence and intimate partner violence are critical public safety issues and called for measures, including an independent gender-based violence commissioner.

Recently, the commission's Progress Monitoring Committee released its final report and rated progress on gender-based violence-related recommendations as just "solidly initiated," warning that current federal funding does not match the scale of the problem.

Senator Moreau, will the government commit to establishing the Mass Casualty Commission-recommended independent gender-based violence commissioner and provide a clear timeline for implementing the commission's recommendations?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Well, thank you, Senator Coyle. There is no doubt that you raise an important topic, and it goes with the concern raised yesterday by your colleague Senator Senior.

As I have said, I cannot comment on future government legislation or appointments, but I will add your voice to my message from yesterday to the minister on the implementation of an independent federal gender-based violence commissioner. In the meantime, the government's approach to combatting gender-based violence combines stronger laws with sustained investment to protect women. In your region, Senator Coyle, there is $1 million for the Antigonish Women's Centre & Sexual Assault Services. This is a sustained investment with $607.4 million to support provinces and territories to end the cycle of violence.

• (1440)

Senator Coyle: Thank you, Senator Moreau.

The Mass Casualty Commission's Progress Monitoring Committee's mandate has now ended. It's over. Significant work remains. The committee's final report noted that 40 of the 130 recommendations were not formally assessed, and it emphasized that progress on systemic issues, such as gender-based violence and institutional trust, requires sustained, long-term effort.

Given that committee members have expressed concern about the need for continued monitoring and accountability, will the government commit to establishing an independent, replacement body —

The Hon. the Speaker: Thank you, senator.

Senator Moreau: The government is committed to acting on the Mass Casualty Commission's recommendation to ensure that lessons learned have a lasting impact to better protect the public.

RCMP Commissioner Mike Duheme released last year's strategy that outlines how the RCMP plans to respond to the inquiry. Nonetheless, I can raise the recommendation to establish a body to continue monitoring the implementation of the commission's recommendation to the minister.

Thank you for your question.

JUSTICE

MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE REVIEW COMMISSION

Hon. Wanda Thomas Bernard: Senator Moreau, it has been generally acknowledged that the bulk of advocacy work on behalf of wrongfully convicted people in Canada is conducted pro bono by groups such as Innocence Canada and Projet Innocence Québec. What specific resources will be made available to wrongfully convicted people as they seek to exonerate themselves under the new Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Bernard. As you know, unfortunately, I cannot comment on future budgetary or spending decisions of the government.

I would also like to acknowledge the important work that Innocence Canada and Projet Innocence Québec conduct, both as legal counsel and as pro bono advocates for justice reform.

As you may know, the Department of Justice Canada does not provide ongoing operations funding to Innocence Canada or Projet Innocence Québec. In terms of general support, however, the Department of Justice Canada operates a variety of funding programs to which pro bono groups can apply, though none are specifically targeted at addressing wrongful convictions, and there are specific criteria for the types of activities that can be funded by the Department of Justice Canada.

Senator Bernard: Senator Moreau, it cannot be forgotten that when a person is exonerated for a wrongful conviction, this often results in significant uncertainty and additional trauma for victims of crime, who may not necessarily receive an answer from the justice system as to who caused the harm they, their families or friends have suffered.

What specific supports and resources will be made available to victims of crime who are unnecessarily retraumatized as the result of —

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

Senator Moreau: First, I want to underline that the government recognizes the profound and lasting impacts that violent crimes and miscarriages of justice can have.

I have been informed that the Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission will have a dedicated victim services coordinator position to support victims. The coordinator will also assist with the development of procedural policies with a specific mandate that attends to notifications for victims and ensures participation in the process is consistent —

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

Hon. Tony Ince: Senator Moreau, Bill C-40, the Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission Act (David and Joyce Milgaard's Law), establishes an independent commission with a mandate that includes informing the public of miscarriages of justice and supporting applicants in need.

