



DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION



43rd PARLIAMENT



VOLUME 151



NUMBER 26

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,
Speaker

CONTENTS

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

Debates Services: Josée Boisvert, National Press Building, Room 831, Tel. 613-219-3775
Publications Centre: Kim Laughren, National Press Building, Room 926, Tel. 343-550-5002

THE SENATE

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

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

Prayers.

THE SENATE

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING PAGES

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, during this time of the year, we take a moment to thank our hard-working and dedicated pages who are leaving us this year. Even though we are in strange times now, I think it is appropriate we do the same today as well.

Adrianna McAllister is completing her third year as a page after having served this year as the chief page.

She will be completing her bachelor's degree in political science and history at the University of Ottawa next year and she plans to attend law school thereafter.

She is grateful for the incredible opportunity she has had in the Senate and is excited to take her Senate experience into her future endeavours. Let me assure you, Adrianna, we are very thankful for all you have done for us here in the Senate. Thank you.

Shella Moreau will be entering her third year at the University of Ottawa and is looking forward to new opportunities. She hopes to become an athletic therapist and is interested in any endeavours related to physical activity, human rights and research.

She is extremely grateful to have spent the last two years at the Senate and would like to express her thanks for her amazing experience. We express our thanks to you, Shella, for the wonderful work you have done in supporting the Senate and senators. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

INTERNATIONAL THALASSEMIA DAY

Hon. David M. Wells: Honourable colleagues, it's with pleasure today that I rise to recognize International Thalassemia Day. The twenty-sixth anniversary was globally commemorated on Friday, May 8, 2020.

Thalassemia, also known as Mediterranean Anemia, or Cooley's Anemia, is a genetic blood disorder where patients cannot make their own red blood cells. This results in severe life-threatening anemia which can only be treated by regular blood

cell transfusions. Without blood transfusions, a child with thalassemia could not live past 10 years of age. Patients are tethered to hospital systems to receive their life-sustaining red blood cells and transfusions every month, for life.

Blood transfusions are a necessary treatment for thalassemia but also cause secondary iron overload. Iron is essential in red blood cells, but once those blood cells break down, iron is deposited in vital organs, including the heart, liver and pancreas. Too much iron can cause severe damage to organs and tissue and can lead to early death unless it is removed. For people with thalassemia, the excess iron that builds up over the years in blood transfusions can be removed with medications that can cost up to \$75,000 per year per patient. Without these medications, a person with thalassemia would not live past their twenties. Thalassemia affects about 1,200 children and adults across Canada. It predominantly affects Canadians whose ancestry comes from the Mediterranean region, North Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim. In Canada, it is estimated that 5 to 7% of people in these populations are carriers.

The Thalassemia Foundation of Canada is a small volunteer-run charity that was established in 1982 to raise awareness to advocate for comprehensive health care and to fund thalassemia scientific research. They have supported scientific research and fellowship grants in Canada's universities and teaching hospitals. Their efforts have expanded to advocate for comprehensive health care for patients over 18 years old. Although the number of children who have survived into adulthood has increased, the health care programs for adult thalassemia patients have not expanded to meet this need at all treatment centres.

All patients have benefited from excellent pediatric care models pioneered in the 1980s — so, too, adults with thalassemia need a similar level of care.

Colleagues, you can do your part by using your communication channels to raise awareness about thalassemia and the valiant efforts of the Thalassemia Foundation of Canada.

As I mentioned earlier, patients with thalassemia require blood transfusions to survive. Thankfully, in Canada, they can rely on the generosity of blood donors who give blood at Canadian Blood Services or Héma-Québec. The thalassemia community is incredibly grateful to all donors for their lifesaving gifts. On this day, I would also like to express gratitude and acknowledge World Blood Donor Day, which is on June 14. Thank you.

FIGHTING TERRORISM

Hon. Yuen Pau Woo: Honourable colleagues, on this, the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Air India bombing, an event often referred to as the largest mass murder in Canadian history, I'm pleased to read a statement on behalf of Senator Mobina Jaffer from British Columbia.

Today as our Canadian flag is at half-mast, the nation mourns victims of the senseless act of terrorism that took 329 precious lives. I remember that day, June 23, 1985. I especially remember the shock, the anger, the pain and the grief.

Thirty-five years have passed since then, and still, across our world, so many lives continue to be cut short by acts of terrorism. In 2018 alone, almost 33,000 people were killed by terrorists. Globally, terrorist organizations employ sinister recruitment tactics.

Senators, we too have a role and a responsibility to stop using divisive language in our politics. Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of meeting so many incredible community leaders who have dedicated their lives to fighting global terrorism. I work with Hamtosou of Nigeria. She works and negotiates with Boko Haram to stop them from causing further damage to the local community and to urge the release of girls and women they have kidnapped.

I also work with Fatima in Iraq. She is on the front lines of the war zone where she meets with and implores young Iraqis to stop fighting for and fuelling terrorism in their region. Part of this work entails interpreting the Quran to them. She tells them that the Quran speaks of peace and not the violence that they are taught to believe in. She also rescues young men and women from volatile war zones, bringing them to the refuge of cities and continuing her work with them.

• (1410)

For many years, I have worked with my very good friend Mossarat Quadeem. I am privileged to have gone to Peshawar, Pakistan to observe her work. Mossarat goes into prisons to debrief convicted terrorists. As she says, when someone has done wrong, you do not simply throw away the key. One day, the young boys in those cells will be released as men. Instead of relegating them to institutional nonexistence, we have to convert them to the belief that terrorism is not the answer to their very real problems. We have to show them that it is not the way, nor is it the way of Islam.

Colleagues, I ask that you join me in working to ensure that not one Canadian man, woman, boy or girl becomes trapped in dangerous terrorist organizations. Thank you.

BILL BELL

CONGRATULATIONS

Hon. Vernon White: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to Ottawa Fire Services' Sector Chief Bill Bell, who rescued a woman who was trapped in a sinking car over the weekend.

Fire officials say they were contacted by Ottawa Police at 12:19 a.m. Sunday on reports that a vehicle was in the Ottawa River in Dunrobin, on the west side of the city. At the time, Bill,

who lives in Dunrobin, about four minutes' drive from where this was taking place, was home and on call. He got out of bed and jumped in his car to head to the scene.

As the car took on water, Ottawa Fire Services says police were able to maintain contact with the driver by phone, relaying information to the water rescue crews headed to the scene. Bill Bell was the first to arrive. He already had a plan based on the information he had received.

Bill said the car's headlights were still on when he got to the scene, shining under four or five feet of water. After donning a life jacket, he made his way into the river, smashed some of the windows in the back and was able to rescue the trapped driver, bringing her back to shore safely. The driver, cold and shaken, was otherwise in good condition and was assessed by paramedics on the shore.

Bill Bell joined the Ottawa Fire Services in 2007 as a volunteer with Station 66 in Dunrobin. He became a lieutenant in 2010, captain of Station 66 in 2014, and then sector chief of District 6 in September 2018. He has been married for 37 years, has a son, a daughter and three grandchildren. Born and raised in Cambridge, Ontario, he and his family have been residents of the city of Ottawa for the past 18 years.

Honourable senators, please join me in congratulating and thanking Bill Bell for his extraordinary act of heroism in bravely saving this woman's life.

CONSUMER DEBT INDEX

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: Honourable senators, in March of this year, almost half of Canadians sampled by the MNP Consumer Debt Index said they were \$200 away from insolvency. While Canadians are struggling through this unprecedented economic disruption, they are not catching a real break from some of the wealthiest companies in Canada, the Big Six banks.

In January, the unemployment rate was 5.5%. This May it was 13.7%. For youth, it was more than 29%. We put the economy on ice to manage the spread of COVID-19. Canadians have and continue to dutifully play their role in altering their lives to mitigate the spread of the virus. Canadians are spending their savings or borrowing more to make ends meet, but Canadians already carried among the highest consumer debt in the world before COVID-19. This June, StatCan reported that for every \$1.00 of disposable income an average Canadian household held, they had \$1.77 in debt. This debt includes mortgage debt, credit card debt and line of credit debt.

Between 2000 and 2017, average median hourly wages in Canada rose 7.4%, but in the past two years, CEO compensation at the Big Six banks has increased 13.5%. Today, average big bank CEOs' compensation averages out to around \$10.5 million per year. This is above 200 times the per capita income of a Canadian.

What have the big banks done for Canadians during COVID-19? Mortgage deferrals were implemented. This allowed homeowners not to pay their mortgages for up to six months without penalty. However, homeowners are on the hook to pay the interest that accrued on their deferred payments. The federal government has negotiated temporary cuts to credit card interest rates for consumers and small business owners. However, like the mortgage deferrals, interest, including a punitive additional interest on many cards, will accrue on the outstanding balances of the credit card and will be payable once the deferral period expires, which is very soon. That means those who are financially vulnerable are going to see their debts growing larger and larger as they must stay home.

Royal Bank recorded \$9.6 billion in profits last year alone; TD, \$11.6 billion; Scotiabank, \$8.7 billion; BMO, \$6.2 billion; CIBC \$5.4 billion; National Bank, \$1.6 billion. As CEO compensation, stock prices and dividend yields expand during a time of economic growth, the banks should not be profiting from the hardship of Canadians.

Prime Minister Trudeau and Finance Minister Morneau said all the way back in April that banks need to be doing more, but what is the federal government doing to prevent our richest corporations in the finance sector from profiting off of Canadians' pain?

NATIONAL SICKLE CELL AWARENESS DAY

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, Senator Cordy can't be here because of COVID restrictions on travel, so she has asked me to deliver a statement on her behalf. If she is listening or watching, I hope she forgives me if I mispronounce the names of some of the persons in the story; it's an honourable attempt. If you hear the word "I," it is Senator Jane Cordy speaking.

Honourable senators, this past Friday, on June 19th, was the third year of celebrating National Sickle Cell Awareness Day in Canada. While this year we were unable to meet in person, I do want to acknowledge the special day in the Senate of Canada. Canada was the first country to recognize their own National Sickle Cell Awareness Day.

Honourable senators, Sickle Cell disease affects hemoglobin, the molecule in red blood cells that delivers oxygen to cells throughout the body. This can lead to blood cells becoming sickle shaped and can slow down the rate of oxygen getting to the cells. Sickle cell disease is hereditary and both parents must carry the genetic trait.

I have been blessed over the past number of years to have gotten to know so many people within the Sickle Cell community. They have shared their stories, their struggles, their resilience, and their successes. I have spoken to family members, caregivers, and doctors, who have expressed how they support those with Sickle Cell. Honourable senators, they are Sickle Cell warriors who daily face the challenges of dealing with the disease.

The current health pandemic has affected millions of people worldwide. In fact, the fifth Biennial Canadian Conference on Sickle Cell was to have taken place in

Halifax this past weekend. Instead, I had the privilege of participating in a virtual meeting called Voices: A National Sickle Cell Conversation Without Borders. The meeting, which had speakers from around the world, included conversations and sharing about lived experiences and coping strategies.

I want to thank just a few people who work diligently and passionately as advocates. Biba Tinga, is the President/Executive Director of the Sickle Cell Disease Association of Canada, Lanre Tunji-Ajayi, is the interim President/CEO of the Global Alliance of Sickle Cell Disease Associations, and Rugi Jalloh is the President of the Sickle Cell Disease Association of Atlantic Canada.

Honourable senators, the current health crisis has made us all more aware of how vulnerable we are in our daily lives. We know that for those facing health concerns, these challenges are compounded during a pandemic.

As we celebrated National Sickle Cell Awareness Day on June 19th, I would not only like to highlight awareness, but also the need to move forward with more action. We must always support our most vulnerable. Thank you.

• (1420)

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION

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

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, September 22, 2020, at 2 p.m.

[English]

SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Hon. Judith G. Seidman: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology have the power to meet on Friday, June 26, 2020, even though the Senate may then be sitting, and that rule 12-18(1) be suspended in relation thereto.

QUESTION PERIOD

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT PS752 TRAGEDY

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

Leader, 55 Canadians and 30 permanent residents lost their lives when the Iranian regime shot down their plane in January. On this National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism, we think of them and their families who live with the unimaginable grief while Iran has yet to be held responsible.

In March, the regime said it would hand over the black boxes within 14 days. Months later, this has not occurred. Even though our Prime Minister bowed his head to the Iranian foreign minister and shook his hand, nothing has happened.

The families of Flight PS752 say the bodies of their loved ones were looted and their coffins desecrated. They want to see a plan and a timetable from the Government of Canada on how it will hold this terrorist Iranian regime to account.

Mr. Leader, will your government provide these families with their plans in this regard? From this point forward, how will the government seek justice for their loved ones?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. The government continues to seek justice — long overdue — for those who lost their cherished loved ones in this tragedy.

I've been advised that on June 22 this year, Minister Champagne spoke directly with his counterpart, the Iranian foreign minister, emphasizing that Iran must cooperate immediately to provide a comprehensive and transparent investigation into the shooting down of the plane and to provide compensation to the families.

I'm advised that in that conversation Foreign Minister Zarif committed again for Iran to send the flight recorders to France without any further delay. I'm also advised that the foreign minister agreed to enter into negotiations for reparations for the victims' families.

The government considers this the highest priority in its relationship with Iran. It will continue to work with its allies and put pressure on Iran to deliver justice and transparency for this event.

Senator Plett: It's amazing how the government finds so many things important and yet nothing gets done.

The Department of Global Affairs recently confirmed the Iranian regime has raised re-establishing consular relations between our countries. The previous Conservative government suspended relations with Iran in 2012 in response to Iran's support of terrorism, widespread human rights abuses, anti-Semitic rhetoric and incitement to genocide.

We learned yesterday that the Trudeau government has done absolutely nothing to help serve papers to Iranian officials in a class-action lawsuit brought in relation to January's plane crash, as required by the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act. I assume the foreign minister did not deliver that either.

Leader, are these two events connected? Did the government refuse to support the class-action lawsuit because it wanted to re-establish former ties with the Iranian regime? Can you assure this chamber that the government will not retract the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act as the price of normalizing relations with Iran?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. I'm not aware of any plans or intentions of the government to retreat from the legislation to which you refer.

In relations with Iran and others, it is and has been the position of this government to seek all different avenues of persuasion and influence, and that includes working to see whether, despite our fundamental differences — differences in values, differences in our behaviour in the world — there may be peaceful solutions to these otherwise intractable problems. The government remains committed to seeking justice for the victims of the downing of the plane and will continue to do so.

ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I have a question for the government leader. Continuing on the leader's questions in regard to Iran and Canada's relationship to Iran, it has now been over two years since the other place passed a motion to immediately designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a listed terrorist entity under the Criminal Code of Canada. Two years ago we believed this was a priority for your government, as the Prime Minister supported this motion. His current and former Minister of Public Safety and Minister of Foreign Affairs all voted for this motion. Yet, here we are, two years later, no further ahead than we were on that day in June 2018.

Leader, shortly after the vote took place two years ago, your government claimed that it had begun the process of listing the IRGC. Has that process been abandoned? If so, when did that occur and who gave the order to end that process?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. This government, like the previous government, despises terrorism in all its forms and condemns all terrorism sponsors.

As you know, the previous government listed the Quds Force portion of the IRGC as a terrorist entity under the Criminal Code. This government has maintained its listing. The previous government also declined to list the IRGC as a whole when the then opposition pressed them to do so as recently as March 2015. The fact is, there's a legal standard of evidence that must be met before listing any of the other components of the IRGC. I've been advised that the government continues to assess that on an ongoing basis.

In conclusion I will add, as senators may recall, that in the spring of 2019 this government also added three Iranian-backed groups to the list of terrorist entities, including the Fatemiyoun Division, which is directed by the IRGC's Quds Force.

Senator Martin: So you're saying that the process to list the IRGC was abandoned or is ongoing but it has been two years and it hasn't been done. Would you confirm that that process is ongoing then?

In February, B'nai Brith filed a lawsuit in the Federal Court against the Government of Canada regarding its failure to list the IRGC as a terrorist entity. Senator, I won't ask you to comment specifically on that lawsuit because I know you cannot comment. However, I would ask you to reflect upon the frustration and distress which would prompt an organization to take such a step in an effort to hold your government to its word.

• (1430)

My question is: B'nai Brith and the Council of Iranian Canadians joined together shortly after the crash of flight PS752 in January to ask your government to list the IRGC as a terrorist entity. Did your government respond to these groups?

Senator Gold: Thank you. Although I can't answer the specific question of the particular response, I can assure this chamber that the government is in regular contact with both of these groups and listens carefully to their suggestions and interventions.

With regard to the first part of your question, my understanding is that this is an ongoing assessment. That is to say, the possibility of listing other entities or the IRGC as a whole is the subject of an ongoing assessment. It's not something that has been abandoned.

I would remind senators as well that Iran remains listed as a state sponsor of terrorism under the State Immunity Act, which removes any legal immunity from any court proceedings against Iran for its support of terrorism and, furthermore, that senior Iranian officials remain subject to sanctions under the Special Economic Measures Act.

Otherwise put, colleagues, there is a suite of measures already in place that represents this government's and previous governments' condemnation of Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism.

JUSTICE

CHINA—UNITED STATES—DETENTION OF MENG WANZHOU

Hon. Yuen Pau Woo: Honourable senators, my question for the Government Representative in the Senate has to do with the lead article in a national newspaper today concerning the views of two learned jurists on the ability and the power of the government to stop extradition proceedings in relation to Meng Wanzhou should they find that the extradition request was unwarranted and/or should the government feel it is in the national interest.

Furthermore, the views of these two learned jurists suggest that to take these actions would not compromise the independence of the judiciary, nor would they be outside the rule of law.

In the interests of the two Michaels, who have been in detention in China for many months now, and in the interests of the broader Canada-China relationship, will the government take the opportunity, with this fresh interpretation from two very seasoned scholars and lawyers, to have what Professor Allan Rock calls:

... a full debate based on a legitimate foundation of facts, rather than an incantation of rubrics, like "rule of law" and the "independence of the courts" and the "sanctity of the judiciary."

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. The well-being of the two Michaels remains a priority for this government and for all Canadians. The two jurists that you cited are indeed eminent.

The government's position is that under Canada's Extradition Act, the Minister of Justice has no direct role to play until after the judicial proceedings at the final stage of the extradition process. Should the extradition judge order Ms. Meng's committal, the minister will be tasked with determining whether or not to order her surrender.

Prior to that final stage, colleagues, in order to ensure that the Minister of Justice can carry out this role in an independent and impartial manner, all decisions in the preliminary judicial phase of extradition proceedings are and have been handled by senior officials within the Department of Justice.

FINANCE

GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME

Hon. Kim Pate: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. The need for economic assistance like the CERB is great. Indeed, many are still struggling without adequate support — a situation that underscores the inadequacy of our social, health and economic supports.

My question concerns what happens next in this country. The emergency debate last week made clear that when we look at who is overrepresented in precarious work and in poverty, we see the effects of racism, sexism and other systemic discrimination. It also made clear that we cannot go back to the status quo. For far too long exorbitant spending — indeed billions of dollars — has been devoted to tax cuts for those who already enjoy disproportionate wealth. These cuts increase inequality, while seemingly endless spending on law enforcement and prisons has been implemented with relative ease.

Funding to remedy poverty and inequality, on the other hand, is too often characterized as “costing too much.” We applaud the government’s efforts during this pandemic. The estimated cost of the CERB as a temporary 24-week measure is estimated to be \$71 billion. A guaranteed livable income could not only assist all in need, but its net annual cost would be a fraction of the CERB: \$44 billion maximum. It would save untold amounts in downstream costs in terms of health care, criminal legal issues, emergency responses as well as replacing provincial social assistance.

Does the government agree that it is time for Canada to admit that it can afford, and must ensure, equality and dignity for all and implement a guaranteed livable income?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question, and I thank you for the advanced notice of the question. We have made inquiries to the specifics and have not yet received a response. I’ll report back to the chamber in a timely manner.

Allow me to state the obvious, perhaps. The issue of a guaranteed livable income is an important and complicated one and requires — as others have said in this chamber — serious study and collaboration between governments, especially municipal, provincial and territorial, and other stakeholders.

It might be unrealistic to expect that the federal government can give a quick commitment to pursue that as you’re asking your question. I will make inquiries, but I beg your indulgence if the answer may not be forthcoming immediately.