In light of the findings of the retired justices, the Honourable Harry LaForme and the Honourable Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré, which helped inform the legislation, what specific measures will the government take to address the under-representation of women, Indigenous, Black and other racialized people among those seeking redress through the anticipated Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): As I mentioned in response to Senator Pate's question, the Criminal Conviction Review Group is a very small unit, and that is the reason why it does not have specific programming or policy to address the under-representation of different groups in the application. All the current resources of the review group are dedicated to general case review.

As I mentioned, of the 20 wrongful conviction remedies issued in the past 10 years, 7 have been for Indigenous Peoples, two of whom were women, and 1 for a racialized applicant.

Senator Ince: Thank you, senator.

TRANSPORT

HIGH-SPEED RAIL

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald: Senator Moreau, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, or PBO, the proposed Alto High-Speed Rail project is now projected to cost as much as $113 billion, far exceeding the government's initial estimate of $90 billion. More troubling is that potential routes threaten to disrupt rural communities, displace landowners and divide productive farmland across eastern Ontario and rural Quebec.

The government's lack of transparency has left families, farmers and property owners anxious about their livelihoods and uncertain whether their homes, farms and lands will be expropriated or divided. Canadians should not be left in the dark about a multi-billion dollar project that could permanently alter their communities.

Will the government commit to full and timely transparency on this project, which could have irreversible consequences for rural Canadians in the regions affected?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. Of course, the government wants to be transparent with that project. Building the first high-speed rail network in Canada is a generational project that will stimulate our economy with an estimated gross domestic product, or GDP, boost of $35 billion annually, create over 51,000 good-paying jobs and contribute approximately $800 million in tourism annually.

Therefore, it would be too early to give a price tag with any reasonable accuracy, as Alto is still receiving feedback on the project because they are consulting Canadians on the transparency issue and working on the route and alignment. As long as the route and alignment are not definitive, it would be too early to put a price tag on the project.

I guess you agree with me?

Senator MacDonald: That's interesting to hear.

Senator Moreau, given the scale of uncertainty about this project and the consequences facing rural residents, will the government commit to ensuring that no land is expropriated and no final route is approved until the full cost, route impacts and concerns of affected communities have been made public and are meaningfully addressed?

Senator Moreau: I was practising in expropriation law before I came to the Senate. You don't start an expropriation procedure without knowing exactly what you want to acquire.

The government will ensure every Canadian gets a fair process with this transformative project. Since January 2026, Alto has held open houses and provided forums for individuals to share their feedback and concerns on the high-speed rail project, with over 10,000 Canadians participating.

I'm sure that the expropriation process will proceed according to —

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

FINANCE

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Hon. Denise Batters: Senator Moreau, your Liberal government has repeatedly claimed to have found $60 billion in savings government-wide, but yesterday the Parliamentary Budget Officer contradicted this and said, ". . . the deficit is broadly unchanged . . . . "

Prime Minister Carney said last fall that a series of tough, responsible choices would save taxpayers that $60 billion. Last March, Finance Minister Champagne repeated the claim: "We should put the record straight." Also, "We found $60 billion of savings across different departments of the Government of Canada."

Now the PBO says, "No dice."

Put the record straight, indeed. Where are these taxpayer savings, or is this just one more Carney contortion?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): The government is committed to transparency, and there will be another budget that will be tabled soon in November. You will have all the information within that budget. Having said that, the government is doing its best to create a strong economy, save industries and businesses, and ensure that Canadians can obtain good-paying jobs. We are also working on affordability. We want to put money in people's pockets during difficult times.

• (1450)

I'm not worried because I know that you will have all the information you need. This document will be tabled with the budget.

Senator Batters: We're asking about the last budget, and there is still no transparency about that.

Your government promised Canadian taxpayers repeatedly, in the last year, that they found $60 billion in savings, but now the Parliamentary Budget Officer, or PBO, says she can't find it. The only visible cut your Liberal government has made recently is to shamefully ground our beloved Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds. Where are the rest of the cutbacks? Are these just more broken Carney Liberal promises?