Senator Pate: I appreciate your efforts.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

Hon. Robert Black: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, we’ve all heard about the recent tragic deaths of three migrant agricultural workers in Ontario: Bonifacio Eugenio-Romero, Rogelio Muñoz Santos and Juan Lopez Chaparro. We know the government has imposed strict rules about safety for temporary foreign workers, including the requirement of an isolation period on arrival in Canada, physical distancing rules and the need to wear personal protective equipment.

However, in recent weeks we’ve seen a few major outbreaks at Ontario farms, and now we’ve lost these three men who were fathers, brothers and sons. I’ve heard from people in the agricultural industry and supporters of it who are seized with this issue and who want the agricultural sector to engage in meaningful conversations on the immediate crisis and the improvement to the program going forward. I would add that the government needs to have those conversations as well.

The government has said that they will apply strict sanctions to employers who violate the rules. Yesterday, Minister Qualtrough noted that the government will take other actions. What actions are these and when will they be in place? How will the government work to be proactive rather than reactive to prevent further tragedies?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. Our office made inquiries upon receiving notice of your question and have not yet received a specific response back on the further actions to which you refer. I will report back to the chamber in a timely fashion.

I would note, colleagues, that provincial governments, of course, which have major responsibilities in this area, are also taking measures to encourage agricultural employers to, first, provide safe working environments for the workers that they bring in, but allow those workers to be tested, for example, by providing mobile testing centres close to the farms.

Thank you for the question.

CROWN-INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

ACTION PLAN

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Honourable senators, I would like to ask a question of the Government Representative on behalf of my colleague Senator Lovelace Nicholas.

The MMIWG Inquiry delivered its final report on June 3, 2019, concluding that systemic racism and human rights violations have contributed to the deaths and disappearances of hundreds of Indigenous women and girls and constitute an event of genocide.

• (1440)

The final report states the Calls for Justice are not mere recommendations or point lists of best practices. They are legal imperatives rooted in Canada's obligations under international and domestic human rights norms and laws. Last week, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations the Honourable Carolyn Bennett said that Ottawa is delaying its intended release of the national action plan this month because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Don't you think that using the pandemic as an excuse for not delivering a plan is a double slap in the face to the Indigenous women who are facing even greater risk of violence because of the confinement? Thank you.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. The government understands the frustration and the pain felt by those who experienced and who have lost loved ones in this, and who are still waiting for the action plan, but, senator, respectfully it's really not quite accurate nor, dare I say, fair to imply that the government is using the crisis to delay.

The government remains committed to ending the ongoing national tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. I've been advised that the government and Indigenous organizations, provincial and territorial governments, continue to work together, as they committed to do, to co-develop a national action plan that will set a clear roadmap to end these systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls, LGBTQ2 and two-spirit people.

Because of the crisis, they have not given up the work. Their meetings are virtual, as so many of ours are. But this has provided some really unavoidable engagement challenges in this process. My understanding is this is why the work has just not progressed as quickly as all the parties, I'm sure, hope.

Indeed, during these difficult times, leadership within communities and the governments are focusing to limit the spread of the outbreak of the pandemic in the communities, and to provide the necessary measures to provide support for the communities during this dislocating time. But the work remains a priority and shall continue.

Senator Dalphond: I think Senator Lovelace Nicholas was anticipating that answer because her supplementary question is the following.

When are we going to see an action plan from this government on that very issue of violence against Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people?

Senator Gold: It's a fair question. As I said, the government understands the importance, the urgency and the frustration of this.

This is a national action plan that needs to be co-developed. It is being co-developed with the federal government and its counterparts and Indigenous leadership and communities and provincial and territorial.

When all of the stakeholders, of which the federal government is one, are able to finish their work and are able to know the date, that date will be released. I'm not in a position to know that date nor to provide it at this juncture. Thank you.

INFRASTRUCTURE CANADA

REPORT OF PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER

Hon. Elizabeth Marshall: My question is also for the government leader in the Senate.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer released a report last week on the federal government's Investing in Canada infrastructure plan. Among his findings, he stated that federal infrastructure spending continues to be delayed by about \$2 billion less than the government originally forecast. He also stated there is little evidence that increased federal infrastructure spending has resulted in higher provincial infrastructure spending, which is consistent with an earlier report released by his office.

On Monday, the Parliamentary Budget Officer posted a supplementary note detailing the difficulties his office had in getting information on projects from the government. He said the amount of work required by his staff was unusual and indicates a need for improvements in data collection on infrastructure projects.

Senator Gold, how will you and your government address the problems raised in this latest Parliamentary Budget Office report on the infrastructure program?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, senator. The government is aware, of course, of the report. I'm advised that it takes this report, as all others, seriously. But I'm not in a position now to provide the government's response to the report. It is seized with it. The government considers providing support for infrastructure in the national interest, and I can assure this chamber that the government will respond in a timely fashion.

Senator Marshall: The problem, Senator Gold, is not new. On the National Finance Committee, we looked at the infrastructure program a couple of years ago. The Parliamentary Budget Officer's finding is consistent with what we found.

The mandate letter for the minister instructs the minister as follows:

Ensure that Canadians have access to accurate and timely information about infrastructure investments in their communities, and work with your Cabinet colleagues to improve financial reporting to Canadians and the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Despite this instruction, Minister McKenna recently claimed she couldn't provide the locations or details of thousands of projects to the Parliamentary Budget Officer for privacy and security reasons. We're talking about billions of dollars in the infrastructure program. Is the minister's attempt to invoke privacy and security concerns a sign that the government will not solve the problems plaguing the program?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. I would not hazard a guess as to motivations here, except to say the government remains committed to the program and committed to providing information. If there are legitimate privacy concerns which the minister addressed, I can assure this chamber that they are being pursued in good faith.

HEALTH

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: Senator Gold, the federal government has announced \$1.3 billion to date to support COVID-19 responses for Indigenous communities. However, communities are still reporting they do not have adequate stockpiles of personal protective equipment. They're having difficulty accessing reimbursements for COVID-related purchases. One First Nation has spent \$500,000 and apparently has no prospect of reimbursement. Many are receiving far less from Indigenous Services Canada than they originally asked for.

Some needs are only being met by volunteer organizations. A petition being circulated on change.org has been signed by over 46,000 people and counting. It is calling for urgent resources for Indigenous communities. Chief Wally Burns of James Smith Cree Nation has called attention to the government's inability to commit to a proposal of \$120 million that would supply 74 First Nations in Saskatchewan with masks, gloves and sanitizers.

My question is: Why do we still have vulnerable Indigenous communities across the country that are ill-prepared to deal with the COVID outbreak?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, senator, for raising these important concerns.

Regarding the availability of personal protective equipment or PPE, I've been advised that Indigenous Services Canada has a stockpile of PPE and other products, like hand disinfectant, to meet the immediate needs of Indigenous communities in the event of a health emergency. As of June 22, Indigenous Services Canada has delivered almost 1,000 shipments of PPE to First Nations communities.

In addition, the \$380 million of Indigenous community support funds that were provided earlier in the life of this pandemic does provide flexibility to communities to do with it as they want. Indeed, they could use the funds to purchase PPE and to create their own stockpile if that is their wish.

Regarding reimbursements for PPE purchases, I don't have the answer for you. I will endeavour to find out what the problem may be. Indeed, if the senator would find it helpful, I'd be very pleased to arrange a conversation between you and Minister Miller to discuss these concerns.

• (1450)

[Translation]

COVID-19 PANDEMIC—MASK WEARING

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne: My question is for the Government Representative. This past weekend, I was dismayed to see very few shoppers wearing masks at a mall that had just reopened in Montreal.

Since people don't seem to be getting into the habit of wearing masks, more and more experts and doctors are recommending that masks be made mandatory on all public transit across the country, as well as in stores.

Shouldn't Patty Hajdu, the Minister of Health, or Dr. Tam, the Chief Public Health Officer, send a message by recommending that masks be made mandatory, even if that decision is ultimately up to the provinces?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for asking that important question. You raised one of the issues at play, which is that, ultimately, the power to regulate businesses and daily life is a provincial responsibility.

The Minister of Health and Dr. Tam have strongly recommended wearing a mask. However, for obvious reasons, it would be a little tricky for the federal government to recommend that the provincial governments do this, that or the other, not only because the impact of the pandemic is being experienced very differently from one province to another, but also because within each province, including our own, that experience varies from region to region as well.

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry, Senator Miville-Dechêne, but the time for Question Period has now expired.

[English]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS

THIRD REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the third report of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, entitled *Developments and actions in relation to the committee's fifth report regarding Senator Beyak*, presented in the Senate on June 22, 2020.

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson moved the adoption of the report.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today on behalf of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators to speak to the third report of that committee, which concerns Senator Lynn Beyak. This report completes a process that began just over a year ago during the previous Parliament when the Senate Ethics Officer tabled his inquiry report concerning Senator Beyak in March 2019.

I will begin by summarizing the events that lead to the presentation of this report.

In his inquiry report dated March 19, 2019, the Senate Ethics Officer concluded that Senator Beyak breached sections 7.1 and 7.2 of the code by posting five letters on her Senate website that contained racist content against Indigenous peoples. In April 2019, the committee considered this inquiry report. In its fifth report presented to the Senate on this matter, the committee indicated that it was troubled by Senator Beyak's failure to recognize that the content of the letters in question was racist, her unwillingness to recognize the harm caused by her actions and her lack of respect for the enforcement process under the code.

The committee recommended several remedial measures and the suspension of Senator Beyak from the Senate. The Senate adopted the committee's fifth report on May 9, 2019, on which day Senator Beyak was suspended from the Senate. Her suspension ended, though, with the dissolution of the Forty-second Parliament.

On December 10, 2019, the Senate adopted a motion directing the committee to study developments and actions in relation to the committee's fifth report. That motion authorized the committee to present multiple reports, with its final report due June 30, 2020.

Pursuant to that motion, the committee deposited with the Clerk of the Senate an interim report on January 31, 2020. In its interim report, the committee concluded that Senator Beyak had not complied with the intent and spirit of certain recommendations contained in the fifth report. Specifically, the committee found that Senator Beyak failed to successfully complete the educational program identified by the Senate Ethics Officer, and that she failed to apologize for her conduct.

The committee determined that further actions were required to address the situation and uphold the dignity of the Senate. To that end, the committee recommended that Senator Beyak be suspended again to afford her with the opportunity to gain further perspective on the privilege of serving in the Senate and her obligations as a senator.

The committee was also of the view that further education and training were warranted in the hope and expectation that Senator Beyak would develop an awareness, recognition and understanding of the reality of racism toward Indigenous peoples and that she would gain a better understanding of the negative impacts of her actions.

Last, the committee recommended that, following the completion of the educational program, Senator Beyak write a new letter of apology.

The interim report was adopted by the Senate on February 27, 2020, on which day Senator Beyak was again suspended from the Senate.

I will now enumerate the various actions and developments since the interim report. On June 9, 2020, the Senate Ethics Officer provided the committee with his report concerning Senator Beyak's training and included as an appendix the evaluation prepared by the educational program provider. The Senate Ethics Officer's report, which includes the educational program provider's assessment, is appended to this report of the committee.

In his report, the Senate Ethics Officer was satisfied that the performance assessment provided by the educational program provider was thorough, comprehensive and indisputable, and that it met all the requirements of the recommendation in the committee's interim report. In his performance assessment, the educational program provider concluded that Senator Beyak demonstrated that she had learned and was willing to learn. He further stated that Senator Beyak seemed to work toward developing and furthering her understanding of her responsibility as a senator and the impact of her past conduct.

The committee accepted the report of the Senate Ethics Officer. The committee carefully examined its content, including the educational program provider's detailed performance assessment, and determined that Senator Beyak has complied with recommendation 2 of the interim report.

The committee also considered Senator Beyak's new letter of apology and found that she adequately acknowledges and understands the impact of her conduct, and that she offered thoughtful reflection on her educational experience and what she has learned from it. Her letter of apology was published in the *Journals of the Senate* on June 16, 2020.

The committee therefore recommends that the suspension of Senator Beyak be rescinded.

In conclusion, the committee underscores that senators' unique public office requires them to confront racism without reservation. Senators must recognize the harm caused by racism and accept that racism in all forms is unacceptable. To this end, the committee notes that education plays an important role in deconstructing racial narratives and stereotypes. This is particularly important for senators, as they are entrusted with constitutional responsibilities that include advocating for regions and representing minority interests. Racism of any kind is incompatible with senators' roles and responsibilities.

The committee was pleased to hear that Senator Beyak accepted the opportunity to gain more knowledge, explore new ideas and reflect on her conduct as a senator and its impacts on Indigenous Canadians, as well as the institution and reputation of the Senate.

• (1500)

While the committee recognizes that one educational course alone may not yield attitudinal changes on Indigenous matters or inform behaviour changes, Senator Beyak has engaged in the process as required, in good faith and with a willingness to learn.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Pursuant to the order of Monday, June 22, I leave the chair for the Senate to be put into a Committee of the Whole to consider the expenditures set out in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021, and in the Supplementary Estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021. The Honourable Senator Ringuette will chair the committee.

[*Translation*]

THE ESTIMATES, 2020-21

CONSIDERATION OF MAIN ESTIMATES AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (A) IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

On the Order:

The Senate in Committee of the Whole to consider the expenditures set out in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021, and in the Supplementary Estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

(The sitting of the Senate was suspended and put into Committee of the Whole, the Honourable Pierrette Ringuette in the chair.)

The Chair: Honourable senators, the Senate is resolved into a Committee of the Whole to consider the expenditures set out in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021, and in the Supplementary Estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

Honourable senators, in a Committee of the Whole senators shall address the chair but need not stand. Under the Rules the speaking time is 10 minutes, including questions and answers, but, as ordered earlier today, if a senator does not use all of his or her time, the balance can be yielded to another senator. As ordered by the Senate, the committee will receive the Minister of Finance and the President of the Treasury Board, and I would now invite them to enter, accompanied by their officials.

(Pursuant to the Order of the Senate, the Honourable Bill Morneau and the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos and their officials were escorted to seats in the Senate chamber.)

The Chair: Ministers, welcome to the Senate. I would ask you to introduce your officials and to make your opening remarks of at most five minutes.

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, P.C., M.P., President of the Treasury Board: Thank you. Good afternoon. I hope everyone can hear me.

[*English*]

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this chamber to discuss the Supplementary Estimates (A) for 2020-21 and Interim Supply II.

We find ourselves in an extraordinary time. Not only are we faced with a global pandemic, but demonstrations and conversations against racism are taking place across the globe. These conversations are important, and we must continue to have them in order to overcome problems that have persisted for far too long.

Our government is determined to keep building a diverse public service that reflects the population it serves. We are committed not just to listening but also to engaging.

[*Translation*]

As you know, honourable senators, every year, the government tables the supplementary estimates, which sets out its spending plan.

The Supplementary Estimates (A) for the 2020-21 fiscal year present information on spending requirements across federal organizations that were either not sufficiently developed in time for inclusion in the Main Estimates or have since been updated to reflect new developments.

The supplementary estimates bring forward \$6 billion in operating and capital expenditures, grants and contributions for 42 federal organizations.

It clearly shows that the government is continuing to invest in people, in the economy, in workers and in businesses to ensure the country's success and economic recovery.

[*English*]

Senators will have the opportunity to review and vote on these allocations which seek, among other things, to provide important services to Indigenous communities, for safe and secure transportation for travellers, and to support Canada's Armed Forces. These are in addition to COVID-19-related expenditures.

I also want to assure honourable senators that information on statutory spending is included in these estimates to ensure that the most complete information is available on the government's planned spending.

As a matter of fact, we know Canadians want maximum transparency from Parliament. For transparency, the estimates document will provide information on spending authorized through the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act, which has already been negotiated, discussed, debated and unanimously approved by parliamentarians. Furthermore, these supplementary estimates also request \$1.3 billion in new voted spending to respond to the impact of COVID-19 on Canadians.

These new spending plans include \$405.2 million for the national medical research strategy to fund tracking and testing of COVID-19, to develop vaccines and therapies, and to enhance clinical trial and biomanufacturing capacity in Canada; \$302.4 million to support small- and medium-sized businesses; and \$274.5 million for emergency research and innovation on medical countermeasures.

[*Translation*]

Madam Chair, I would now like to move on to the proposed interim supply bill, Appropriation Act No. 2, 2020-21.

As you know, honourable senators, this is the second interim supply bill for the 2020-21 fiscal year. This bill seeks approval for approximately \$55 billion of the \$125 billion in voted amounts presented in the Main Estimates currently being examined by parliamentarians.

The government's first interim supply bill, Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2020-21, received Royal Assent on March 13, 2020, and provided for the allocation of \$44 billion to support the government's activities from April to June of this fiscal year.

However, on April 20, the House of Commons also adopted a motion to temporarily amend Standing Order 81, thereby extending study of the Main Estimates until December, seven months later than the usual completion date in previous years.

This special measure was necessary because of the extraordinary circumstances resulting from the spread of COVID-19 in our country. Consequently, we proposed a second interim supply bill that provides for \$55 billion to support the programs and activities of federal institutions from July to December.

[*English*]

Without this proposed funding, many of those organizations will be unable to continue providing the programs and services that millions of Canadians depend on.

In conclusion, the Government of Canada and Canadians remain resilient throughout the global pandemic.

[*Translation*]

The new spending plans presented here will continue to help those affected by COVID-19 while supporting the economy and Canadians.

I would like to recognize the essential and extraordinary work of all parliamentarians as we continue to work together to ensure the well-being of all Canadians.

[*English*]

I would now like to take the opportunity to introduce you to Minister of Finance Bill Morneau, who needs no introduction, but also two officials who accompany both Minister Morneau and myself. First, Glenn Purves, Assistant Secretary, Expenditure Management, Treasury Board Secretariat; and Mr. Andrew Marsland, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Tax Policy Branch, Finance Canada.

[*Translation*]

That said, we will be very pleased to answer your questions, honourable senators.

The Chair: Thank you, Minister.

• (1510)

[*English*]

Senator Plett: My questions this afternoon will be for Minister Morneau.

Minister, last month, during an appearance before a committee in the other place, the Parliamentary Budget Officer was asked if the federal debt would hit \$1 trillion for this fiscal year. He responded: "Possible, yes. Realistic? Yes. Certainly not unthinkable."

Minister, how much is the current debt of the Government of Canada?

Hon. Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P., Minister of Finance: First of all, senator, thank you very much for the question. It's a pleasure to be here with all of you this afternoon, and I'm happy to have the opportunity to answer your questions.

I think the best way for me to answer that, senator, is that we have said we're going to provide an economic update to the country, and we're going to be doing that on July 8. At that time, we will be providing an understanding of the investments we've made and the underlying economy, which will also show what our situation is in terms of the debt and the deficit.

Senator Plett: Minister, you have been asked this question in the past, and I believe Canadians have a right to know. I think Canadians have a right to know every day of the year what the finances are of our government. They are obligated to know every day of the year what their finances are.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has 42 members on his staff. The Minister of Finance has 800 staff working for him. The Parliamentary Budget Officer, with his 42 staff members, has a pretty good idea of what the debt is.

Minister, if you can't give me an answer today, then if I were to tell you that I have figures that say it's \$1.3 trillion, would you confirm that that is a pretty accurate number?

Mr. Morneau: Again, senator, I very much appreciate the question. One of the things that's most important for our government — certainly for myself, as Minister of Finance — is to provide accurate information to Canadians. We're providing to Parliament, to the Finance Committee — and, of course, available to the Senate — an update of our expenditures on COVID-19 every two weeks, and there will be a complete exposition of our current financial situation on July 8. At that time, we'll be able to give you a level of precision on our current economics and our expectations for this year.

Senator Plett: Minister, with respect, you are now in our house, and I think we deserve an answer to a question, not an answer that you are going to give us an economic update down the road.

Again, if you cannot confirm that it is \$1.3 trillion, I will have to assume that that is the correct number.

Minister, who owns the debt?

Mr. Morneau: First, senator, perhaps I could just say that it would be important not to make assumptions about things as important as our finances.

Senator Plett: We need an answer, please.

Mr. Morneau: We will give a complete answer; that would be the appropriate way for us to provide an understanding to Canadians on July 8, as I said.

In terms of who owns our debt, there are, of course, many Canadians and many people around the world who seek to own Canadian debt because of the high quality of our debt and the continuing success of Canadians in creating a good and strong economy.