Senator Moreau: Senator Batters, I know you like the Snowbird issue. On Thursday, September 17, the Royal Canadian Air Force welcomed the first two of its new training aircraft, the CT-157 Siskin II, which are the planes that will replace the old Tutor jets. I know you don't like it, but they were retired for safety reasons.

I guess pilot safety is more important to the government than anything else. When you tell —

[*Translation*]

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

HEALTH

ADVERTISING OF VAPING PRODUCTS

Hon. Victor Boudreau: My question is for the Government Representative. I'd like to circle back to a question that I asked last year.

Over five years ago, restrictions on flavoured vaping products were published in the *Canada Gazette*, but they've yet to be finalized. A number of organizations have been working for years to get certain vaping products banned in Canada. Among other things, these organizations want to restrict flavoured products on the basis that they target children, given their youth-appealing flavours and bright colours.

At a recent meeting of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology concerning Bill C-31, officials inferred that the ban's implementation appears to have stalled. The reason given was a lack of consensus at the provincial and territorial level as to what exactly should be banned. Can the Government Representative confirm this version of the facts?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question, Senator Boudreau. I know you have a particular interest in this matter because of one of your roles in your previous life. I want to reassure you. Preventing young people from vaping is a priority for the Government of Canada, and the government has passed a number of bills in that regard. The Tobacco and Vaping Products Act prohibits the sale of vaping products to young people and bans any advertising likely to appeal to young people. The Canada Consumer Product Safety Act also regulates the manufacture, import, advertising and sale of vaping products.

As you are well aware, health is a shared jurisdiction. The provinces definitely have an important role to play, but the Government of Canada believes it can work in a spirit of cooperative federalism with the provinces to provide leadership and ensure that all existing barriers are removed as quickly as possible to prevent vaping.

Senator Boudreau: As a follow-up, could the representative tell us if the government intends to negotiate any sort of solution? On such an important issue, I would have thought, and hoped, that the federal government would understand the importance of showing leadership, rather than waiting for the provinces and territories to reach a consensus.

Senator Moreau: Senator Boudreau, the government believes that it is demonstrating leadership by passing stricter laws, while continuing to work with the provinces and maintain a dialogue with them. That includes ensuring that it is moving things forward with the provinces within the context of that dialogue. The federal government would rather take a collaborative

approach with the provinces than a coercive one. I think that, as we saw in Alberta, the result is a productive federal system and constructive leadership.

[*English*]

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

CANADA-PALESTINE RELATIONS

Hon. Daryl S. Fridhandler: I am a Canadian Jewish Zionist who has long believed in the possibility of a two-state solution where both Palestinians and Israelis live in peace, security and mutual recognition. I have had the good fortune to discuss this subject with former Israeli prime minister and former mayor of Jerusalem Ehud Olmert, who is a strong proponent of a negotiated two-state solution.

The Government of Canada's recognition of the Palestinian state was presented as a step forward in advancing a two-state solution. Such recognition was predicated on reforms within the Palestinian Authority, democratic elections in 2026 and the exclusion of Hamas from any future governing role. We have not seen any meaningful steps taken to achieve these reforms.

Mr. Abbas, now in the twenty-first year of his four-year elected mandate, recently postponed elections to September 2027. "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me."

Can the Government Representative in the Senate explain how the Government of Canada currently views its recognition of a Palestinian state under these changed circumstances?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Fridhandler. For more than 70 years, successive Canadian governments have held the position that the two-state solution is the way forward for long-term peace in the region while also addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns. The recognition of a Palestinian state by the Canadian government is a decision firmly aligned with the principles of self-determination and fundamental human rights reflected in the United Nations Charter.

To your question specifically, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has reiterated in a joint statement with allies that Hamas cannot play a role in the future governance of Palestine. Furthermore, the minister said she deeply regrets their decision to postpone the election and that Canada remains available to support democratic initiatives.