Senator Plett: How much of the \$1.3 trillion in debt that the Canadian government has right now is debt owned by foreign entities?

Mr. Morneau: Sir, we'd be very happy to provide you with more details. If you would like to send the question to my office, asking —

Senator Plett: Minister, you have been asked, on our invitation, to come here and answer questions. If I wanted to come to your office and ask your staff questions, I would have done that. You have 800 staff. Surely they have told you how much debt the Canadian government has and how much of it is foreign-owned, and how much isn't, so please give us an answer.

This Committee of the Whole was struck so we would have answers. We are supposed to approve a supply bill later this week. You are not giving us answers to questions. You are inviting us to your office. We invited you here. You have staff with you. If you can't answer the question, could you ask your staffer how much debt Canada has and how much is foreign-owned?

Mr. Morneau: Thank you, senator, for the question. If the question you're asking is about specific dollar figures on specific questions that we've not prepared for in advance, I think it would be inappropriate for me to give you an approximation or guess as to what the answer would be. I would not put my official in that situation either.

However, I am always pleased to answer those specific questions if they're submitted to my office. If those questions are more general in nature — ones I can answer without going back for a detailed response from my department — I'm happy to answer those questions.

Senator Plett: You were asked some time ago in the House, by Pierre Poilievre, how much debt there is. You have had lots of time to prepare that answer. How much of the \$1.3-trillion debt that the Canadian government has is foreign-owned? What are the conditions? Which part of it is for a fixed term?

Mr. Morneau: One of the things we are making sure we do, as we manage the treasury function of the government, is to ensure we have a balance between the risks of rollover and the cost of

longer debt. As we incur more debt, we're looking at extending the term and duration of our debt in order to provide us with less rollover risk.

Senator Plett: Thank you. You don't have an answer as to how much is foreign-owned or as to what the fixed terms are.

Let me see if you have an answer to this. I'm surprised you don't have these answers, because you knew they would be asked. The assets of the Bank of Canada have more than tripled since mid-March and now stand at over \$500 billion.

Minister, does the Bank of Canada have a plan to offload these assets, and if so, over what period?

Mr. Morneau: Senator, as I think you may know, the Bank of Canada is independent from the federal government. To the extent they've done some planning and forecast scenarios, I'm sure I will get information on that, as will you, when the Bank of Canada decides to make that information available.

Senator Plett: Minister, since you can't answer any of these questions, I assume it's \$1.3 trillion. If it's different from that, then I hope we will have the correct answer before we have to vote on your supply bill later this week. I expect we should have those answers in our hands. We should have in our hands every one of the answers to the questions I have asked, before we are asked to vote on a supply bill of this magnitude, which you spent only four hours debating in the other place. We are doing our job over here. We are refusing to allow the government to hold us to a four-hour debate. We expect the answers here. I'm quite disappointed that you come into our house and aren't prepared to give me the answers.

Minister, my next question is with regard to the emergency financing of large employers. The only update concerning the Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility provided in your June 8 biweekly report to the other place notes that its application portal opened on May 30. Your department told the media a week ago that zero applications have been approved under this program. How is that possible, minister? You said this program was meant to help our energy sector, which remains in dire need of support.

Minister, how many large employers have applied for financing under this program? Specifically, do you know how many large retailers, airlines or energy companies have applied to this?

Mr. Morneau: Thank you again for that question. The Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility we've put out is intended to be a provider of last resort of credit for organizations that are going through stress.

Senator Plett: Minister, I don't want an explanation of what the program is supposed to be; I want a number of how many applied.

Mr. Morneau: Sir, I was in the midst of my response. What you should know is that, to the question that was asked — how many have been approved — the response was that none have been approved because it takes time to go through these procedures. Going through these applications is relatively complex. These are large organizations.

• (1520)

So we have a number of organizations —

Senator Plett: No, minister, my question was not how many have been approved. I had the number of how many had been approved. I knew it was zero. My question was: How many have applied?

Mr. Morneau: Could I ask, Madam Chair, what's the protocol in this house? Is it that the —

Senator Plett: For me to ask a question and for you to answer.

Mr. Morneau: Is the protocol, Madam Chair, that the senator asks the question and in the case of responding I have the same amount of time to respond to his question?

The Chair: The protocol for the Committee of the Whole is that the questioner has 10 minutes for questions and answers. That is what we abide by.

Mr. Morneau: I see. So it's unlike in the house where the responses are of the same duration as the questions?

The Chair: Exactly.

Senator Plett: Unlike in the house, we actually expect an answer.

The Chair: This 10 minutes has been completed. We will now move on to the next questioner.

[*Translation*]

Senator Cormier: Welcome, ministers. My questions are for Minister Duclos on behalf of Senator Raymonde Saint-Germain.

My first question is about your government's planned financial allocations and expenditures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We've heard a lot of criticism about how it will take Canadian taxpayers decades to pay back pandemic-related spending. We agree that investing to save lives and support people was crucial, given the global crisis, but do you think the government struck the right balance between the need to save lives and support people and businesses and the need to protect the Canadian economy?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you, Senator Cormier. I think you've captured the Government of Canada's two key objectives over the past few weeks. The first objective was to help keep workers, their families and their loved ones healthy. The second was to help them make ends meet and feed their families during a pandemic that nobody anticipated and nobody fully understands to this day. We had to be both quick and careful. That's what we have done from the start, and that's what we believe Canadians deserve from their government.

Senator Cormier: Thank you, Minister. At the start of the pandemic, it was easy to understand the rationale for your decisions. However, the more we ease restrictions, the more legitimate it becomes to question how these decisions are being made today.

My second question is the following: What criteria were used by your government to make decisions that strike this balance and to establish the government's spending strategy?

Mr. Duclos: I will first talk about the bases for some of the most important decisions we made. These decisions were essentially founded on science, epidemiology, immunology and public health science, which we didn't know much about before the pandemic, in many cases, but which we understand much better now. With respect to the principles of public policy, the primary objective was to protect our economic and social fabric, to protect the millions of workers who have lost not just their jobs but also their incomes in the past few months, and to also protect the economic environment, particularly for small businesses, which we will absolutely need in the recovery that is just now beginning.

Senator Cormier: Thank you. My last question for you, minister, is as follows: What do you say to the critics who believe that your approach will hobble Canada's economy for many years to come?

Mr. Duclos: On the contrary, the approach we have used from the start, acting swiftly and intensively, was the approach that was needed to prevent considerable, long-lasting damage to our economy. We needed to protect the economic fabric and that is what we did with the programs that you're quite familiar with. That approach has already helped us avoid going from a severe recession to an even worse depression that would have gone on for many years.

Senator Cormier: Thank you, minister. I will give the rest of my time to the Honourable Senator Loffreda.

Senator Loffreda: Thank you, Senator Cormier.

[*English*]

Thank you, Minister Morneau and Minister Duclos, for being here today. I wanted to thank you at the same time for helping Canadians, helping our economy remain viable and helping businesses stay alive. I'm in constant touch with the business community and at this point in time, they need all the help they can get. So thank you for doing that.

I share a concern, and I would like Minister Morneau to answer this.

[*Translation*]

I'd also like to hear what Minister Duclos has to say about this.

[*English*]

Senator Forest and I sit on the National Finance Committee and we have the same concern. When Karen Hogan, Canada's new Auditor General, appeared before the Senate in mid-May, I asked her about her office's ability to conduct comprehensive

audits of the government's various COVID measures and programs. She acknowledged that the resource constraints right now are having a ripple effect on the organization and that the COVID-related work will likely occupy many resources and a great deal of her time, of course.

I noticed, however, that the Office of the Auditor General is receiving a little less money through these Main Estimates than last year, and no additional funding was requested earlier this month in Supplementary Estimates (A).

My question is: Can we expect a funding increase for Ms. Hogan and her staff in future supply bills to help her fulfil her role and scrutinize the unprecedented expenses brought by the pandemic?

Mr. Morneau: I think this question is correctly asked to both of us. We recognize that the Auditor General is facing a particularly large challenge in fulfilling her role. Obviously we're pleased to have appointed a new Auditor General. We're looking forward to working with her to make sure she has the resources needed in her situation, as it is certainly the situation of the government at this stage. We are in a very dynamic and changing economic environment, meaning that it would likely be for her, as it is for us, difficult to determine the exact resources.

That said, we know that we will need to work with her. We see her function as important and one that is essential for parliamentarians and Canadians to understand the nature of the investments and the quality of those investments. So you can expect to see us continue with that approach.

I don't know, Minister Duclos, if you have anything to add.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Duclos: Thank you, Minister Morneau, and thank you, senator. In fact, I spoke with Ms. Hogan a few hours ago to congratulate her on her appointment and to tell her how important her work is. Obviously, she already knew that. As Minister Morneau was saying, her work is important for the Canadian government's ability to have an adviser that can be there when times are good and also help them navigate the troubled waters we now find ourselves in. I also wanted to express to Ms. Hogan, as Minister Morneau just did, our full support in the relationship we will have with her in the years to come.

[*English*]

Senator Loffreda: Thank you for the answer, Minister Duclos.

As economies open, there is concern about the Canadian debt level, obviously. It's a serious concern. But I'm confident that the Canadian economy, which has historically always been very healthy, will return to being healthy. I think it's important to keep helping our businesses, like I originally said. As economies open and we transition from support aid to economic stimulus policies, I think the Bank of Canada has done the maximum it can in these circumstances, without repeating what they have done. Congratulations to the Bank of Canada. Thank you for that.

[Senator Loffreda]

As we transition to economic stimulus policies, can you share some of those policies being considered, if any, as economies start to reopen across Canada?

Mr. Morneau: I think, first of all, I'd like to set the frame for that question. I think we're in an economic challenge that is unlike any we've seen before, so the notion of how we might come out of this challenge is likely to be different from what we've seen before.

In 2008-09, in coming out of the economic challenge, we saw a dearth of demand. Obviously, in that context, governments look toward how they can, as you say, put stimulus into the economy. We can't yet predict with any certainty what it will look like as we come out of COVID-19. So in the hopeful situation that the restart we're in now goes well and that we get to a proper consideration of recovery later this year, we'll need to think about the challenges at that time, whether it is actually a deficit of demand in which we'll have to think about measures that might stimulate that demand, or whether there are challenges that might not exactly be that one.

• (1530)

We've so far put money into the economy, both in terms of supporting people and in supporting businesses and, through them, people who have, to a great extent, filled up some of the economic challenges that we've seen, and that may mean that that kind of measure could hold promise for what we might need to do at the next stage, or we might need to go back to more traditional measures.

I think the important thing from our standpoint is to understand that this is a dynamic situation and we need to make decisions as we have information. Since we're not yet at the recovery stage, I'm not at the stage where I can conclude on the appropriate ways to deal with demand shortages if they actually occur.

Senator R. Black: Thank you, ministers, for being here. It's great to have you here.

My questions focus on agriculture and are focused to the Minister of Finance. There's about \$20 million in the estimates allocated to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Can you give us a brief outline of what those funds are going to be used for?

Mr. Duclos: I would be glad, Minister Morneau, to put that question to my official, Glenn Purves, who knows the question quite well, unless, of course, you prefer to answer it yourself with your colleague.

Glenn Purves, Assistant Secretary, Expenditure Management Sector, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat: Thank you very much for the question, senator.

Of the \$20 million, \$16 million includes for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency being able to respond to emerging vulnerabilities in inspection capacity for food, plant and animal products in light of COVID-19 and to ensure an adequate, safe and reliable food supply for Canadians.

These funds will allow the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to continue performing critical activities by maintaining inspection capacity and investing in technology to facilitate delivery of inspection services.

Senator R. Black: Thank you. We've heard a lot of complaints recently about the insufficient coverage of the business risk management programs, especially now that we're going through the COVID-19 crisis.

Do the funds allocated to Agriculture and Agri-food Canada include money to make improvements to the business risk management suite of programs?

Mr. Morneau: Minister Duclos, do you want to respond to that question?

Mr. Duclos: As you said earlier, to be precise and useful, we will again invite Glenn Purves, who is not only an excellent person but also an excellent expert in this particular area.

Mr. Purves: They do, in fact. They are encompassing in terms of covering that area as well.

Senator R. Black: Thank you. I have one more question before I turn my time over.

The Minister of Agriculture has announced \$75 million for a local food infrastructure program. How will farmers and producers be able to ensure that their surplus food gets to where it needs to go?

Mr. Duclos: Again, I would propose that I defer the answer to Glenn.

Mr. Purves: This is an item that is separate from the Supplementary Estimates (A). As such, I don't have the information on that.

Senator R. Black: That gives me time to ask one more question then.

A lot of agricultural producers, processors and groups have expressed disappointment in the support measures offered to agriculture in response to COVID-19. Is there more assistance coming?

Mr. Duclos: On that I can perhaps provide the right high-level answer. Minister Bibeau has been very actively engaged in supporting farmers throughout the crisis. We know and we feel how difficult the situation is for them. She's working with her colleagues in various provinces and territories. In many cases, the programs that we are putting into place benefit from and need the support of provinces and territories.

[Translation]

Senator Dagenais: I have some questions for Mr. Duclos and Mr. Morneau. Mr. Morneau, when I take a close look at the figures, which isn't easy to do when new programs are popping up almost every day, I see some concerning — or, at the very least, questionable — discrepancies. Mr. Trudeau sometimes acknowledges that during his press conferences in front of his cottage.

Take the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, or CERB, for example. The CERB is a \$73-billion program that provides \$2,000 a month. The projections made in May were revised, and the \$73-billion total was lowered to \$45 billion. That's nearly \$4 billion less per month. What happened to the other \$28 billion initially announced, and how does the government explain this discrepancy? This is a lot of money. We're talking about a \$28-billion error.

Mr. Duclos: Senator Dagenais, this isn't so much a discrepancy as a misunderstanding. The \$73 billion you're referring to, and Mr. Morneau can expand on this, is the amount for the wage subsidy. It's not the amount for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.

Senator Dagenais: The new programs we're looking at right now are worth a total of \$13 billion. Can we expect to see other discrepancies of that nature, such major corrections? Can you explain this to me in greater detail?

Mr. Duclos: I think more accurate words here might be "adjustments," "evolution" or "adaptation." The crisis hit quickly, but it also evolved as the weeks went on. That's why we introduced measures very quickly. Those measures evolved over time based on the public health situation, which was initially the greatest concern, but also based on the economic situation. That is exactly the right thing to do in such circumstances, and by that I mean act quickly to prevent a severe depression and then take steps to adapt to the economic recovery.

Senator Dagenais: Since you're answering me, Mr. Duclos, I have another question for you about the 10 sick days for all Canadians that everyone was talking about. Calculating conservatively, that's 15 million full-time workers, which is 150 million days at \$100 per day, which adds up to about \$15 billion. What programs will that money come from? Can you assure us that you haven't included this expense in the \$14 billion transferred to the provinces because it will be \$1 billion short? What portion of that \$14 billion will be transferred to Quebec?

Mr. Duclos: I have a short answer, and then maybe a longer answer to follow.

First of all, we made a commitment to support workers so that they wouldn't have to choose between protecting their health and protecting their ability to provide for their families. As you mentioned, all this requires a COVID-19 sick leave program. Over the coming weeks, this leave could help us avoid a second wave of COVID-19.

Second, we made it very clear that the Government of Canada was definitely going to shoulder both the cost and the burden of this measure in the short term, because we know that there's a widespread positive impact when workers are able to self-isolate as needed. That way, they can keep their co-workers and workplace safe from the virus.

Lastly, the \$14 billion that the Government of Canada is offering to the provinces and territories is intended to recognize what a heavy burden they have had to bear these past few weeks, as most people, including yourself, understand. This assistance is being provided by the Government of Canada to support the priorities that the first ministers agreed on in their discussions over the past 14 weeks.

Senator Dagenais: How much will go to Quebec?

Mr. Duclos: Discussions are ongoing. The goal is to carry on with this excellent collaboration between the different governments. This collaboration is important in any context, but it is even more important during a pandemic, as we've seen in the past few months.

Senator Dagenais: Thank you.

[English]

Senator Campbell: The fisheries minister, Bernadette Jordan, confirmed on June 15, more than a month after announcing \$400 million in relief for the Canadian fishing industry and, as far as I know, the government has yet to deliver any benefits. In fact, new supports, including the \$267-million Fish Harvester Benefit and the \$202-million Fish Harvester Grant are among those that have yet to be open to applicants.

• (1540)

I understand that things change rapidly in this environment, but do you know of any other situations similar to this one, where the government has said, "We're going forward on this during the pandemic," and then for one reason or another the provision has been delayed? I'm sure there are other instances of this, given what we're seeing here.

Mr. Morneau: Thank you. It's an appropriate question. There are, obviously, many situations where we've tried to provide support for different sectors.

The direct answer to your question is, yes, there are places where, to get the administrative details completed in a way that makes sense or to have the appropriate allocation, we need to have the approach verified before we actually move forward. I can specifically give you the example of the Canadian Emergency Business Account where we were hoping to get the expansion out last Friday. In fact, due to some appropriate administrative checks, it's being worked through as rapidly as possible. We hope that will be completed in the very near term.

In this emergency setting, we're trying to get things done as quickly as possible and do it with the sense of responsibility that it's done appropriately.

Senator Marshall: My question is for Minister Duclos. Thank you for your opening remarks, minister. They line up quite nicely with my question.

You mentioned the Main Estimates, and they outline \$308 billion in government spending. You went on to say that \$125 billion is to be voted, because \$183 billion is statutory.

[Mr. Duclos]

Of the \$125 billion — by the end of the week, \$99 billion will have already been approved by Parliament into interim supply bills. That's going to leave a mere \$26 billion of the Main Estimates to receive parliamentary approval sometime later this year.

I'm hearing rumours that there may be a third interim supply bill to pick up the remaining \$26 billion. Could you confirm that the government will be seeking parliamentary approval of the remaining \$26 billion in a third interim supply bill? If that's not correct, what exactly is the plan for the remaining \$26 billion?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you. These are all excellent questions and demonstrate the substantial ability to understand the process.

In a typical year, there would be Main Estimates that would be tabled. There would be Interim Estimates that would be voted, and then the full main supply bill would be voted by about this time of the year, therefore providing Main Estimates at the disposal of departments and agencies for the whole year.

We are in a different situation this year. We have already had one interim bill voted on earlier this year. We have a second one this time, which in principle should be for the total value of the Main Estimates. However, as the senator just said, there is approximately a quarter of the total Main Estimates that remain, that are not covered by the interim bill of this particular period, which will therefore come back in the fall. Exactly when will be decided and then announced. That will complete the process of Main Estimates.

There are also supplementary estimates. Today we are also talking about Supplementary Estimates (A). Typically, there will be Supplementary Estimates (B) in the fall and Supplementary Estimates (C) at the beginning of next winter. These provide opportunities, as the senator mentioned, to redesign and to increase levels of support as the situation requires.

Senator Marshall: Minister, the \$26 billion, could you just address that? I'm interested in knowing, will that be a third interim supply bill? What is the plan to get that \$26 billion approved?

Mr. Duclos: Yes, there is a plan for a third interim bill. However, having Glenn Purves with us in the room is an outstanding opportunity to ask him to come back again to the microphone, and to make what I've just said as precise as it can be.

Senator Marshall: I would rather speak to you, minister, because I have another question. No disrespect to Mr. Purves.

We are talking about the \$125 billion, and there is going to be \$99 billion approved by the end of the week. We have until the end of December to study Main Estimates. I don't see the merit in that study now. You've received approval for most of the money.

What do you see as the benefit of studying Main Estimates this year?

Mr. Duclos: That is a good question. By the way, the reason I wanted to invite Glenn to speak is that I see Glenn and hear him regularly. You might not have had the same fortune. He's a very clear, composed and structured person. Perhaps I was too generous in trying to share that with you, but let me, perhaps, be more relevant.

Yes, typically we would be voting on the full Main Estimates at this particular time, but given the situation, we are giving parliamentarians in both chambers the opportunity to further continue their study of Main Estimates, and proceed to debate and vote on the third interim supply bill in the fall.

Senator Marshall: Thank you. My next question is for Minister Morneau.

Minister, it's nice to see you again. I want to talk about the media advisory that your department issued in June about the Economic and Fiscal Snapshot that you're going to deliver on July 8. The advisory says "The snapshot will provide information on the current state of the economy and the Government of Canada's response to support . . . COVID-19 pandemic."