Senator Fridhandler: Senator Moreau, the success of any negotiated two-state resolution will ultimately depend on leaders who possess both the authority to negotiate and the legitimacy to secure support for any agreement reached. Which specific Palestinian individuals, institutions or organizations does the Government of Canada believe are currently capable of acting authoritatively on behalf of the Palestinian people in negotiations concerning the future of a Palestinian state?

Senator Moreau: Canada is convinced that strengthening the Palestinian government is essential for continuing to build the institutional foundation for a viable two-state solution, which is the only path to lasting peace and security for both Israel and Palestine. However, it is not the role of Canada or of any foreign state to interfere with the process of identifying who has electoral legitimacy as representatives or as head of state. Nonetheless, the government has been clear that Hamas cannot play any role in such democratic initiatives and continues to be committed to holding elections.

JUSTICE

CRIMINAL CONVICTION REVIEW GROUP

Hon. Paul (PJ) Prosper: Senator Moreau, it has been two years since we passed the Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission Act, or David and Joyce Milgaard's Law, which established an arm's-length body to investigate wrongful convictions. During our study of that bill, it was clear that the proposed body was meant to ensure that these investigations would be conducted in a fair and timely manner.

Can the government please tell us the average time the Criminal Conviction Review Group has taken, over the past 10 years, to complete a preliminary assessment and, when a reasonable basis has been found for determining that a miscarriage of justice has likely occurred, the average time it has taken to investigate applications for a ministerial review?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Prosper. It is my understanding that the Criminal Conviction Review Group does not keep official statistics on the average time it takes to complete a preliminary assessment or an investigation. However, I can tell you that, in the last 10 years, the review group observed that files that result in a new trial or appeal can take anywhere from two to four years, with the average approaching four years. On the other hand, preliminary assessments generally require six months to a year to complete, since counsel handles multiple files, but they can take up to two or more years for more complex cases. For your information, there are currently 40 cases in the preliminary assessment stage as of today.

Senator Prosper: Senator Moreau, what additional resources, if any, is the government providing to the Department of Justice and the six lawyers at the Criminal Conviction Review Group to complete the review process and clear the backlog of cases before the Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission becomes operational?

Senator Moreau: Thank you, again. The Criminal Conviction Review Group's yearly budget is approximately $1.5 million. There are currently five — not six — lawyers on staff, one paralegal and three outside agents assigned to specific files. When the commission is operational, the review group will be jurisdictionally barred from working on cases that are still at the preliminary assessment stage, such as the 40 cases that I mentioned earlier.

• (1500)

[*Translation*]

CANADA-AFRICA PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

BILATERAL MISSION TO ETHIOPIA AND SOUTH AFRICA, FEBRUARY 12-20, 2026—REPORT TABLED

Leave having been given to revert to Tabling of Reports from Interparliamentary Delegations:

Hon. Amina Gerba: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association concerning the Bilateral Mission to Ethiopia and South Africa, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pretoria, South Africa, from February 12 to 20, 2026.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

LAWFUL ACCESS BILL, 2026

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

> Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Dhillon, seconded by the Honourable Senator Varone, for the second reading of Bill C-22, An Act respecting lawful access.

Hon. Danièle Henkel: Honourable senators, many of you seem surprised to see me rise to speak to Bill C-22. I do not claim to be an expert on the matter.

However, as I've already mentioned in this chamber, and as other public figures have as well, I've been a victim of identity theft. My voice and image were used without my consent to promote fraudulent investments. Businesspeople, politicians, artists, and television personalities are also regularly targeted by these schemes.

It is in that context that I want to address Bill C-22.

When someone discovers that their identity has been stolen to swindle them out of their savings, that a teenager is a victim of sextortion, that a business is being extorted, or that a family is receiving threats on a digital platform, they naturally turn to the police with a legitimate expectation: that those responsible will be identified and held accountable for their actions in court. Behind these scams lie criminal networks that enrich themselves at the expense of their victims.