I've never heard of the term "fiscal snapshot" before. It doesn't sound very promising. I'm hopeful that you're underpromising now and that you will overdeliver in July.

Could you give us some insight into what you will be disclosing in July in your fiscal snapshot?

Mr. Morneau: First of all, thank you, senator. I certainly try to make it a practice to underpromise and overdeliver. We'll see if I meet your standards on July 8.

Our reality right now is it's extremely difficult to make projections with any sense of precision. The decline in economic activity during the end of March, April and May was, as all of us in this chamber know, unprecedented. For that reason, we think that we should ensure that we provide information on what we know, and don't try to provide information that is hypothetical or without substance.

What you will see us doing is providing you with our best understanding of the current state of the economy, with a comprehensive understanding of the commitments that we've made, and that will go out to the extent we've made them, and that will allow us to provide a picture of what 2021 will be, in our estimation.

Senator Marshall: Will you be providing numbers such as the debt and deficit even at this point in time? I do appreciate the difficulty in forecasting, but just to find information on the current state of finances in government; it's difficult and challenging. People who are interested have to go to a variety of sources.

Will you be providing information as of this point in time? For example, Senator Plett asked about the debt and deficit. Will we get that number, or will we have to continue to try to calculate it ourselves?

Mr. Morneau: Yes, you will.

Senator Marshall: Great. Thank you. Minister Duclos, I have another question for you.

We've been doing quite a bit of study of capital projects in the Department of National Defence, and two years ago the Prime Minister announced that the Treasury Board would assume responsibility for key delivery challenges, including defence procurement.

I notice in Supplementary Estimates (A) there is about \$700 million for capital projects in the Department of Defence, the largest being \$585 million for the Joint Support Ship project. The decision of the Prime Minister to put that responsibility over to the Treasury Board — you can see it when you look at the 2019 update to the Defence Investment Plan because the plan clearly shows Treasury Board at the top of the decision pyramid.

• (1550)

As President of Treasury Board, are you satisfied that capital projects under Strong, Secure, Engaged and approved by Treasury Board are being properly managed in the Department of National Defence, and that the information on the cost and progress of these projects is complete and accurate?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you for the question. It's very important.

I will start by correcting the impression that could have been wrongly sent: Treasury Board is not in charge or the sole agent in those important processes. The Treasury Board is there to support and monitor other important departments in those types of processes.

In this particular case, the departments mostly involved are, of course, National Defence but also PSPC, Public Service and Procurement Canada. We work all together with the respective abilities and responsibilities that we share and put in common. We all work together to ensure that, as you said, there are proper actions and monetary mechanisms implemented in the context of such important capital expenditure projects.

Senator Marshall: Thank you very much.

Do I have sufficient time for another question?

The Chair: No.

Senator Harder: Good afternoon, and thank you, ministers and officials, for being here. I'm probably one of the few people in Ottawa that believes that Treasury Board's work is really important and exciting. I want to take the occasion to ask the minister some questions about the role of the Treasury Board, particularly in light of the COVID initiatives and the changing dynamic of both programs and quantum that we are approving.

The Treasury Board, as everyone knows, is the traditional department to ensure program integrity, program evaluation, and the promotion of value and prudence for taxpayer funding.

I would like to hear from the President of the Treasury Board regarding the following: What additional steps, beyond those of the normal practices of the department, have been put in place as a result of the COVID initiatives to ensure that this overwhelming and sudden program allocation meets the traditional standards of integrity and program effectiveness?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you, Senator Harder. Thank you for being so kind and supportive of the role of the Treasury Board and perhaps its president as well. Yes, it is indeed an important central agency, but perhaps an agency whose work is rather discreet, in many cases, in support of other important agencies or departments across the government.

In the current crisis, we have acted in a different number of ways to make sure we could do things quickly but with the integrity and the value for money concerns that you also signalled, and correctly so.

We have needed to be agile and, at the same time, diligent and responsible. As an example of what we did, there was a clear communication to all departments, officials and public servants at all places and all levels of not only an expectation but a demand that whatever measures they put into place — sometimes in a relatively speedy manner — need to be documented and will eventually need to provide full information to the important institutions, like the Information Commissioner, the Auditor General, and other central agents and agencies in the Government of Canada.

Similarly, we have had to be agile and rigorous in our ability to monitor the important demands on health care and the public health side in providing support for medical research, testing, treatment and vaccination, procuring at a level and speed we have never seen in the history of Canada. That involves working with PSPC and other important mechanisms on human resources, technology and financial management sides that the Treasury Board absolutely needs to do.

Senator Harder: I will move on to — if I could put it this way — the “normal” programming activities. What steps are you taking in your department to ensure that the program integrity of the other programs outside of the COVID initiatives continue to be both appropriately resourced and effectively monitored?

Mr. Duclos: The short answer is that I and we have the privilege of having, within the Treasury Board Secretariat, a level of expertise and dedication that is unfortunately not too visible; it is not visible enough for most Canadians and even for parliamentarians. I know this now for sure, because I’ve been at the Treasury Board for a number of months now and I can tell you that, even in the context of an emergency like COVID-19, there have been the right levels of efforts, as you suggested, invested in making sure that other aspects of the government’s work were following the right integrity and monitoring procedures. Again, this amazing level of dedication, expertise and commitment ensures the well-being of our country.

Senator Harder: My final question to you as President of the Treasury Board has to do with transparency. There’s a lot of commentary around transparency. Certainly, as I look at the various websites of both your department and other departments,

there is a good deal of information being put out for public and parliamentary interest, not only for their information but also as a means of holding the government to account.

One of the challenges is that we have many windows of transparency, but we don’t always see the full picture. I’m wondering if the Treasury Board is giving consideration to how to adjust the reporting requirements on the results side to take advantage of the additional tools — particularly electronic tools — that have been developed in the crisis for the transparency that is appropriate to provide a better context for results reporting, by department?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you. I like the phrase that there are different windows to look into the house of the government, but we don’t always see the full picture. That is exactly true. That’s why we and the Minister of Finance were key in doing this. We have provided bi-weekly reports that were tabled in the appropriate parliamentary committees.

We also have two key windows that have been available and filled with important information over the last few weeks. The first one is the Government of Canada InfoBase, which provides important information on the measures and the associated costs of those measures. There is also the Open Government portal, which has led to the automatic and full disclosure of almost 150 separate measures, all focused on the COVID-19 emergency.

In addition to the questions that members in this house and the other house have asked repeatedly and quite legitimately on government operations, there has been a fair amount of transparency. We can always do better, of course, and we should always want to do better, but I think there has been a good level of transparency, given the circumstances.

Senator Harder: Thank you.

My next question is for Minister Morneau.

Yesterday in the *Financial Times*, there was a front-page story saying that Brookfield Properties is chasing small retailers to pay thousands of dollars in rent on outlets that were forced to close during the coronavirus pandemic, even as the Canadian investment group skips payment on its mortgages and asks its lenders for forbearance. The story goes on to describe, through various documentation that has been received, how they are putting the screws to their tenants while seeking forgiveness from those to whom they owe money.

• (1600)

I know this is not obviously a direct responsibility of the Minister of Finance, but you have in the past spoken to the spirit in which the government’s actions have been undertaken and the assistance that the government has provided. I would invite you to comment on how you see the cooperation from large corporations in the exercise of that spirit in their area of responsibility.

Mr. Morneau: Well, thank you, Senator Harder. Firstly, I didn’t see that article, so I’m not able to comment specifically on what the situation is with Brookfield and their tenants.

With respect to your broader question, we've tried to design programs that would create the right incentives for participants in the market to work together, and the path we took on the emergency rent approach was intended to do that. It was intended to provide an incentive for a landlord to work with a tenant because they would be guaranteed 75% of their payment, and it was incentive for the tenant because they would only have to pay 25%. We see that program is now starting to grow, which is positive, enabled by the fact that many of the provinces have temporarily put a moratorium on evictions of commercial tenants.

To your direct question, we've actually worked with some of the largest landlords in the country. I've personally spoken with a number of them — not to Brookfield but to a number of other large institutions that have a significant number of commercial tenants. I've spoken to large Canadian pension funds and in all the cases, in fact, they've told me that they would work with the commercial rent approach that we put in place in order to try to get to a settling of the challenge they're facing: tenants don't have the money to pay and landlords, of course, don't want to take a haircut. They thought the program was appropriately scaled for the challenge.

I think that broadly answers the question you're asking.

Senator Batters: Minister Morneau, your government is once again here asking us to approve billions of dollars in spending with little transparency. This is part of a disturbing pattern. The Trudeau government's first COVID-19 act gave you the power to unilaterally set up a potentially massive 100% government-owned corporation without parliamentary oversight.

Bill C-14 put a sunset clause of September 30 on that government corporation, but that only prevents the creation of this Crown corporation after that date. It does not prevent your government from pouring in unlimited taxpayer money if it has already been created. And guess what? You've already created your giant government corporation. May 10 orders-in-council show you've named it the Canada Enterprise Emergency Funding Corporation. So the sunset clause in Bill C-14 on this giant government corporation is now meaningless.

Minister Morneau, why won't you impose a real sunset clause and close this huge loophole? Canadians don't want to be on the hook for another Trudeau government power grab.

Mr. Morneau: The corporation you're referring to is one that's underneath the large enterprise financing facility we have put in place, and it is intended to manage that facility.

We recognize that these large organizations that are going through stress, and might come to the government for this financing facility, will likely go through stress that will go beyond September 30. This is similar to what happened in the 2008-09 crisis when we saw large enterprises challenged and went through a significant restructuring following the actual time of the crisis.

We think we've set this up in a responsible way to allow us to support these enterprises with credit. Our goal, of course, is to maintain the possibility for these enterprises to come out of COVID-19, continue to be able to provide jobs for Canadians and enable us to have a strong economy going forward.

As was mentioned earlier, we've had a number of companies come forward. In many cases, the mere fact of this financing facility has enabled firms to go out and get financing themselves. Over the last couple of weeks we've seen both Air Canada and Hudson's Bay Corporation go out and seek large financing, which we think is appropriate. They've been able to find financing in the market. The large enterprise financing is intended to be for those organizations that cannot. Of course, the emergence of those challenges can happen over time and the stress will become greater for many of those businesses the longer COVID-19 goes on. We just think it's the right way to support our economy and ensure there are jobs after we get through this crisis.

Senator Batters: Minister Morneau, the Conservative government, in the 2008-09 situation, took that action in a much more limited and circumscribed way. Also, Conservatives would only purchase corporate assets out of necessity, not desire. But let's get back to your giant government corporation.

Have you already used this Crown corporation to dole out taxpayer money? If so, to whom? How much has this already cost Canadians? Are the projected recipients of this taxpayer-funded largess already set? Will the Trudeau government use this corporation to provide massive bailouts to its favoured sons, SNC Lavalin and Bombardier?

Minister Morneau, again, why won't you close this huge loophole? If you promise to impose a sunset clause on such a significant government power, make it count.

Mr. Morneau: Well, to be clear, again, this is not intended to purchase companies. In fact, on the contrary; it's a credit facility put in place in order to provide liquidity for firms going through challenges. The cost of that credit is relatively expensive, as is appropriate given the situation these organizations are in, with the potential for warrants. Those warrants can be satisfied in cash from the organizations, meaning no equity need be exchanged between the government and the company.

The answer to your direct question is "no." No funding has been released, because as was asked earlier as to whether any of these potential loans have been approved, the answer is no. There are a number of companies that are under stress. The facility is likely to be useful, but it has not been used as yet because that process is just starting to get under way. Again, we hope it provides us with the opportunity to support some important large organizations through an unprecedented time, which is of course the reason we've set it up this way as opposed to the significant but more limited challenge we faced in 2008-09.

Senator Batters: Thank you. Minister Morneau, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, Yves Giroux, is also very concerned about the sweeping powers you personally have with this giant government corporation. When the PBO testified at the Senate Finance Committee last month, he stated that vesting that level of power:

. . . without any immediate oversight — in one person, it's something that, in my opinion, is unprecedented in the current regime and in Canadian history. Even though speed is at a premium right now, it doesn't mean that the minister should be allowed to act by himself or alone to create trusts by corporations and borrow billions of dollars

The PBO went on to say:

It is thankfully limited in time, but it is unprecedented and worries me a lot.

Unfortunately, Minister Morneau, the giant government corporation now really isn't limited in time, since it has already been created. Won't you give the PBO some small level of comfort and impose a real sunset clause on that corporation?

Mr. Morneau: First, obviously, I respect the importance of the Parliamentary Budget Office in completing its work, in providing a level of understanding for Canadians, for this chamber and the House of Commons to have an understanding of the federal finances. I think that's an important function.

We will certainly put in place the appropriate safeguards around the large enterprise financing facility. We have ensured that there are multiple levels of due diligence as we go through this challenge, and we will continue to take that approach. This is complex. It requires a lot of expertise — expertise that we have in government to a certain extent, but also expertise we need to seek outside, as well as governance that's appropriate, and we are seeking to do that.

Senator Batters: Minister Morneau, back in March, shortly after this whole pandemic crisis rocked this country, you sat in this very Senate Chamber and promised that your Trudeau government would deliver help for the oil and gas sector imminently. You said, "I'm not talking about weeks. I'm talking about hours, potentially days. . . ."

Well, 90 days have now passed since you made that promise, minister — almost 13 weeks and more than 2,160 hours. But who's counting, right? Well, I'll tell you who's counting, Minister Morneau: the oil and gas workers, whose jobs were already threatened due to the anti-energy policies of your government; the small- and medium-sized oil companies that can no longer afford to pay their workers because the aid you promised just isn't flowing; the withering and now shuttered small businesses and shrinking rural communities; and so many communities throughout my region of Western Canada, whose livelihoods depend on the very energy sector your government seems to have abandoned. When will the Trudeau government cut the platitudes and actually deliver for Canada's energy sector and the millions of Canadians who depend on it?

• (1610)

Mr. Morneau: Thank you. This is a significant misunderstanding and one that I think I should correct on the record.

[Senator Batters]

We need to be very clear that the programs we've put in place support all sectors across Canada, support Canadians across the country. The Canada Emergency Response Benefit is obviously for Canadians across the country.

With the wage subsidy, we now have 223,000 unique applicants, with over a couple of million people on it, which is 1 in 7 Canadian employees, including significant large and many small- and medium-sized companies in the energy sector. With the Canada Emergency Business Account, we now have 680,000 applicants who have been approved, including more than tens of thousands in Alberta, many of which are in the energy sector.

The specific program you may be referring to is the reserve-based lending approach with the Business Development Bank of Canada. That program is also going forward but did require some considerable details to be concluded before it moved forward.

So there is aid flowing; there is credit flowing across this country to individuals, to businesses in all sectors, including the oil and gas sector in those parts of the country where that's an important sector. We'll continue to look to support all sectors. I'm pleased to see that our measures are doing exactly that. As we find challenges, we've tried to improve or change those programs to deal with those challenges, and that will certainly be our ongoing approach.

Senator Batters: Your comments you made in the Senate that day are incapable of misunderstanding. You were talking about the energy industry, and your government's empty promises now won't pay the bills, minister. You're 90 days late and billions of dollars short. The anti-energy policies of this Trudeau government have devastated —

The Chair: Senator Batters, I'm sorry, your 10 minutes is up.

[*Translation*]

Senator Forest-Niesing: I have two questions for you. Thank you, ministers, for accepting the invitation to appear before us today.

My two questions concern transportation. I'll ask them and then let you decide who can answer.

I'm asking the first question on behalf of my colleague, Senator Eric Forest. He notes that, compared to last year, there's been a \$500-million reduction in the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund. He asks the following question:

As we know, there are many projects awaiting funding in Quebec and across Canada. Should we expect a major reinvestment in these funds to foster the development of public transit and, in turn, the economic recovery?

Mr. Morneau: I'll start. As I said earlier, we're now in a cautious recovery, so we're not yet there. We can't exactly say what we'll do with respect to infrastructure, but we know that public transportation is very important. That's why we looked at improving things for municipalities in our work with the provinces. We recognize that municipalities have some significant needs, and public transportation is one of them.

Our first step in the ongoing negotiations with the provinces is to look at the municipalities' current situation. We'll be able to get you some answers after that.

As for a larger investment in the future, and in light of the stimulus measures, I hope we'll be able to say more in the coming months.

Senator Forest-Niesing: Thank you. I have a second question.

[*English*]

This question concerns community and regional airports and their very short-term survival. I noticed that the Main Estimates allocated \$38 million for ACAP, the Airports Capital Assistance Program. Additionally, in response to the pandemic, some emergency measures have been enacted to support businesses, but the majority of regional airports that have governance models that involve the municipalities don't qualify. They aren't eligible for those measures.

Regional airports are sounding the alarm. They've been strongly affected. Many of them are on the cusp of bankruptcy, having lost up to 90% of their revenues and having fixed costs.

Is the government planning short-term support measures to prevent the bankruptcy of these economic and social vectors so vital to remote regions across Canada? If the answer is yes, what are those measures? If the answer is no, can you explain why not?

Mr. Morneau: Perhaps I can identify both what we've done in this regard and our approach.

I think you will know that we have waived a number of fees from airports across the country, which has helped. We've also said that the measures we've put in place for industry and for organizations across the country have consistent criteria. The criterion of the wage subsidy is that the reduction in revenue is 30% or greater.

We are looking right now at the extension of the wage subsidy and considering how we might best change the criteria for the wage subsidy to make sure it's having the desired impact. We went through a series of consultations with businesses and labour unions to get their insights. We're getting close to the final determination on how those programs will be changed.

I expect that many of the most hard-hit sectors — and I think airports would certainly be included in that — are going to be anxious to see that we've considered their challenge in that new policy. I'm confident that we will provide additional support for businesses that have been particularly hard hit through that.

Then, of course, on top of that, the credit measures that we've put in place are intended to support organizations of different sizes. The CEBA loans are for the smallest of businesses. The BDC and EDC loans — the BCAP loans — are for larger. And then likely the size of airports you're looking at are probably on the scale where they're accessing about \$12.5 million of potential credit or, for the largest of airports, if they are over \$300 million worth of revenue they can go into the LEEFF program we talked about earlier. Some airports are in that category.

We're trying to provide support as we can through direct measures like the wage subsidy and then credit support where necessary, based on the situation, and not necessarily looking at a specific sectoral response but more broad-based, helping all organizations that fit the criteria of being directly impacted by COVID-19.

Senator Forest-Niesing: My concern with respect to the emergency measures that have already been put in place, specifically with respect to the rent relief for airports, is that the larger airports have been able to benefit from that measure. Regional and community airports, which really are the very important link not only for passenger transportation but also for transportation of goods that are essential to the survival of remote communities, have governance models that render them ineligible given their relationship to the municipality that may own their building and the fact that there may not be a rental obligation or rent payment obligation, so they can't avail themselves of those measures.

I would suggest there remains a very urgent situation with respect to regional and community airports, and that creativity will have to be part of the consideration of additional measures involving those airports in order to ensure that we do not lose one of the 50 plus that are across Canada and that remote communities depend upon. I leave that with you.

Mr. Morneau: What I can say is that I appreciate the challenge. It has been brought up to me from other parliamentarians. We are trying our best to face up to the multitude of sectors that are in immense challenge at this time — that would be one of them — and thinking about different ways we might be able to do that.

• (1620)

Obviously, support from the municipalities is one way that might support these smaller regional airports. But we are not taking the approach that we have a playbook. The challenges that are emerging are continuing to manifest themselves in new ways as this continues on. The additional stress that organizations find themselves in, the longer this goes on, requires us to consider whether our measures are appropriate for the challenge. That's what we're trying to do on a daily basis.

Senator Forest-Niesing: In the few seconds I have left, I just want to express my gratitude for the speed and creativity of the emergency response of the government to an unprecedented situation.

Senator Martin: My first question is to Minister Morneau. In a way, it is in the same vein as my colleague's questions about the smaller airports, but it's about smaller businesses.

I know there has been, as you say, credit flowing to businesses. Many businesses have been able to be supported, but it's the very small businesses, minister, the mom-and-pop, family-owned businesses that were not originally eligible for the Canada Emergency Business Account. They had to wait even further once you did change the criterion, to allow qualification with a payroll lower than \$20,000. Because it was EDC and not an

entity that already knew credit unions, some of them who had accounts with credit unions had to further wait for accreditation to take place, and that took about a month.