[*English*]

In 2025, Canadians reported losing more than $704 million to fraud. According to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, only 5% to 10% of fraud is estimated to be reported. These figures do not fully convey the distress caused by identity theft, blackmail, threats or the loss of a lifetime of savings, but they do make one thing clear: Digital crime is no longer a fringe phenomenon.

The sharp rise in fraud also shows that cybercriminals see serious weaknesses in Canada's legal framework. In fact, in its *2025 Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risks in Canada*, the Department of Finance acknowledges that our economy attracts the proceeds of crime and that fraud is one of the leading money laundering threats in Canada. Yet, while criminals exploit the latest technologies, our legal framework too often struggles to keep pace. All major democracies face this gap, but Canada's delay in catching up is particularly well documented.

[*Translation*]

In September 2025, the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians released a special report on lawful access to communications.

Its findings deserve our undivided attention. In particular, they found that Canada lacks overarching legislation that would require communications service providers to maintain the technical capabilities necessary for lawful interception.

Some of the rules that apply to cellular networks today date back to 1995, a time when we didn't use smartphones or messaging apps the way we do today.

The same report found that Canada is the only Five Eyes and G7 country without legislation requiring electronic service providers to develop and maintain lawful access capabilities.

As a result, Canada has fallen behind, which is something that Bill C-22 seeks to address. Although I recognize that some clauses of the bill need to be clarified, and I will come back to that, I also recognize that we can't wait any longer.

That is precisely why Bill C-22 is the first long-overdue step.

[*English*]

The first part of the bill aims to strengthen investigations from the earlier stages. In a case involving sexual exploitation, threats, kidnapping or extortion, an investigation can become a race against time. Today, police may have to obtain several court orders simply to identify the telecommunications provider associated with a phone number or an IP address used by a suspect. These steps can slow down an investigation from the onset.

Clause 5 would allow police to ask a telecommunications provider a simple yes-or-no question: Do you provide service to this IP address? Police would need reasonable grounds to suspect an offence and that the answer would assist their investigation. In

my view, this would not infringe upon the reasonable expectation of privacy, since it would reveal neither a person's identity nor their activities.

Meanwhile, clause 6 provides for a judicial production order to obtain subscriber information, such as a person's name or address. I believe this distinction matters. It would allow investigators to save valuable time while preserving judicial oversight when they seek information that could identify an individual.

With the objective, the bill would also facilitate investigations involving foreign companies, including major digital platforms. A Canadian judge could authorize police to request certain information from these companies. They would not automatically be required to respond, but this procedure would give investigators a more direct route than the usual international channels, which are often slow.

[*Translation*]

Part 2 of Bill C-22 seeks to ensure that electronic service providers have the technical means necessary to provide investigators with the information that a judge authorizes them to obtain.

I have more reservations about Part 2. I listened carefully to my colleagues who spoke before me. I'd like to thank them for sharing their expertise and drawing our attention to several provisions that need to be studied carefully. I'm thinking in particular of metadata, which, even without revealing the content of communications, can provide very specific information about a person's private life and their conversations. The conditions under which authorities can access this data raise legitimate questions. I'm also thinking of the very broad definition of "electronic service providers," which could include everything from telephone companies to digital platforms and messaging apps. However, they would not all be subject to the same obligations.

• (1510)

The government could set out broad requirements by regulation and impose specific obligations on certain suppliers through ministerial orders. It is these orders that warrant closer scrutiny.

Clause 12 of the proposed act allows a ministerial order to override any conflicting regulation, and clause 14 imposes restrictions on disclosing such orders.

Of course, we're assured that these orders will be, and must be, approved by the Intelligence Commissioner, but is this guarantee sufficient? I look forward to hearing what the committee tasked with studying this bill has to say about that, particularly with respect to the testimony of experts and the views of the organizations concerned. The Senate must fully exercise its role as the chamber of sober second thought. It is our responsibility to determine whether the powers being proposed are necessary, proportionate and sufficiently regulated. If amendments are required, we must propose them.

I would also like to take the opportunity presented by the passage of Bill C-22 to acknowledge what it, unfortunately, doesn't do. While this bill enhances the ability of authorities to investigate offences and lawfully obtain evidence, it does not amount to a comprehensive strategy for preventing online fraud. It doesn't address all the issues associated with fraudulent advertising, fake accounts, identity theft, the platforms' due diligence obligations or the financial protection of victims.

The government launched consultations this year on a national anti-fraud strategy. While this move is extremely helpful, it is high time that the consultations lead to tangible decisions and legislation, considering how widespread and extensively documented the fraud phenomenon has become.

I expect the government to move quickly to introduce rules requiring platforms to more thoroughly verify the identity of advertisers, promptly identify and remove fraudulent advertisements, and provide victims with simple mechanisms for reporting fraud and seeking redress. It will also be necessary to clearly establish the accountability of companies that, despite having been alerted, allow these scams to continue to the detriment of consumers.

The internet has become an integral part of our lives. We entrust a vast amount of personal information to others online. We cannot be outraged by web-based crimes, lament the suffering of victims, yet accept that those responsible, and the companies that allow them to operate, escape accountability.

Honourable senators, I support the principle of Bill C-22 because it addresses clear gaps and, to some extent, helps make up for lost time. However, certain provisions of the bill warrant clarification. We must provide law enforcement agencies with the legal and technical tools they need to carry out the duties entrusted to them, while preserving the safeguards that are the foundation of our rule of law.

We must then continue our efforts in the areas of prevention, digital platform accountability and victim protection.

Again, Bill C-22 is not the culmination of this work: It is the necessary starting point. Thank you. *Meegwetch*.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

Hon. Denise Batters: Will Senator Henkel take a question?

Senator Henkel: Of course.

Senator Batters: Thank you very much for your speech. You provided an important perspective, especially given the relevant experience you have regarding this issue. I agree that a lawful access bill is important, but we want to ensure that it's as good as it can be.

On September 24, tech companies wrote a letter to the ministers involved — the Minister of Public Safety and the Minister of Industry — that received a bit of media attention. It raised a couple of very important concerns that may be relevant to what you were speaking about.

I wondered what your reaction would be to that.

They said in their letter that:

> Bill C-22 could still require us to weaken encryption or build interception capabilities. Weakening encryption could expose customers' sensitive financial, identity, and transaction data to criminals and other unauthorized actors. A backdoor for law enforcement is a backdoor for everyone. Once built, it would permanently expand the attack surface for criminal actors and foreign adversaries. . . .

They also spoke in the letter about how the requirement of retaining metadata for six months, including information not needed for business purposes, could create what they called ". . . high-value cybersecurity 'honeypot' targets for hackers. . . ."

How would you react to those two issues? Would you support amendments to ensure that this bill can be as strong as possible and to ensure it is accomplishing what it is intended to do?

[*Translation*]

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator, I would like to mention that you have very little time remaining to answer the question. Would you like extra time for this question? Another senator would also like to ask you a question.

Senator Henkel: Yes, please, Madam Speaker. I will try to be as concise as possible.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Henkel: Thank you very much, Senator Batters, for raising those two points.

To your first point, I would say that, yes, I believe the legislation specifies that a company could, if it had encrypted information, decrypt it where a legitimate request had been made. It would have to be willing to do so, of course, since it could choose to oppose such a request. However, it could only do so if it had encrypted the information in the first place. That's the first answer.

Could you remind me of the second question, please?

Senator Henkel: Yes, the second question, because Senator Batters mentioned encryption, decryption and cyber security.

[*English*]

Senator Batters, could you clarify your second question?

Senator Batters: The second part of the question was about the fact that this act would require retaining metadata for six months, including information that is not needed for business purposes. These tech companies said that that would create ". . . high-value cybersecurity 'honeypot' targets for hackers. . . ."