Finally, you announced on May 19 that these businesses could look forward to receiving support. June 19 was supposed to be the day, but on the previous night, you tweeted that the CEBA expansion wouldn't happen as planned. It was quite a crushing blow to these businesses and families who were waiting. There wasn't much explanation in a tweet, of course, and no new date.

Minister, what happened to this long-awaited date? They have been waiting for months. Why did you further delay the long overdue support to these businesses, the most vulnerable businesses, as I have come to understand in the calls that we've taken? When will you finally implement the CEBA expansion to help these businesses? Is there a date?

Mr. Morneau: Thank you. I really think it's important to put this in context. In what has still been a very brief period of time, we have put in place numerous programs that have had broad applicability across our country. In the case of the Canada Emergency Business Account, just to consider the numbers, as of June 12, we had 680,000 applicants. About 680,000 small businesses were approved for these business accounts for a total of \$27.05 billion in cumulative funds disbursed.

I think we need to always start with the context. Of course, there are more businesses than 680,000 in this country that meet the criteria to be eligible, but that's an enormous number of businesses that have applied for and been approved and received funds.

What we committed to was expanding the range of businesses. With all good intent, we set out the criteria for these businesses up front. People came to us and said, in some cases, they didn't actually pay their employees in a way that would enable us to use payroll as an indicator. We had payroll as an original indicator because it was something that banks could verify. We always want to make sure, as we're putting out loans, that the banks have a way of verifying it's an appropriate organization.

When we found that problem, we decided to expand it. That was the decision that we saw as the enlargement that we were aiming for, and we expected that we would be able to have those loans start flowing this past Friday.

First of all, we are moving forward with that measure. Nobody should be disappointed that they're not going to get that loan. That loan is coming. The issue was that, over the course of last week, the multiple financial institutions engaged in getting prepared for this new expansion required administrative capabilities they had not previously had. We found out the night before they really didn't think they could deliver to the standards expected. They asked for a few more days.

My answer was, we want to do this right, therefore we will enable a few more days. I would say through you to those small-business owners that this is still going forward. We are doing this. We've expanded the criteria. We are making sure the financial institutions, including credit unions which we have expanded significantly, have the capacity to actually deliver. That will be in the near future. Since we aimed for last Friday but

were unable to get it done that day, I don't want to say I know the exact day today, but they're working night and day to get this done.

Senator Martin: Thank you, minister. You changed in your response from a few days to the near future. You speak about this being a brief period of time but, for these small, family-run businesses, they sometimes work 16- or 20-hour days, and they've been waiting for months. So it is critical. And it was tweeted the day before. So, with all due respect, they've really suffered, and I wanted to say that on their behalf.

My next question is to Minister Duclos.

[Translation]

Minister Duclos, my questions have to do with the Privy Council Office, which received an additional \$48.7 million in funding for communications and marketing related to COVID-19.

A spokesperson for the PBO said last month that \$26.7 million of that funding would be allocated to, and I quote:

. . . other advertising departmental initiatives related to COVID-19 as necessary.

Minister, how much of that money is being spent on the press conferences the Prime Minister is holding every morning on the steps of his "cottage" rather than on Parliament Hill?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you for your question, Senator Martin, and for being so kind as to ask it in my mother tongue.

I can tell you right now that, in these times of crisis and pandemic that we have been and are still are experiencing, Canadians are worried. They are worried not only about their pocketbooks and their ability to make ends meet, but also about their health. In most cases, that is their main concern. That is why outreach, information-sharing and reassurance efforts are so important, particularly when it comes to those who are the most vulnerable and the most worried.

The resources that you identified and described are there to support Canadians, inform them and guide them in the personal decisions that they have to make to protect their health and the health of their loved ones. These resources also help them determine how best to go about their daily lives and plan for the future.

It is a very important communications environment that informs, reassures and helps guide people's behaviour. There are all kinds of activities planned that can be carried out with that funding.

[English]

Senator Martin: Thank you. I am curious, though, about the amount that is dedicated to those daily announcements. That was the question. In the spirit of transparency, which you have also said is very important, that is the question I have. If that could be provided, that would be much appreciated.

[Translation]

Mr. Minister, there's \$7.5 million here for, and I quote:

Funding to support regional presence, stabilize and enhance PCO capacity and the transfer of exempt staff in Ministers' Regional Offices

Minister, can you tell us exactly what those words mean by providing a detailed breakdown of how that \$7.7 million of taxpayers' money was spent?

• (1630)

Mr. Duclos: Once again, thank you for your question. Getting back to your previous question, I can assure you that the Prime Minister's presence is important. He has certainly been present for several weeks now. There are also other activities that may be less visible but in which the Privy Council Office and several other federal institutions are participating to communicate with Canadians and reassure, inform and guide them.

As to ministers' regional offices, during the pandemic, public health directives have been key to all government operations. Public servants were asked to work from home. Some were even forced to. I can provide details later on about what we learned and the good results we achieved, but because members of cabinet and senior officials have also been involved in remote activities and meetings, we've had to invest in security and technology in ministers' regional offices.

The Chair: This ten-minute period is over.

Senator Moncion: Thank you for being here with us today. My question has to do with the maximum stock of debt. I know you had to answer questions on this at the beginning of the meeting. Subsection 43(1) of the Financial Administration Act was repealed in June 2016. This change restores the requirement that the Minister of Finance obtain the authorization of Parliament for his borrowing activities. To satisfy this requirement for authorization for renewed borrowing, Parliament passed the Borrowing Authority Act, which came into effect on November 23, 2017. This legislation establishes the maximum stock of market debt for the Government of Canada and Crown corporations at \$1.168 billion and gives the Governor-in-Council the power to authorize borrowing within that limit. Under that act, the government must report to Parliament on the state of borrowing at least every three years.

Since the country's financial situation is evolving quickly in the current context and given the government's obligation to report to Parliament every three years, when can we expect the government to report to Parliament under this act or introduce a bill to establish a new maximum stock of debt?

Mr. Morneau: Is the question for me?

Mr. Duclos: I believe so. It's a little too technical. It is rather unfair to ask Minister Morneau to speak to the technical aspects. Some are governed by orders-in-council. If senators are more interested in the technical aspects, I can ask Mr. Purves to answer.

Mr. Morneau: We know that it is very important to follow the rules. We intend to follow the rules concerning information that is to be provided to Parliament. You can rest assured that we will report before the scheduled dates.

Senator Moncion: I want to correct the amount right away: we are talking about \$1.168 trillion, not \$1.168 billion. It would be wonderful if the debt were that small.

[English]

The government's emergency expenses made in response to COVID-19 are in large part financed by the Bank of Canada and part of the government's borrowings from markets. This means that the provisions contained in the Borrowing Authority Act are not applicable in the present case.

Can you give us some explanation regarding COVID-19 debt funding and how this will be reflected in the government's financial statements?

Mr. Morneau: We will be reflecting the overall borrowings in the financials. That would include, by extension, the debt of the Bank of Canada as well. That will be clearly demonstrated in the accounting that we bring forward. That will give the transparency and the understanding of our borrowings, and the challenge that we're facing as a result of COVID-19. We're looking forward to doing that.

Senator Moncion: Will we be expecting more clarity on the amounts at the financial update that you'll be providing on July 8?

Mr. Morneau: Yes.

Senator Moncion: Thank you.

If Senator Pate would like to have the rest of my time —

Senator Pate: Thank you to both ministers for appearing, and also to your government for the economic support that you've provided to Canadians during this important time.

The cost of leaving people in poverty is estimated at between \$72 billion and \$84 billion each year, including government budgeting for health care, criminal legal issues and emergency support costs.

The Bank of Canada has advised that a permanent CERB-like program would be a good investment and would enable more expeditious responses to individuals in need in future times of crisis.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates the cost of the temporary CERB measures, including the recent eight-week extension, at \$71 billion. For comparison, the same office says that the net cost of operating a guaranteed liveable income for a year would be \$44 billion. On top of this, a guaranteed liveable income would save \$15 billion or more for provinces and territories in terms of social assistance costs.

The benefits of guaranteed liveable income go beyond financial ones. A guaranteed annual liveable income for all Canadians was one of the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It has also been recommended by the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime.

What consideration has the government given these various recommendations as part of its budget process, in particular given the downstream cost savings that a long-term guaranteed liveable income program could offer by reducing poverty-related strain on health care, criminal, legal and other systems, and better equipping Canada to weather future crises like COVID-19?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you, Senator Pate. I value that question very much, and I equally value your sensitivity and knowledge of these issues and the importance of not only recognizing the short-term cost of poverty, which is significant, as you said, but also the long-term cost of poverty, vulnerability and exclusion.

That's one of the reasons we needed and wanted to act quickly and impactfully in this particular crisis; because there was an obvious risk, not only of entering into a severe economic depression, but also the serious risk of entering into a severe social crisis. No one around this room has yet to imagine the level of social crisis that would currently exist in Canada if millions of people and families had nothing to put on the table.

We should all be mindful, of course, of the fiscal integrity and fiscal rigour that governments have to abide by, but also the social responsibility that we have for citizens who have nothing else if we don't help them.

It's also related to the important debate and discussion around the guaranteed minimum income. That philosophy, in fact, has inspired the introduction of the Canada Child Benefit in the first mandate, a benefit which still reduces the level of poverty among children by 40% every month. That has also influenced and determined many of the measures we have put in place to support seniors through enhancements to Old Age Security, the Canada Pension Plan and enhancements to the Guaranteed Income Supplement, always with the perspective of providing a social safety net that is both efficient, in the sense that you mentioned, and fair for everyone.

Looking forward, we have learned lessons from the crisis, including the fact that our Employment Insurance system wasn't designed to go through these crises and, of course, before the crisis, it wasn't entirely adapted to the changing labour market circumstances and social circumstances of our country.

We value your input very much. We encourage you to continue your advocacy because we all believe that these are important things to discuss and to keep in mind.

Senator Pate: Thank you very much. I want to quickly go to another issue.

• (1640)

I was disturbed to hear earlier, and very happy to see some of it abandoned, a focus on looking at going after individuals who were seen as falsely or mistakenly applying for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit. I was pleased to see some of the comments you made, Minister Duclos, in this respect. However, I'm curious as to what the budgetary impact of fraud associated with the CERB would be compared to the prevalence and monetary amount of fraud associated with other forms of COVID-19 economic support measures, including measures geared toward businesses for which these types of penalties were not considered and, more generally — this is probably more for Minister Morneau — the amounts of tax revenue lost each year as a result of tax evasion and tax avoidance by businesses and wealthy individuals.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer recently estimated that losses due to offshore tax evasion and avoidance by multinational corporations could amount to \$25 billion per year. I haven't heard anywhere close to that amount being related to potential CERB benefit mistakes.

The Chair: I am sorry; your 10 minutes is over. You're always welcome to send in a written answer.

Senator Tannas: My question is for Minister Morneau. There are a number of programs — the Co-Lending Program, the loan guarantee program — that are under way right now. I think there are more to come around mid-market programs, all with partners such as financial institutions, major banks, credit unions and so on.

I can tell you that in my field of contacts, it doesn't appear that the financial institutions are jumping to the pump on this. Notwithstanding the guarantees, they still have to take risk and they are reluctant to do so. We've seen this. This has played out over decades with the small business loans programs where banks have been reluctant to use it — too much paperwork, and lots of excuses.

Are you satisfied with the take-up? Do you think that the partners — specifically, the banks and credit unions — are displaying the appropriate effort and enthusiasm? These loans are going to be important in the relaunch. If you or your people see resistance, which would be traditional resistance, now is the time to do something about it. What are your thoughts?

Mr. Morneau: Thanks. I would start by saying I think it is quite an important question. We put in place these measures because we think that having liquidity in the market is critically important right now, and it's particularly important to find a way to ensure businesses can get through this time.

I would say candidly that some of the programs we've put in place have been phenomenally effective. I identified the Canada Emergency Business Account. Certainly we're not at perfection, because there is more we need to do; however, it has delivered credit to a large number of organizations, very rapidly. The financial institutions, broadly speaking — the banks and credit unions — have been very effective at doing that.

In terms of the BCAP program, I would have two observations. The first is that it is too early for me to fully answer your question. When we look at the rollout of the BCAP program, which was successful in 2008 and 2009, we see a similar pattern. The program did not have high levels of take-up in the early days; as organizations got more stressed, it had greater and greater levels of take-up.

I think we are still at a stage where it's important to remember that we're providing a significant amount of money, liquidity, to organizations through the wage subsidy and we're providing help for their employees through the CERB. I'm not yet able to give you a clear answer on whether we should be believing that the take-up is where we would expect it to be.

That said, I'm trying to stay on top of this. I am in constant contact with our financial institutions. We have an 80% guarantee on those loans, and that was put in place because we want the credit to flow. We will be taking what I think was your advice in terms of staying on top of this and continuing to push to make sure this program is having the desired impact. That will be an ongoing issue that we'll need to address.

Finally, in the large enterprise financing, I think those organizations are sufficiently sophisticated to know whether they need to use that financing, based on other sources of credit.

You've pointed out the right place where we need to focus our attention, but I'm not yet able to tell you that I have enough information to determine whether it's meeting our desired goals.

Senator Tannas: I'll give you another unsolicited piece of advice, and that is to find a listening post close to the front lines. You may get a different answer than you will in the executive offices of Bay Street.

I'll yield the balance of my time to Senator White. Thank you, minister.

Senator White: Thanks to both ministers and staff for being here.

To Minister Duclos: Treasury Board created the Expenditure Management System in about 2007. Primarily, Treasury Board required that all new program proposals go through a systematic examination, ensuring they meet the needs of Canadians, focus on federal responsibilities, produce results and provide value for money.

We've had a number of new programs, worth billions of dollars, in the last couple of months. I'm trying to get assurances from Treasury Board that the same standard is being met with these new programs as would have been envisioned with programs previous to that, and that, whether or not the Expenditure Management System is being used as expected.

Mr. Duclos: Thank you, Senator White. Let me answer in three different steps.

First, we did indeed have to act quickly.

Second, we regularly adjusted our policies in order to adapt them to not only the evolving situation but to the input that was regularly provided by Canadians, and businesses in particular.

Third, I made clear to my team at the secretariat — which all departments and agencies have understood — that while we do this, we need to keep a level of integrity and monitoring that is expected of the federal government, in particular, in the value-for-money context that you describe.

The Expenditure Management System and its value and importance remain during the crisis and will continue as we go through the remaining part of this crisis, as we emerge from it, and as we implement some of the lessons we learned in the last few weeks.

Senator White: In a similar vein, we certainly understood the government would have to provide billions of dollars' worth of programs and services in order to effectively respond to COVID-19. In fact, Treasury Board allowed for time limit increases to emergency contracting limits.

However, at the same time, Treasury Board has emphasized that departments should not undertake one-off procurements outside of the coordinated purchase of commodities, for example, that has been organized by PSPC. As well, Treasury Board has advised departments to track expenditures associated with COVID-19 as part of each department's Response Expenditure Report.

Are you confident that the departments are not engaged in one-off purchases outside of PSPC's coordinated purchase and that departments are accurately tracking all of the pandemic expenditures? Second, have you put in place an audit process to assure the public?

Mr. Duclos: As you said, and as you hinted, there are important joint responsibilities and relationships across departments and agencies. Treasury Board is obviously one of those agencies that has the responsibility to provide important administrative, monitoring and enforcement support that other departments may require.

We do this in a manner that is, in this particular crisis, mindful of the urgency and transparency expected with regard to our actions. We will continue to do so because, as you said, it is not only a matter of having the right actions and impact but also a matter of keeping the faith of Canadians in terms of the integrity of our institutions.

Senator White: Thank you very much.

My last question is for you, Minister Morneau, if I may. A number of not-for-profits that have been pursuing capital expenditures across the country to try to build homeless shelters, some here in Ottawa — homes for homeless veterans, for example — are having real challenges in terms of receiving the same level of giving that they were getting pre-COVID.

• (1650)

Has there been any consideration given from the government to increase the tax credit to those who donate to those types of projects, in particular, capital expenditures, not-for-profit, to try to entice further giving and, at the same time, increase the level of construction, as we've seen in some states in the United States about 15 or 20 years ago under homelessness initiatives?

Mr. Morneau: Thank you. We have been trying to use approaches that consider the direct impact of COVID-19 and supports that would be related to that challenge.

You've seen us with wage subsidies to use the reduction in revenue as the proxy for how we decide to deliver to organizations across the country facing those challenges, including not-for-profits.

We have been working not to use the tax code, which is very broad-based, for what might be specific challenges for people for tax code changes. That's not our first approach in trying to address these issues.

I'm not saying we're taking any idea off the table, but our direct support is very much about trying to directly support people and then directly support organizations so that they can maintain employment of those people.

As for the longer term issues and challenges, we're hopeful that we can address those, including through the tax system, when we get into a state of more normal operations.

[Translation]

Senator Galvez: Thank you very much, Minister Duclos and Minister Morneau, for being here to answer our questions.

[English]

My question is about maximum transparency, as you mentioned in your introduction, Mr. Duclos. We have these action plan programs of open government and, according to your website commitments, user-friendly open government, financial transparency, accountability, corporate transparency, and digital government and services are supposed to be respected.

Bill C-13 enabled the government to increase the liability amount for the Canada Account, and therefore, on June 5, it was published in the *Canada Gazette* that the amount of the total liabilities and obligations for the Canada Account shall at no time exceed \$93 billion.

This is an incredible amount of money for an account that, first, risks taxpayers' money, and second, that the Auditor General, despite our commitments to transparency, could not access information on as per their report in 2014.

[Senator White]

The government has chosen to exclude, in Part I, page 2 of the supplementary estimates, the payments to Export Development Canada on the basis that their programs do not receive payments from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. However, the Canada Account does receive payments from the CRF.

I'll read you an excerpt from the EDC, 2015-16:

The Government effectively assumes the associated financial risks for Canada Account transactions by providing all monies required for any transaction from the Consolidated Revenue Fund ("CRF").

We have heard ongoing criticism on accessibility and transparency of the data, including from the Auditor General in 2014 about the deficient disclosure practice of the Canada Account. Why has your government chosen to exclude these transactions from your estimates?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you very much, Senator Galvez. I'll reply briefly and will invite Minister Morneau or Mr. Purves, who is the expert in this room on financial accountability, to provide further details.

On the Auditor General, as I said earlier, we are absolutely making sure that as the crisis evolves, all agencies and departments understand that they have the responsibility to keep all the information about the process taken, actions and decisions being made so that the Auditor General receives the information she requires further on when it comes time to learn the lessons from this crisis.

When it comes to providing transparency of information, as I mentioned earlier, there are at least two important and fully accessible portals. The first one is the Open Government portal, which for the last few weeks has released almost 150 full and proactive disclosures of important files around COVID-19. There is also the Government of Canada InfoBase, which provides the level of information that you deserve to have on the various measures, including those covered by the estimates process.

The estimates don't include everything. There are aspects, for instance, of tax expenditures that are typically not in the estimates process. In fact, the supplementary estimates also include what we call "legislated funding," which comes from authorities that have been granted by Parliament, including the Senate, prior to these estimates having been built and then tabled.

I will end here and leave open the possibility for Minister Morneau and Mr. Purves to provide further information.

Mr. Morneau: I'm very satisfied with your answer.

Senator Galvez: Minister Morneau, last month the National Finance Committee heard from the Canada Revenue Agency, and they confirmed that they had more than 3,000 cases in front of the Tax Court of Canada and the Federal Court of Appeal for corporate tax evasion and had performed over \$14 billion in tax reassessments.

Canada's 2018-2020 National Action Plan on Open Government, which I mentioned before, includes a set of milestones that target corporate transparency. Given that one of the issues to be addressed as listed in the plan is tax evasion, have actions taken as part of this plan been successful in reducing instances of corporate tax evasion? How is this indicator being measured and followed up with?

Mr. Morneau: This has been a very important issue for us since we've come into government. Our approach in dealing with tax avoidance and tax evasion has been multifaceted. First, obviously, in terms of international issues, we've had to work with international colleagues. We've done most of the work through the OECD, looking at how we can have common reporting standards around the world, reporting of accounts from around the world so we can get transparency of information. We're also working on standards around what's called "base erosion and profit shifting," organizations that move their revenues and their profits to advantage their situation. We've worked hard to come up with common international standards that have been quite successful.

During the course of each one of our budgets, we also have significantly increased the funding to the Canada Revenue Agency. That was intended to give them the resources that they need to be able to examine and make sure that individuals and corporations are properly reporting on and held accountable for the taxes that they pay.

Finally, of course, that brings about the issue of the requirement for adequate judicial resources to deal with the challenges that come to the judiciary around the enforcement of those rules and those efforts. That is a continuing issue as well, and one that I know we were looking at in the context of the Budget 2020, which was delayed, unfortunately, for reasons that we all know about. But we intend to continue to look at all of these facets and to work internationally to make sure we have rules that work. That is challenging ongoing work, giving the adequate resources for the CRA and ensuring that we also have the judicial resources to follow up once we find people who are acting inappropriately.

Senator Galvez: Thank you.

[Translation]

Senator Miville-Dechêne: First, thank you for being here. I will start by asking a question on behalf of my colleague, Senator Pate, for you to answer, Minister.

[English]

How would the budgetary impact of "fraud" associated with the CERB, compared to the prevalence and monetary amount of fraud associated with other forms of COVID-19 economic support measures, including measures geared towards businesses for which these types of penalties were not considered?

• (1700)

[Translation]

The Chair: Minister, we understand that you have to leave. Thank you for coming.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[English]

Mr. Duclos: The first thing I would say is that the vast majority of Canadians are honest people.

The second thing I would say is that the vast majority of errors that were made, particularly with respect to CERB in the recent weeks, were made in good faith. That's partly because a number of Canadians, for very understandable reasons, didn't understand exactly how the new benefit would be provided and they asked, in some cases twice, by going through Service Canada and through the Canada Revenue Agency. Many of those mistakes made in good faith have been corrected. In fact, a large number of Canadians — we estimate around 200,000 — have already reimbursed their overpayments.

The third thing I would say is there will be instances of fraud, as there are in all programs, including business programs. We have full confidence that the public servants at Service Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency will do what they can, and what they must, to find those instances of fraud, correct them and apply the appropriate penalty, if necessary. That must be done in a manner that is adapted to individual circumstances, including individual business circumstances, and in a manner that both leads up to their responsibility and to the importance of maintaining confidence in the system.

Senator Seidman: Thank you for being with us this afternoon, Minister Duclos and Minister Morneau, who has sadly had to leave, I suppose. Thank you to your staff as well.

I did have some questions for Minister Morneau, so now you're going to be the recipient of all my questions, and I'll have to hope that you can answer them.

These estimates contain about \$40 million in voted appropriations for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, which includes funding for emergency COVID-19 research and innovation. The government's biweekly update to the other place notes, with respect to the CIHR funding announcement of April 23, that the program details are being finalized.

When does the government expect to confirm the program details?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you. Although Minister Morneau has left, Mr. Purves is with us. I don't see him, but I feel his reassuring presence in the back. He will be able to provide the important details.

At a high level, of course, we all understand the importance of funding researchers, through the CIHR in particular, in the context of a pandemic, which is having a huge impact on the health of thousands of Canadians, and also a significant impact upon our economy. Mr. Purves, are you still there?

Senator Seidman: Thank you so much, but before he begins, what I really want to know — and perhaps it is Mr. Purves who could answer — is when the government expects to confirm the program details. What is the timeline? This announcement was April 23.

Mr. Duclos: That's an excellent question. I could give you an answer, but I would prefer to give you the right answer, so I will ask my colleague, the Minister of Health, to get back to you with the information you correctly need and have asked for.

Senator Seidman: That's fine.

In that case, the estimates also include over \$400 million in voted spending to various agencies and departments, in relation to the National Medical Research Strategy for COVID-19. As government entities enter into agreements with companies on vaccine development — the National Research Council is working with a Chinese company, for example — how is the issue of proprietary rights being handled? What would the government own in this regard?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you for raising the absolute importance of proprietary rights, not only in our relationships with enterprises outside of Canada but also in the context of working with businesses within Canada.

The broad answer is that this has been top of mind of the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and Treasury Board. We've had serious discussions at the Treasury Board on making sure that what we invest is invested in a manner that yields the biggest, most important and most secure benefits for Canadians.

Senator Seidman: My next question concerns funding for ongoing science and medical research, unrelated to the subject of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of this pandemic, many research projects have been suspended; some are at risk for being imminently discontinued. There have been significant shortfalls in industry and philanthropy funding for these vital projects.

In response, the federal government announced \$450 million in funding to help Canada's academic research community. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research has also announced the reinstatement of their spring 2020 project grant competition, whose peer review process is currently ongoing.

While I recognize that important steps have been taken to support the research community, will this funding be enough to mitigate the major impact that COVID-19 has had on their work? Also, does the federal government plan to adopt any more measures to account for the disruption the research community has experienced?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you for making the link between the research community and the emergency through which we have been living.

Initially, we knew we would need to invest in the design, development, testing and production of tests, vaccines and treatments. We simultaneously put into place measures that the

Minister of Finance summarized recently on the emergency wage subsidy. Unfortunately, many of the research institutions you mentioned were not eligible for the emergency wage subsidy because they were associated with public administration.

But we did put in place, as you said, almost \$500 million of investments that mimic, in some sense, the emergency wage subsidy support that we provide to businesses overall. We mimic that for the health and academic research environment.

That being said, we also signal the importance of continuing that support, because it's a fragile support. It's easy to lose researchers who would be tempted to go abroad. We can't afford that in the current context, and we can't afford that to prepare for future pandemics.

Senator Seidman: Thank you.

If I might tackle a slightly different subject, across Canada there are a number of long-term care facilities that are outdated and in desperate need of renovation. These are facilities that contain wards with multiple beds in the same room, shared washrooms and bathing areas, and crowded dining halls. They have significantly contributed to the spread of COVID-19.

In their pre-budget submission this year, the Canadian Association for Long Term Care requested funding for the "construction, renovation and retrofit of 400 long-term care homes to meet current design standards and the needs of today's seniors, especially those living with dementia, by 2023."

Minister, does the federal government plan to use infrastructure funding to upgrade long-term care facilities across Canada? If yes, when can we expect these projects to begin?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you.

There are two quick elements to your important question. First, as we've learned in the last weeks, and something I've personally learned from my experience as a Quebec member of Parliament, is that the treatment of our seniors has been far below what they need and require to live in dignity. It's about dignity, safety and the health of our seniors. Despite all of the jurisdictional differences between provinces and territories, this is a lesson we need to talk openly about.

• (1710)

Second, as we move forward in continuing our investments in infrastructure, as you correctly alluded to, there are opportunities for the federal government to be both a partner and a leader, again in some jurisdictionally appropriate manner when it comes to building safer and healthy homes for seniors. One thing we have in mind, and Minister Hussen is working on, is the National Housing Strategy. That is a \$55-billion housing strategy that we have started to implement. There are obvious and important opportunities to link that type of funding with the support that provinces and territories will also want to provide in giving seniors a dignified life.

Senator Seidman: Again I talk about seniors, who have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as by the increase to their cost of living. Many have had to bear additional expenses, including grocery delivery fees, increases in prescription dispensing fees and transportation costs.

On May 12, the federal government announced a one-time, tax-free, top-up payment for seniors to help counteract these additional living expenses. Those who receive Old Age Security benefits will get an extra \$300, while those who receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement will receive \$200. While many have welcomed the OAS and GIS top-up, they have also voiced that these payments should be targeted to those most in need and recurring.

Minister, does the federal government plan to provide more financial relief to Canadian seniors, especially targeted funding to those seniors who really need it?

Mr. Duclos: You are looking at me with stern eyes.

The Chair: Yes, because the allotted 10 minutes is gone. We have to move to the next 10 minutes.

Senator McPhedran: I'd like to thank you, Minister Duclos and Minister Morneau and your officials, for joining us here today. I will share time to question you on behalf of Senator Mobina Jaffer regarding the measures your departments are taking or will take to deal with systemic racism, followed by my own question if time allows.

Let me use a little bit of this time to ask you, please, not to experience rude interruptions by a previous questioner as a reflection on the rest of us in the chamber today, and to express to you my regret the conduct that descended to that level.

Senator Jaffer begins:

I recognize that the Plus of the existing Gender Based Analysis is intended to represent race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability. While this recognition is commendable, I believe that an explicitly race-centric policy oversight is necessary to ensure that targeting racial injustice at the legislative level does not become another secondary consideration.

Consequently, and in light of the words of Prime Minister Trudeau, we should focus on dealing with our systemic racism problems in Canada through real actions on institutional levels.

Senator Jaffer then asks:

Are your departments considering implementing race-based analysis and if any action to fight systemic racism is under way, can you tell us what these actions are?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you, senator. Maybe I should start with the GBA+ comment that you made. It's all about giving everyone a fair chance in life. Let me give an example of the type of unequal opportunities that exist in Canada: Take two baby girls born on

the same day: one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous. The Indigenous baby girl will have a 10 time higher probability of being jailed once in her lifetime than the other baby girl.

That is a demonstration of the fact that there is no way to deny we have unequal opportunities in Canada. That's why those things that may seem technical, like a GBA+ analysis, are absolutely essential. We need to talk about things. The first thing we need to do before we tackle issues is to recognize that they exist. Once we recognize they exist, we can openly discuss why they exist and how to make sure they don't exist any longer.

To admit that systemic racism exists in Canada is the first step to correcting it. That's why this conversation is so important — to support subsequent actions that must be taken. Systemic racism is one of the reasons we have an inequality of opportunity in Canada and the reason an Indigenous baby girl doesn't have the same chance in life as a baby girl who is not.

Senator McPhedran: Minister Duclos, please share these questions with Minister Morneau as well.

Canadians must spend their savings or borrow more to make ends meet, but Canadians already carry among some of the highest consumer debt in the world. StatCan just reported that for every \$1 of disposable income an average Canadian held, they had \$1.77 in debt. This debt includes mortgage debt, credit card debt and line of credit debt.

Today, average big-bank CEO compensations come to around \$10.5 million per year. This is more than 200 times the per capita income of a Canadian.

Minister, the Prime Minister and Finance Minister both told Canadians back in April that banks need to "do more." Minister Duclos, what has the government actually accomplished to make the big banks deliver genuine, sustainable economic relief and, yes, to stop profiting from this pandemic? Because — and I'm truly sad to have to say this — I and the 90,000-plus other signers of the Democracy Watch petition that has been brought to your government's attention can find nothing of substance that the big six banks have done for Canadians during COVID-19 that will have a lasting, ameliorative impact.

Mr. Duclos: Thank you. This speaks to the joint responsibility that we all share in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. I agree that we — inclusive of everyone — all have something to do with maintaining the economic and social fabric of our society.

One of the first things we did at the beginning of the crisis was to ask banks, including credit unions, to provide a moratorium on the payment of capital and interest for six months, so until September 2020. We then worked with the banking sector to make sure this would apply in a more substantial manner for students.

We — when I say "we," it's the Minister of Finance — took a decisive role in working toward a decrease in some of the interest charges on credit cards. This said, these are all, as you say, relatively modest measures from the banking sector in the context of the big crisis. I will transmit your message to the Minister of Finance. I know he continues to work strongly and

effectively with the banking sector because, as you said, if we want to emerge stronger and united from this crisis, we all need to do our part.

Senator Miville-Dechêne: I will ask this question on behalf of Senator M. Deacon:

The government has nearly doubled the projected cost of the CERB, while at the same time it scaled back estimates for the wage subsidies. Many in Quebec and elsewhere have argued that the CERB provides a disincentive to work. The wage subsidy was intended to allow employers to keep their employees and pay them their wages.

Has there been any research into why the take-up on this was so small? Will it be retooled and tried again?

• (1720)

Mr. Duclos: Thank you. First on CERB, yes, 8 million Canadians have received at least one payment. On the wage subsidy, approximately 2.7 million workers have received support through the emergency wage subsidy.

It is true that it started relatively slowly. There are two important reasons for that. First, this was a new program for businesses, and it took time for them to get to know the nature of that program, and to be reassured when it came to understanding if they would be eligible for the program.

The second issue was also about uncertainty on the part of the businesses themselves. Many of the businesses, before deciding to rehire or keep their workers, obviously had in mind whether their short-term and long-term economic future was really in a condition to support their participation in the wage subsidy.

It did take a little while. That being said, there has been an acceleration that we've seen in the take-up of the wage subsidy. We expected this from the start. We're pleased to now be able to observe it from a more evidence-based perspective. As Minister Morneau said a moment ago, there will be further changes and flexibility that he will soon announce, on how we believe the wage subsidy program to be important and effective in driving the economic recovery.

[Translation]

Senator Miville-Dechêne: I've spoken with Canadian footwear manufacturers who fear that their clients, retailers, will face a liquidity crisis in the fall, which means they won't be able to purchase or pay for their merchandise. It's extremely risky for manufacturers to sell to retailers on credit. Have you considered any kind of targeted government assistance to ensure that the supply chain doesn't collapse?

Mr. Duclos: I love it when someone talks about the importance of maintaining the supply chain. I know I'm using up a lot of time, and I can see the Chair giving me a stern look, but I'm going to tell you a little story anyway.

Towards the beginning of the crisis, I was on a plane that was flying through a ferocious storm. We needed to land while keeping the passengers and crew safe and the plane intact. The plane represents small businesses, who also represent the plane's

[Mr. Duclos]

engine, while large companies are often up front in the cockpit, flying the plane. The wings represent supply chains. Without supply chains, there are no wings to restart the economy. We needed to implement easily accessible programs with broad applicability, as Minister Morneau put it earlier, to preserve the integrity of this supply chain. We've been quite successful so far, to put it modestly, but you're right to say that there will be more challenges ahead that we'll have to confront.

[English]

Senator Patterson: With all due respect, Minister Duclos, I have come all the way from Nunavut to ask questions of Minister Morneau, within his authority. What I will do with my few minutes here is get those questions on the record. I spoke to his official about getting written answers. I may proceed in that way.

My first question is a question that Senator Plett graciously asked Minister Morneau on April 11, when he was here, about the exclusion of non-revenue-generating industries from the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program. Minister Morneau said, "If there are specific sectoral issues that we need to consider, we will be looking at those . . ." It's several months later, and the issue has not been addressed, as far as I know.

In the mining industry in particular, junior mining and exploration companies do not qualify for the existing supports to small- and medium-sized businesses. They don't qualify for the wage subsidy program because they are non-revenue-generating — they raise their revenues from flow-through shares and investors — nor have they qualified for funding from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency.

Organizations such as PDAC have lobbied your government for support. I know for a fact that this concern was reiterated in a joint submission to the wage subsidy which was signed by Senators Duncan, Anderson and Bovey from the three territories and the Churchill region, and myself.

Will your government allow for non-revenue-generating businesses, including junior mining and exploration companies, to apply for the wage subsidy?

My second question is about the northern tourism industry. It's facing a significant threat because, as you know, COVID-19 has led to the creation of strict travel restrictions, especially in the North, to protect and insulate vulnerable populations. While, of course, we applaud measures like this and, I'm happy to say, our territory of Nunavut is COVID-free as a result, the unfortunate side of this has been the struggle of many industries, including the northern tourist industry and hotels in particular. There remains no certainty when normal operations, even with enhanced safety precautions, will resume in the North.

In a brief to Minister Joly, signed by representatives of all territorial hoteliers in Yukon, N.W.T. and Nunavut, it was made clear that as a result of this uncertainty, the travel industry businesses will have even greater challenges to fund negative cash flow in 2020.

Will your government provide bridge funding to support hotels north of 60? They've asked for a subsidy for vacant rooms until the pandemic restrictions are lifted. They haven't been able to get relief from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency to date.

My third question is about airlines, which of course you understand are a lifeline in the North. I want to thank the government for the support that has been given to northern airlines, but that support is to end at the end of June. Until pre-pandemic service levels can be achieved, further support is required.

Will your government extend the Northern Essential Air Services Relief Program beyond June for the entire course of the pandemic?

There is also a request presented by the Northern Air Transportation Association to temporarily suspend merger undertakings imposed on Canadian North last year — they are no longer relevant during this pandemic — until the resumption of regular service levels.

Finally, there was a request from Mr. Joseph Sparling of the Northern Air Transportation Association to the Standing Committee on National Finance, that the minister use his good office to explore gateway route traffic as another effective tool to provide financial relief to these struggling northern airlines.

Those are my three questions on the record. I thank Minister Duclos for listening, and I thank you for responding.

Senator Wells: I have a question for Minister Duclos. Thank you again for coming in and for the work you are doing.

Minister, the supplementary estimates include a voted appropriation of \$203.5 million for funding the government pay system. Minister Anand confirmed this is for stabilizing the Phoenix pay system. You would be familiar with that.

Minister, why is this appropriation not in the Main Estimates? It seems impossible for me to believe the government didn't know they were having problems, obviously, with the pay system. I believe all of Canada knows that. Why did the government not anticipate an expenditure of over \$200 million in the supplementary estimates as opposed to the Main Estimates?

Mr. Duclos: Thank you for the question. I will start by providing the broad context for those sorts of investments.

We all recognize it's totally unacceptable for the public service or any workers in Canada not to be paid for the services that they give to their employers. It certainly isn't acceptable for the Government of Canada not to appropriately pay its workers.

• (1730)

We are making important progress when it comes to solving the still-too-large number of workers who have yet to receive the exact payment and on time. That's why those investments are so crucial.

The probable reason that wasn't in the Main Estimates is there was probably insufficient information at the time, essentially prior to February, or January more likely, for that item to appear in the Main Estimates. If you want to be reassured, I can ask Mr. Purves to confirm that this is the case.

Senator Wells: I would like to be reassured. I think all Canadians would like to be reassured, so I will listen to Mr. Purves's response.

Is it expected that there will be further requests in future supplementary estimates?

Mr. Duclos: You're asking if there will be further requests for Phoenix? It's very likely that there will be further work on Phoenix because, as I said briefly, there is still work to do. Although over the last few months there has been a significant decrease in the number of unresolved files, there are still too many of them. We absolutely need to give every public servant the level of service that they not only need but they deserve. So there will most likely be further investments, however, as I said, we are entering into a stage where we can be more confident that we will finally settle this problem and open up the world of opportunities in a better and more significant manner.

Mr. Purves: Minister Duclos is absolutely correct that typically there are times when there are costs that are not developed in time for Main Estimates. This is why we have the supplementary estimates. There are other items in the supplementary estimates like that.

The funding, the 203, is going towards eliminating the backlog and stabilizing the pay system by sustaining employee capacity to be able to do this, increasing processing rates and increasing the automation of as many transactions as possible through system enhancements.

Perhaps just a couple of quick numbers. As of May 27, the number of transactions waiting to be processed at the pay centre has decreased by 49% since the peak of January 2018, representing a reduction of 310,000 transactions, from 633,000 to 323,000.

Senator Coyle: Thank you for being with us, minister, and thank you for your work.

My question is a question from Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard, a fellow Nova Scotian:

In Nova Scotia the non-profit sector employs 20,000 people in the province, 68% of whom are women. In April 2020, the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia conducted a survey of non-profits which showed the precarity of non-profits including increased demand for services for at-risk community members while experiencing significant difficulty operating on insufficient funding. If any non-profit organizations are forced to close due to irreparable losses as a result of COVID-19, the closures will disproportionately impact the employment and livelihoods of women, while simultaneously detrimentally impacting vulnerable populations served . . .

We know that some non-profits have been receiving the wage subsidy program, are participating in that, but we want to know what other specific supports the government will offer to non-profit organizations post-pandemic to help these organizations survive the financial hardships caused by this pandemic.

Mr. Duclos: Thank you so much. You're correct in alluding to the fact that vulnerabilities prior to a crisis become extreme during a crisis. The problem is that once these vulnerabilities are enhanced or augmented, then it becomes even more difficult for people and organizations to emerge from the crisis.

We have been very mindful to preserve and help people, and particularly vulnerable Canadians. We need the community sector and the non-profit sector. That's why the wage subsidy was immediately applicable to non-profits. We also created an emergency community fund of \$350 million that was delivered to help community organizations, and another \$150 million investment at the very start of the crisis to help provide support to women's organizations. Unfortunately it's the case that in crises of this type, women suffer a disproportionate impact of the tragedy. Finally, another \$110 million was quickly announced initially to provide support to fight homelessness.

In addition to that, as you know, the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion have been working very hard together so that not only do we provide this support during the crisis, but so we're also there to help after the crisis.