[*Translation*]

Senator Henkel: I believe we will be the only country to require metadata to be retained for six months. In the other G7 countries, the period is up to almost two years.

However, the government also emphasizes the importance of requiring these companies to maintain the highest possible standards of security when storing metadata. In a sense, the message is that, yes, companies will be required to retain metadata for six months, but they will also be required to store this information using the most secure methods available.

[*English*]

Hon. Baltej S. Dhillon: Senator Henkel, would you take a question?

Senator Henkel: Of course, senator.

Senator Dhillon: Senator Henkel, thank you for your speech and for recognizing that this is an important bill. We are over a decade behind other jurisdictions and other countries in trying to ensure that the citizens of Canada are protected in the same way.

As a matter of fact, in speaking to some experts, I learned we're targeted because of that. Those enterprises are set up here because we don't have those measures.

We talked about metadata here. The term "metadata" has yet to be defined because metadata keeps changing day by day. While we use that term, there are experts who will help us design the definition of "metadata." I took interest in your concern where you said, ". . . the conditions under which the authorities could access them . . . ."

• (1520)

Would you mind sharing with me what you were thinking about or what your concerns are? Because at the present time, the only way the authorities would be able to access any of that information past that first "yes" or "no" question that you spoke about is through judicial authorization and by making a case in front of a trier of fact, a justice, and in sharing with them reasonable grounds to believe that there is a crime and that they need that information. Only through that warrant and only through that judicial authorization can they then receive that metadata. I'm curious to understand what your concerns are.

[*Translation*]

Senator Henkel: Thank you, senator. I think what I wanted to highlight here is the importance of ensuring that the parameters are clearly defined so that the authorities understand them and so that Canadians can be reassured about the extent of those powers and how they're being exercised. At present, this remains a very grey area. I believe it is important to clarify that area and then to impose a clear obligation on companies that retain this metadata to maintain extremely robust safeguards. And finally, I was also talking about ministerial orders. With respect to those ministerial orders, one wonders what would ensure that —

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Henkel, I must interrupt you again. Would you like more time to answer Senator Dhillon's question?

Senator Henkel: I'd like to ask for the consent of my colleagues. If they agree, then, yes, I'd like to finish.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted for the senator to finish answering Senator Dhillon's question?

Hon. Senators: Yes.

Senator Henkel: Thank you. I would like to come back to ministerial orders, which are related to this. Just how far does the minister's authority go and how can the minister access data without the consent of the Intelligence Commissioner? Is that consent enough? Does that answer your question?

[*English*]

Senator Dhillon: I think we'll speak after about that particular issue. But I think there is no ambiguity in law as far as how authorities can receive judicial authorizations. That's very, very clear. We can certainly follow up.

You also spoke about prevention. I agree. I think there is much more to be done around prevention. We can be better at that.

Would you agree, senator, that by having the efficiency and the tools that are necessary for law enforcement, as you say, to identify those bad actors and to identify those criminal enterprises and organizations that are putting up those platforms where people are being targeted and the millions of dollars — what we heard in Toronto was an estimate that somewhere between $20 billion and $40 billion in Canada is lost to scams and fraud. Would you not agree the most powerful way to prevent future victims is by taking these criminal enterprises or organized crime groups down by identifying them, and, to do that, we need these tools?

[*Translation*]

Senator Henkel: Thank you, senator. I'm absolutely certain that we need to do just that. That's why I'm saying that Bill C-22 marks the beginning of something new, something we don't already have. The first step is to give the police the power to ask whether an offender is a customer of a certain provider, yes or no. The second step involves having immediate access to a judge to obtain an order and take the matter further, if only to obtain the offender's identity, email address or telephone number so that action can be taken. That's important.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Senator LaBoucane-Benson: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-13(2), I move:

> That the Senate do now adjourn.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(*At 3:25 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.*)

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