I will certainly share your important thoughts with them and ask them perhaps to connect directly with you.

[Translation]

Senator Massicotte: Thank you for joining us today. I want to congratulate your government for taking such swift, skilful action. It was crucial for our economy and our communities. The government made sure to respond quickly, and all the measures have met with resounding, well-deserved success.

[English]

I wanted to get a sense from you, from a fiscal big picture point of view. Not the details. I know the details will come out in the next two weeks. There has been a report from Bennett Jones, with David Dodge as the principal author, saying plan A, if things work well and we get recovery from a lot of the jobs, our debt level will go up but it's manageable.

He also alerts us to say that if we have a second strike of the coronavirus, then our country will be challenged in raising the money. Our country will be challenged in making sure it's fair for all Canadians. This will be an ultimate test.

Could you comment on that? I know we're all talking about the future, but I think Canadians should be aware of the consequences of another strike of the coronavirus and what it could mean to all of us.

The Chair: You have 30 seconds to answer that question.

Mr. Duclos: Thirty seconds. My answer will necessarily be unfair. I will just say thank you for that. The key word here is "prudence." We need to be very prudent to avoid a second wave. We all have a responsibility in this. Following the health guidelines is absolutely key if we want to protect, as I said, our economy, our society, vulnerable Canadians and avoid living through another wave of the pandemic.

The Chair: Honourable senators, the committee has been sitting for 155 minutes. In conformity with the order of the Senate of earlier this day, I am obliged to interrupt proceedings so that the committee can report to the Senate.

Ministers, on behalf of all senators, thank you for joining us today to assist us with our work. I would also like to thank your officials.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Chair: Honourable senators, is it agreed that the Committee rise and that I report to the Senate that the witnesses have been heard?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the sitting of the Senate is resumed.

• (1740)

[Translation]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette (The Hon. the Acting Speaker): Honourable senators, the Committee of the Whole, which was authorized by the Senate to examine the expenditures set out in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021, and in the Supplementary Estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021, reports that it has heard from the said witnesses.

[English]

ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS

THIRD REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Patterson, seconded by the Honourable Senator Seidman, for the adoption of the third report of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, entitled *Developments and actions in relation to the committee's fifth report regarding Senator Beyak*, presented in the Senate on June 22, 2020.

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: As I was saying, and I was almost finished in speaking to this third report. If the Senate adopts the committee's report, it will be up to Senator Beyak to apply her learning to her work as a senator. The committee hopes and expects that Senator Beyak is now better equipped for approaching her duties as a senator and her personal beliefs with awareness, recognition and understanding of the reality of racism toward Indigenous peoples in Canada.

The committee also takes this opportunity to express its profound gratitude to Dr. Jonathan Black-Branch, Dean of the Faculty of Law of the University of Manitoba, and the exceptional team of experts he put together to deliver the educational program to Senator Beyak. Each of the educators had a wealth of expertise and experience in Indigenous matters, which made them uniquely qualified to provide this kind of training.

The committee was also impressed by the quality of the educational program, which was designed specifically for Senator Beyak, and how promptly it was assembled, despite the ongoing pandemic and its attendant challenges.

Thank you, honourable senators.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

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

Is that agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

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

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 4-13(3), I would like to inform the Senate that as we proceed with Government Business, the Senate

will address the items in the following order: consideration of the third report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, followed by all remaining items in the order that they appear on the Order Paper.

THE ESTIMATES, 2020-21

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (A)—THIRD REPORT OF NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the third report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, entitled *Supplementary Estimates (A), 2020-21*, tabled in the Senate on June 22, 2020.

Hon. Peter Harder moved the adoption of the report.

He said: Honourable senators, I will be very brief because we have had two days of very significant discussion about this report.

I would like to say a few things on behalf of the committee. First, I commend Senator Mockler for the exceptional job he's done as chair of this committee. The supps came to us as we were engaged in the already-authorized COVID review, so the supps were very much bound in the material and the thinking that we had already engaged in. The committee also adjusted to the Zoom approach to conduct the meetings.

We've had some challenges with technology but don't we always?

The committees have otherwise been very successful and have heard from a wide range of officials on this matter, as well as others.

We would also like to thank the clerk, Maxime Fortin, and her team, for the hard work behind the scenes, the Library of Parliament employees, the interpreters, the translation teams, the technicians — all these professionals you see much more in action when you are vulnerable to the technology and to the appropriate support. So we are grateful for that.

I won't discuss the Estimates in detail, as I've said, but I would like to draw attention of the chamber to a couple of the observations made by the committee. I want to share them with you because they highlight and are demonstrative of the collegial approach that the committee has taken to the work it has undertaken.

These observations can be found in the report, of course, but I highlight a couple for your attention.

First, with respect to the Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, it is requesting additional funding and authorities of \$628.4 million, including \$192 million for emergency research and innovation measures, and \$375.6 million for national medical research strategy. These funds will be used to support Canadian companies' large-scale and later-stage research programs in developing vaccines and therapies, and to enhance clinical trials and biomanufacturing capacity in Canada.

Our committee appreciates ISED's efforts in supporting Canadian research and manufacturing capacity, especially given the risk of overreliance on overseas medical supplies, and will be monitoring the progress and distribution of these funds for and on behalf of Senate colleagues.

With regard to PHAC, the Public Health Agency of Canada, it is requesting \$42.3 million to establish domestic production of personal protective equipment and to support Canada's medical countermeasures response in collaboration with ISED. Again, officials from PHAC told the committee that, currently, every country is heavily dependent on overseas manufacturing. However, efforts are being made to move Canada toward a domestic production of PPE. Out of the \$42.3 million requested, \$37 million will be used for this effort. A number of Canadian companies have responded and retooled for the production of PPE. For the sake of transparency, the committee feels the government needs to periodically publish the details of its collaboration with private companies and report the distribution of these efforts across Canada.

Finally, with Indigenous Services Canada, it works in collaboration with partners to improve access to highly qualified services for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and works to support and empower Indigenous peoples to independently deliver services and address socio-economic conditions in their communities. The current health crisis demonstrates inequalities in access to health services and it has exposed vulnerability of Indigenous communities to the virus. Officials acknowledge that the pandemic had a significant impact on ISC's operations, including the suspension of some infrastructure investments due to the closure of communities. The committee reiterates that it believes it is imperative that ISC strengthen Indigenous health care capacity across Canada.

Finally, I should say that, in respect of the Department of National Defence, the committee is unanimous in believing that more senior people from the department, including the deputy minister, need to speak to the committee with respect to concerns on the public reporting of certain investments made in capital acquisitions.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank the people working for the departments and organizations who have been extremely agile in delivering services to Canadians with speed and quality. Canadians are working hard and struggling under very complex circumstances, and we appreciate the work that is being done. The new spending plans in these supplementary efforts will support people affected by the pandemic and maintain support for the economy and Canadians. Your committee commends this report for your adoption.

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

Hon. Senators: Question.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

• (1750)

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 2, 2020–21

THIRD READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate) moved third reading of Bill C-18, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

He said: Honourable senators, everything that I want to say on third reading debate I said on second reading debate, and we have heard more, so *ça suffit*. Thank you, Your Honour.

(On motion of Senator Coyle, debate adjourned.)

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 3, 2020–21

THIRD READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate) moved third reading of Bill C-19, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

He said: Honourable senators, upon reflection, I think I've said enough on this bill.

(On motion of Senator Coyle, debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of June 22, 2020, moved:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Thursday, June 25, 2020, at 1:30 p.m.

She said: Honourable senators, I move the motion standing in my name.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

CRIMINAL CODEBILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Joyal, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Cordy, for the second reading of Bill S-202, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy).

(On motion of Senator Cormier, debate adjourned.)

[English]

**CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867
PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT**BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—
DEBATE ADJOURNED

On Other Business, Senate Public Bills, Second Reading, Order No. 4, by the Honourable Terry M. Mercer:

Second reading of Bill S-205, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 and the Parliament of Canada Act (Speaker of the Senate).

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15, and Senator Mercer intends to speak to it.

Therefore, with leave of the Senate, I ask that consideration of this item be postponed until the next sitting of the Senate in Senator Mercer's name.

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

Hon Senators: Agreed.

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

**DEPARTMENT FOR WOMEN AND
GENDER EQUALITY ACT**BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator Francis, for the second reading of Bill S-209, An Act to Amend the Department for Women and Gender Equality Act.

Hon. Pierre J. Dalfond: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill S-209, An Act to Amend the Department for Women and Gender Equality Act on behalf of my colleague,

Senator Dyck. This will most likely be Senator Dyck's last speech in this chamber before her retirement in August, and I am honoured to have the opportunity to deliver it for her.

All the mistakes will be those of the messenger, but the content is really Senator Dyck's. The speech is the following:

Let me begin by stating that I support the intention of Bill S-209, which is to examine the potential effects of government and other bills on women, particularly Indigenous women and subsequently to report to Parliament.

Senator McCallum should be acknowledged for championing the issue of resource extraction and its association with higher rates of violence against women, in particular Indigenous women.

My first comments are in regard to the rationale and justification for Bill S-209. While an affirmative action for a particular group, such as women, can be proposed under the Charter, this requires evidence demonstrating the need. The sponsor of the bill did not, unfortunately, provide such data or evidence to justify the female focus of her bill.

The sponsor could have provided an example of a bill where such a female-centric focus, particularly for Indigenous women, has been justified and enacted, such as in Bill C-75: An Act to amend the criminal code. That bill was amended in May 2019 to include specific mention of women and in particular, Indigenous women, with respect to intimate partner violence and abuse in general relying on the work of the MMIW commission.

Honourable senators, there are also two fundamental problems with Bill S-209. Firstly, its operational clause, clause 5.1(1) lacks specific and clear language, and secondly, given the recent changes to the Justice Act in Bill C-51, there seems to be little or no need for Bill S-209.

On the first fundamental problem, the sponsor stated that "This bill would enshrine the requirement of the Minister for Women and Gender Equality to undertake a gender-based analysis (GBA) for every future piece of government legislation". However, the bill itself does not actually mention GBA. Clause 5.1(1) of Bill S-209 simply requires the Minister of the Women and Gender Equality department to table for every bill, "a statement that sets out potential effects of the bill on women, particularly Indigenous women." The bill does not specifically or clearly spell out how the Women and Gender Equality department is supposed to examine the potential effects of a bill on women.

Even if Bill S-209 was amended to include GBA or GBA+ in clause 5.1(1), there is another concern which should be noted.

It's the underlying assumption that GBA or GBA+ is effective, but according to a 2018 paper by Professor Vanessa McDonald (posted on the Can LII website), GBA+ analyses are largely a marginal phenomenon in a marginalized department.

Similarly, according to the 2015 Auditor General's report on Implementing GBA+, such analyses had been implemented in only 25 of 110 departments, so much work still has to be done to fully implement it into all departments. The Auditor General stated that Status of Women (as it was then named) needed additional resources to do the work. It is important to note that the Auditor General also stated that the effectiveness of GBA has not been assessed and its impact is unknown.

In other words, colleagues, there are significant weaknesses to GBA+ that make it worth questioning whether or not it should be enacted into law as a mandatory for all bills — government and non-government bills.

Furthermore, Professor MacDonald stated that there is a significant gap between the aspirations of GBA+ and its application. A key point she makes is that courts readily invalidate laws that infringe on rights (and S-3 would be a good example here), but on the other hand, courts rarely review the sufficiency of steps that the government takes to implement rights. Since GBA+ focuses on implementation of rights, legislation to require GBA+ may be less effective than Charter vetting.

• (1800)

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Dalphond, I apologize, but I do have to interrupt.

According to rule 3-3(1), I am obliged to leave the chair until 8 p.m. unless it's agreed that we not see the clock.

Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Dalphond, on debate.

Senator Dalphond: Thank you.

Honourable senators, that brings me to the second fundamental problem with Bill S-209, even if it were amended to include GBA+, which is this: It will be similar to but not as good as what is already being done by the Department of Justice in connection with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The requirement in Bill S-209 to analyze the impacts of legislation on women, particularly Indigenous women, would be similar to the current method of Charter vetting of government bills. The latter already accomplishes the same objective as Bill S-209 and thus the bill would be redundant, except for non-government bills.

The sponsor briefly mentioned Charter vetting by stating that “in section 4.1(1) of the Department of Justice Act that requires the minister to ascertain whether any of the provisions of new legislation are “inconsistent with the purposes and provisions of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms . . . “. That minister is also required to report any such inconsistency to the House of Commons at the first convenient opportunity.” But these provisions have been changed recently.

On December 13, 2019, amendments made to the Department of Justice Act under Bill C-51 came into effect, which made public Charter statements mandatory, and furthermore, instituted Charter analyses for all government bills, not just those from the Department of Justice. The sponsor may not have been aware of these important changes when drafting Bill S-209.

Let me explain why these changes are important. According to information on the Justice website, as of December 2019, a new duty has been imposed on the Minister of Justice to table a statement for all government bills that set out the potential ways in which a bill engages Charter-protected rights and freedoms. The Minister of Justice previously tabled Charter statements for bills that the minister introduced, and now the minister extends this duty to all government bills.

Quoting directly from the Justice website:

“The Statements are intended to inform Parliamentary debate as well as the public more generally about the implications of new legislation from a Charter perspective. The Statements would be accessible and as plain language as possible, with a view to promoting increased awareness and public discussion of the Charter. Charter Statements would provide legal information — not legal advice — to Parliament and would be tabled in the House of Parliament in which a bill is introduced.

The purpose of the proposed new duty is to enhance the protection of Charter rights by requiring the Minister of Justice to provide information systematically and proactively about the potential Charter implications of all government bills.”

Colleagues, let me emphasize that last sentence: This new duty is to enhance the protection of Charter rights — which, of course, includes women and Indigenous women.

Resuming the quotes from Justice:

“The Minister of Justice's Statements would become an additional resource available to support Parliament in its consideration of bills and would help foster informed debate of the key Charter issues raised by proposed legislation. This would encourage ongoing consideration and discussion by Parliamentarians and the public of the shared Canadian values embodied in the Charter, including respect for the inherent dignity of every human being, freedom, democracy,

equality, inclusion, and respect for diverse cultural, religious and group identities. It would also demonstrate a firm commitment to openness and transparency.”

Colleagues, there were 25 Charter statements posted by the minister on the Department of Justice website in the last parliamentary session, and on March 8 there were five posted for this session.

From the reports that I read, it is apparent that the current method of applying a Charter analysis to all government bills and utilizing a methodology that is oriented to upholding and implementation of Charter rights is more likely to create an improvement in equality for targeted groups than the previous methodology of Charter vetting that was oriented to avoiding court challenges due to perceived violation of Charter rights. Furthermore, the current approach to Charter analysis of government bills would also be more likely to result in greater equality results than the approach envisioned in Bill S-209 which, as stated by Senator McCallum, “. . . would flag any potential adverse impacts of the bill on women, particularly Indigenous women.”

Thus, it could be argued that what is being proposed in Bill S-209 is redundant because its intention has already been implemented by the amendments in Bill C-51. Through the latter bill, the Minister of Justice is required to table a statement that sets out potential effects of government bills on the rights and freedoms that are guaranteed by our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and this would, of course, include women and Indigenous women. Under Bill S-209, the Minister of Women and Gender Equality must table a statement that sets out the potential effects of all bills on women, in particular Indigenous women — a more limited scope of application that would exclude other groups protected by the Charter, such as those with mental or physical disabilities.

In summary, though the intention of Bill S-209 to analyze the impact of all legislation on women, in particular, Indigenous women, is laudable, it does not actually implement GBA of all bills as stated by the sponsor. Furthermore, even if Bill S-209 were amended to achieve this goal, it would be mostly redundant.

In addition, if the bill passed it would create a need for additional resources by the Department of Women and Gender Equality, the responsible authority. Is that legitimate for a Senate public bill?

Finally, and most importantly, the recent amendments through the Department of Justice Act regarding Charter analyses and Charter statements accomplish the same objective as Bill S-209, but with a methodology that is thought to be more effective in advancing women’s equality. So it may be concluded that there really isn’t any need for Bill S-209, that it is redundant except in the case of non-government bills. If it is determined that non-government bills must also undergo a Charter analysis, the Department of Justice Act could be amended to do so.

For these reasons, though the intention of Bill S-209 is laudable, I am unable to support it. Due to its fundamental shortcomings, it is questionable whether it should be sent to committee for study.

Thank you. *Kinanaskomitin*.

(On motion of Senator Mégie, debate adjourned.)

• (1810)

ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS

SECOND REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Patterson, seconded by the Honourable Senator Seidman, for the adoption of the second report of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, entitled *Consideration of an inquiry report of the Senate Ethics Officer*, presented in the Senate on June 18, 2020.

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

Is that agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

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

MOTION CONCERNING FORMER SENATOR DON MEREDITH— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Joyal, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Day:

That, in order to preserve the authority, dignity and reputation of the Senate of Canada, and in light of the following reports from the First Session of the Forty-second Parliament:

1. the Senate Ethics Officer’s *Inquiry Report under the Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators concerning [then] Senator Don Meredith*, dated March 9, 2017;
2. the Second Report of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators presented on May 7, 2017;

3. the Senate Ethics Officer's *Inquiry Report under the Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators concerning former Senator Don Meredith*, dated June 28, 2019; and
4. the Sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators tabled on July 29, 2019;

the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators be authorized to examine and report on the advisability of adopting the following motion:

That the Senate call on the Prime Minister to recommend to Her Excellency the Governor General that former senator Don Meredith be excluded from the application of section 6 of the Table of Titles to be used in Canada, and no longer entitled to the style of "Honourable", and that former senator Meredith no longer receive any precedence or status that would normally be accorded a former senator.;

That in conducting its examination of this question, the committee afford former Senator Meredith the opportunity to be heard by the committee;

That notwithstanding the provisions of rule 12-28(1), the committee be empowered to meet in public for the purposes of this study if it accepts a request from former Senator Meredith to that effect; and

That the committee present its final report no later than January 31, 2020.

(On motion of Senator Coyle, debate adjourned.)

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE BODY OF ISSUES KNOWN AS "INTELLIGENCE TO EVIDENCE"—
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Gold, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Woo:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence be authorized to examine and report on the body of issues known as "intelligence to evidence", when and if the committee is formed; and

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

(On motion of Senator Plett, debate adjourned.)

THE SENATE

MOTION TO CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPOSE
SANCTIONS AGAINST CHINESE AND/OR HONG KONG OFFICIALS—
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Housakos, seconded by the Honourable Senator Ngo:

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to impose sanctions against Chinese and/or Hong Kong officials, pursuant to the *Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law)*, in light of the violation of human rights, of the principles of fundamental justice and of the rule of law in relation to the ongoing protests in Hong Kong and to the systematic persecution of minority Muslims in China.

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, I would like to be on the record to speak to Senator Housakos' motion.

A few months ago, I spoke to my own inquiry on the human rights abuses suffered by pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong at the hands of the Hong Kong police with the backing of the Beijing regime. At that time, I did not plan to rise again, but times have changed.

Senators, like you, I believe in thoughtful diplomacy and constructive dialogue on issues and common concerns among nations. Today I stand to support the motion of my colleague and add my voice to the call for stronger actions by Canada in response to China's step-by-step destruction of democracy in Hong Kong and the disregard of human rights and life across the country, and especially for minority Muslims, the Uighurs. I covered the story of the Uighurs back in the late 1980s and 1990s; I was in that province and you could see then the systematic approach by the Beijing government in what was taking place with the Muslim minority in that region of China.

Senator Housakos's motion says that the Senate will call upon the Government of Canada to impose sanctions against Chinese or Hong Kong officials pursuant to the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law) in light of the violation of human rights of the principles of fundamental justice and of the rule of law in relation to the ongoing protests in Hong Kong, and to the systematic persecution of minority Muslims in China.

Let me reflect on what has upset me about China's actions and abuses in only the last number of weeks. Earlier this month, China banned the vigil organized for victims of the Tiananmen Square massacre in June 1989. The Chinese government authorities banned the peaceful memorial under the cloak of the coronavirus security laws enforced by the Hong Kong police force. Still, thousands of brave Hong Kongers stood up and lit candles all across Hong Kong in memory of what took place in Tiananmen and held a vigil. They have a right to do that, and I sincerely hope they'll have the right to do that in years to come.

As we know, China has shamefully never acknowledged the victims of the massacre even once in the last 31 years. Then, while other countries are understandably distracted by the health issues within their own borders, the pandemic has allowed China to reach its tentacles further into Hong Kong's administration. They are ignoring the "one country, two systems" international agreement and they aren't looking back.

I recently participated in a webinar with Senator Ngo, Senator Housakos and the Honourable David Kilgour, and young democratic leaders in Hong Kong Watch to mark the one-year anniversary since protests erupted in Hong Kong over the proposal of unlawful extradition legislation. This proposed law would have allowed for the extradition of citizens to mainland China where the courts are under the control of the communist regime, rather than a more democratic system in Hong Kong.

After much international attention and months of protests and uproar, the law was reluctantly revoked, but stability has certainly not returned. Hong Kongers are now faced with a draconian security law. Through it all, as we've witnessed while we watched television and read, hundreds of innocent people, young people particularly, were beaten and arrested. Some still sit in a maximum security prison for their participation in the pro-democracy demonstrations. In fact, Beijing, as I mentioned concerning the Tiananmen vigil, has used the COVID-19 crisis to reinforce restrictions on movements and gatherings in recent months.

The Hong Kong people, like you and me — people who believe in democracy — should not have to fear, suffer or die to live in a state with democratic peace and with human rights and freedoms. No one should.

China's abuses do not stop there. I know we are all horrified by the devastating human rights abuses by the Chinese government on the Uighur minority who live in China's Xinjiang region. They are continually being abused, harassed and arbitrarily arrested. They are not free to practice their religion or customs, their movements and phone calls are monitored and family members are threatened. And it gets worse: of those arrested, more than 1 million Uighurs are in internment camps in Xinjiang. These are so-called re-education camps, and they are an attempt by the regime to fully control every citizen of its country. They are trying to wipe out a culture, a religion and its people in northwestern China.

We have learned of these inhumane practices from Uighurs who have been able to escape from China, although it seems they will never really be free, not completely. This is a statement from Amnesty International:

Uyghurs living overseas are suffering from harassment and intimidation by the Chinese authorities. Around 400 people have told us their stories, recounting intrusive surveillance, intimidating phone calls and even death threats. Their family members in China are targeted to suppress their activism abroad.

• (1820)

These are very serious concerns. These actions by the Beijing government provide a compelling reason, in my view, to use the Magnitsky Law. The Magnitsky Law allows the Canadian government to seize assets in Canada belonging to individuals known to have engaged in gross violations of human rights or corruption, bars these individuals from the country and prohibits Canadians from doing business with them.

I want to invoke a few words from two learned Canadians who are experts on both the legal and, of course, human rights aspects.

One is Errol Mendes, a University of Ottawa law professor and human rights expert. He talks about the Magnitsky Law, saying, "This is the least we can do," because he believes that, *vis-à-vis* the Uighurs in China, it's a massive crime against humanity. He understands, as I think we all understand when dealing with China, that:

It will still no doubt attract even more repercussions from China, but it's a price we have to pay if we believe in where we stand since the Second World War — that we cannot let it happen again.

Recently, we have seen words from Irwin Cotler, a former colleague in the other place and, of course, an international human rights lawyer who has stood up for Nelson Mandela and many others in Russia who believe in human rights. Of course, he has said we should invoke the Magnitsky Law when it comes to China in dealing with the cover-up of the coronavirus. It's very serious. He believes it, and he has said it. It has to do with the idea that, for five or six days, the world did not know what took place in China.

Mr. Cotler has said:

If Chinese leaders do not hold themselves accountable . . . at least we in Canada should be imposing visa bans, asset seizures and the like.

Having lived in China, having worked in government, having understood some of the things that happen behind the scenes, thinking of the two Michaels tonight and having listened to Michael Kovrig's wife last night on CBC — what she is saying is compelling — I'm sensitive to the idea of how we deal with China.

However, I think somewhere along the line there has to be more than just saying we're very disappointed. I have great respect for the Prime Minister and the foreign minister. I understand, having worked in government, what government is going through. Somewhere along the line, we have to stand up to the bully. In my view, this is the time to stand up and use different forms of action, or at least contemplate using them, talking about them publicly and not shying away.

We have an important role to play in the Senate in terms of what takes place at our borders, when it comes to the two Michaels and the student who came to see me, who now sits in a

Hong Kong prison. He came to see other senators. His name is Edward Leung. He spoke about freedom and human rights, and where does he end up? In a Hong Kong jail.

I think we have the right to talk about those people and what they stand for. I can say anything I want, inside or outside the chamber, and I don't think somebody will pick me up and say, "I'm going to put you in jail for what you believe in."

If we don't stand up, who will stand up for what takes place in China — to the Uighurs, the Tibetans, the people of Hong Kong and the young students who are fighting the good fight? I feel there is an opportunity for senators to discuss the Magnitsky Law and to delve into the minutiae of it. It's a lever that Canada has; it's there. It has been used against officials in Russia, Venezuela, South Sudan and other places in the world.

As I said, I know the government has raised the human rights issue at every opportunity, but it doesn't seem to be working. China has shown that it will not listen to reason or to allies. It is playing games with people's freedoms and precious lives. Beijing needs to be held accountable for the abuses it knowingly inflicts on innocent people. We have seen and heard enough; and, most important, we know enough to demand that these abuses stop, or Canada will act.

I've always said that I'm only one voice here, but I have a lived experience. I remember once an official in China telling me that my news stories hurt the feelings of the Chinese people. I said, "I love the Chinese people. I just have a problem with your government, the way it treats its own people."

I've always wanted to have a debate with the Chinese ambassador and others about the way we talk here. Once when I was being wined and dined as a senator, I said, "Could I go back to China and go on the equivalent of CTV in Canada?" It was called China Central Television, or CCTV. I said, "Could I go on your television program and say what I witnessed in Tiananmen Square in 1989?" We have had that discussion here. I've had the discussion in the Chinese embassy here. Let me do that, and then I'll be satisfied that China is an open and free place where people can be heard and say what they want, without fear.

In closing, I know that some senators have a difficult time in supporting Senator Housakos's motion, but I feel it's another piece of leverage that Canada could use, and perhaps should use. I want to thank Senator Housakos for bringing this motion to the Senate, and I hope other senators will consider it. Thank you.

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: Honourable senators, as reminded by Senator Munson, protests in Hong Kong have been ongoing since June 2019, when over 1 million people rallied against an extradition bill that would allow criminal suspects to be extradited to other jurisdictions, most likely China.

The Hong Kong government temporarily withdrew the extradition bill, but Chinese suppression of fundamental human rights and freedoms within the region is ongoing. While protesters were partially vindicated with the withdrawal of the extradition bill, they still have four key demands that have yet to be satisfied.

[Senator Munson]

First, there must be an investigation into alleged police brutality and misconduct; second, all those arrested during the protests must be released; third, the official characterization of the protests as "riots" must end; and fourth, universal suffrage must be implemented.

Just months ago, the U.S. Department of State decertified Hong Kong for the purposes of the United States-Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992. Hong Kong's decertification by the United States reflects the Hong Kong government's failure in upholding human rights and the rule of law.

Hong Kong protesters suffered significant human rights abuses, including, to quote from a report, "police brutality against protesters and persons in custody; arbitrary arrest; substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association; and restrictions on political participation." Despite this, the Hong Kong government has refused calls, including from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, for a special inquiry into the alleged police brutality.

Violence has continued against protesters and police have targeted pro-democracy leaders under the pretense of their involvement in "unlawful assemblies." Well over 8,000 protesters have been arrested in the last year.

China has also engaged in suppression of human rights observers. Five human rights observers were arrested while working at assemblies in Hong Kong in November 2019 and January of this year. The observers were stripped of their clothing, all personal belongings were taken and observer cards and recording devices were taken. At the time of their respective arrests, all five of the observers were wearing clothing and ID cards that clearly identified their role and the organizations for which they were working. All of them were conducting impartial and independent work and at no time did they obstruct police operations.

• (1830)

In addition, during the two separate incidents, each of the five observers was subjected to verbal abuse from police officers, specifically in relation to their role as human rights observers.

China is now taking the extraordinary step of ignoring the requirements of the internationally negotiated and agreed upon basic law to unilaterally implement an oppressive Hong Kong national security law that would classify the exercising of many basic freedoms as subversion.

Hong Kong people will now have to consider arrests and harsh sentences for protesting, speaking out, running for office and other freedoms they have long enjoyed and struggled peacefully to defend.

The law will also allow China to establish a presence in Hong Kong by their national security and intelligence organizations.

Chief Executive Carrie Lam has already indicated that she will comply fully with China's imposition of the law on Hong Kong, despite its implications for Hong Kong's level of autonomy under the "one country, two systems" arrangement promised in the basic law.

Colleagues, I had the honour of meeting with Bill Browder at a conference in Berlin seven years ago to discuss his proposed Magnitsky law, then before the European Parliament. When I came to the Senate, I was so proud of our now-retired colleague Senator Raynell Andreychuk when she brought the Magnitsky Law to this chamber and we were able as senators to contribute to the Canadian version of this remedy for human rights violations.

Let me just tell you a little bit about Sergei Magnitsky. He was Bill Browder's lawyer in Russia who was imprisoned after uncovering a massive tax fraud scheme implicating numerous Russian government officials. In 2008, Mr. Magnitsky was put in jail and subsequently denied adequate medical treatment. In early November 2009, Mr. Magnitsky was beaten so severely that it caused his death. He had filed over 400 complaints to the prison in which he was held, creating a substantive record of his mistreatment. Despite this record, none of the officials responsible for his abuse and death were held accountable in Russia. Following his death, his colleague, client and friend Bill Browder worked very hard until the United States passed the Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act in 2012.

Canada's Magnitsky Act was introduced in this chamber in October 2016 by Senator Raynell Andreychuk. It passed the House of Commons with all parties voting in favour, coming into force just under a year from its first reading in the Senate — a rapid process that many of us still hope for. The act gives the Government of Canada the ability to freeze access to Canadian property owned by foreign nationals or entities that are responsible for or complicit in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights. Canada's Magnitsky Act gives our government the power to prohibit such actors from making any financial transactions in Canada, further limiting their ability to use Canada to store and hide their wealth, some which is gained from violating the rights of others.

Here are some examples of how we have already used the Magnitsky Law in Canada. In early November 2017, just two weeks after the law came into force, Canada sanctioned 52 human rights abusers from Russia and Venezuela, stopping them from using the Canadian banking and property systems. In November 2018, Canada sanctioned 17 Saudi nationals who were responsible for or complicit in the brutal torture and death of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi. I concur with Senator Munson, Senator Housakos and Senator Ngo: It's time we swung the spotlight onto the astonishing levels of human rights violations by China against millions of people who are defenseless against state-sanctioned violence and force, largely hidden from the world.

According to Human Rights Watch, since 2015, it has been estimated that over a million Muslim minorities have been detained in over 85 camps located in China. The Chinese

government initially denied the existence of these camps, but after pictures of construction of these camps were exposed, they claimed that they were merely re-education centres.

In early March of this year, I travelled to Calgary at the invitation of Dr. Fozia Alvi, well-known for her work in the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh, where she invited families of detained Uighurs who are now Canadians to raise the alarm about COVID-19 in the encampments and prison of China. I moderated their press conference. It was attended by advocacy organizations, members of families and six doctors from Calgary who are particularly concerned about what was going to happen as a result of COVID-19 in the overcrowded conditions of the prisons and encampments of China.

A recent report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute asserts that over 80,000 Muslim minorities in China have been moved to various areas around the country to do "forced, hard labour" in factories that create products for companies like Nike, Samsung and Apple, among others.

Additionally, the China Tribunal, an independent judicial investigation based in England, conducted thorough research into forced organ transplantation in China. Okay; can we just pause for a moment and hear what I'm about to say? We are talking about organs inside people's bodies forcibly and surgically removed from live prisoners of conscience. That's what I'm talking about here. So pause from your phones and whatnot and think about that, please.

This was recently presented as findings from the tribunal to the UN Human Rights Council. They were very clear: These are crimes against humanity that are being committed against Chinese Falun Gong practitioners — another minority population in China — and there are indications that Uighur detainees are now being added to this horrendous violation of fundamental human rights.

In closing, I wish to express regret as an independent senator about the agreement reached by the leaders of all the political groups in this chamber to not allow motions such as this to be brought to a vote.

I want to thank Senator Housakos and Senator Ngo for their leadership in bringing this motion and for now initiating a letter that senators can sign on to, since we can't vote, and to express to the human rights advocates for a democratic Hong Kong for freedom for Falun Dafa and Muslim minorities being persecuted by China. How sorry I am that all we can do this week is speak to, and not call for a vote on, this motion.

Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

(On motion of Senator Coyle, debate adjourned.)

• (1840)

MOTION TO AMEND THE *RULES OF THE SENATE*—
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Woo, seconded by the Honourable Senator Saint-Germain:

That the *Rules of the Senate* be amended:

1. by replacing rule 3-6(2) by the following:

“Adjournment extended

3-6. (2) Whenever the Senate stands adjourned, if the Speaker is satisfied that the public interest does not require the Senate to meet at the date and time stipulated in the adjournment order, the Speaker shall, after consulting all the leaders and facilitators, or their designates, determine an appropriate later date or time for the next sitting.”;

2. by replacing rule 4-2(8)(a) by the following:

“Extending time for Senators’ Statements

4-2. (8)(a) At the request of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, the Speaker shall, at an appropriate time during Senators’ Statements, seek leave of the Senate to extend Statements. If leave is granted, Senators’ Statements shall be extended by no more than 30 minutes.”;

3. by replacing rule 4-3(1) by the following:

“Tributes

4-3. (1) At the request of any leader or facilitator, the period for Senators’ Statements shall be extended by no more than 15 minutes for the purpose of paying tribute to a current or former Senator.”;

4. by replacing rules 6-3(1)(a), (b) and (c) by the following:

“Leaders and facilitators

(a) any leader or facilitator shall be permitted up to 45 minutes for debate;

Sponsor of a bill

(b) the sponsor of a bill shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading;

Spokesperson on a bill

(c) the spokesperson on a bill from each recognized party and recognized parliamentary group, except for the party or group to which the sponsor belongs, shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading; and”;

5. by replacing rule 6-5(1)(b) by the following:

“(b) the time remaining, not to exceed 15 minutes, if the Senator who yielded is a leader or facilitator.”;

6. by replacing the portion of rule 7-1(1) before paragraph (a) by the following:

“Agreement to allocate time

7-1. (1) At any time during a sitting, the Leader or the Deputy Leader of the Government may state that the representatives of the recognized parties and recognized parliamentary groups have agreed to allocate a specified number of days or hours either.”;

7. by replacing the portion of rule 7-2(1) before paragraph (a) by the following:

“No agreement to allocate time

7-2. (1) At any time during a sitting, the Leader or the Deputy Leader of the Government may state that the representatives of the recognized parties and recognized parliamentary groups have failed to agree to allocate time to conclude an adjourned debate on either.”;

8. by replacing rule 7-3(1)(f) by the following:

“(f) Senators may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes each, provided that a leader or facilitator may speak for up to 30 minutes.”;

9. by replacing rules 9-5(1), (2) and (3) by the following:

“(1) The Speaker shall ask the whips and the designated representatives of the recognized parties and recognized parliamentary groups if there is an agreement on the length of time the bells shall ring.

(2) The time agreed to shall not be more than 60 minutes.

(3) With leave of the Senate, the agreement on the length of the bells shall constitute an order to sound the bells for that length of time.”;

10. by replacing rule 9-10(1) by the following:

“Deferral of standing vote

9-10. (1) Except as provided in subsection (5) and elsewhere in these Rules, when a standing vote has been requested on a question that is debatable, a whip or the designated representative of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group may defer the vote.

EXCEPTIONS

Rule 7-3(1)(h): Procedure for debate on motion to allocate time

Rule 7-4(5): Question put on time-allocated order

Rule 12-30(7): Deferred vote on report

Rule 12-32(3)(e): Procedure in Committee of the Whole

Rule 13-6(8): Vote on case of privilege automatically deferred in certain circumstances”;

11. by replacing rule 9-10(4) by the following:

“Vote deferred to Friday

9-10. (4) Except as otherwise provided, if a vote has been deferred to a Friday, a whip or the designated representative of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group may, at any time during a sitting, further defer the vote to 5:30 p.m. on the next sitting day, provided that if the Senate only meets after 5 p.m. on that day, the vote shall take place immediately before the Orders of the Day.

EXCEPTIONS

Rule 12-30(7): Deferred vote on report

Rule 13-6(8): Vote on case of privilege automatically deferred in certain circumstances”;

12. by replacing rule 12-3(3) by the following:

“Ex officio members

12-3.(3) In addition to the membership provided for in subsections (1) and (2), the Leader of the Government, or the Deputy Leader if the Leader is absent, and the leader or facilitator of each recognized party and recognized parliamentary group, or a designate if a leader or facilitator is absent, are ex officio members of all committees except the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators and the joint committees. The ex officio members of committees have all the rights and obligations of a member of a committee, but shall not vote.”;

13. by adding the word “and” at the end of rule 12-5(a) in the English version, and by replacing rules 12-5(b) and (c) by the following:

“(b) the leader or facilitator of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, or a designate, for a change of members of that party or group.”;

14. by replacing rule 12-8(2) by the following:

“Service fee proposals

12-8. (2) When the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Government tables a service fee proposal, it is deemed referred to the standing or special committee designated by the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Government following consultations with the leaders and facilitators of the recognized parties and recognized parliamentary groups, or their designates.

REFERENCE

Service Fees Act, *subsection 15(1)*”;

15. by replacing rule 12-18(2)(b)(ii) by the following:

“(ii) with the signed consent of the majority of the leaders and facilitators, or their designates, in response to a written request from the chair and deputy chair.”;

16. by replacing rule 12-27(1) by the following:

“Appointment of committee

12-27. (1) As soon as practicable at the beginning of each session, the Leader of the Government shall move a motion, seconded by the other leaders and the facilitators, on the membership of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators. This motion shall be deemed adopted without debate or vote, and a similar motion shall be moved for any substitutions in the membership of the committee.

REFERENCE

Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators, *subsection 35(4)*”;

17. in Appendix I:

- (a) by deleting the definition “Critic of a bill”;
- (b) by deleting the definition “Ordinary procedure for determining duration of bells”;
- (c) by adding the following new definitions in alphabetical order:

“Designated representative of a recognized party or a recognized parliamentary group

The Senator designated from time to time by the leader or facilitator of a recognized party or a recognized parliamentary group without a whip as that group or party’s representative for a purpose or purposes set out in these Rules. (*Représentant désigné d’un parti reconnu ou d’un groupe parlementaire reconnu*)”;

“Leaders and facilitators

The Government Leader and the leaders and facilitators of the recognized parties and recognized parliamentary groups (see definitions of “Leader of the Government”, “Leader of the Opposition” and

“Leader or facilitator of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group”). (*Leaders et facilitateurs*”); and

“Spokesperson on a bill

The lead Senator speaking on a bill from each recognized party and recognized parliamentary group, as designated by the leader or facilitator of the party or group in question. (*Porte-parole d’un projet de loi*”); and

18. by updating all cross-references in the Rules, including the lists of exceptions, accordingly; and

That the *Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators* be amended by deleting subsection 35(5), and renumbering other subsections and cross-references accordingly.

Hon. Scott Tannas: Honourable senators, I’m rising to speak to Senator Woo’s motion regarding changes to the *Rules of the Senate* and equality among groups in the Senate.

I’ve carefully reviewed the motion and all of the individual rules that he’s proposing be changed, and I listened carefully to his speech back in March in the chamber. I certainly agree that the full recognition of the equality of Senate groups and the senators who are part of them should not wait any longer, given the historic changes that have occurred in this chamber over the last five years.

Today, we have four recognized groups in the Senate of Canada, three of which are not officially linked to a political caucus in the other place. I arrived here seven years ago, and 95% of the senators were aligned in political caucuses, the Liberals and the Conservatives. We are now 80% not aligned with Liberals or Conservatives in any official way.

In addition to the four groups, we should note that we have the Government Representative in the Senate, who does not lead a recognized caucus.

Previously, this was all unimaginable, but somehow, we’ve made it work. Quite frankly, in my mind, today’s Senate is more dynamic and more valuable to Canadians than the one in which I arrived.

Some changes were already made to our Senate rules in November 2017, in recognition of a more independent Senate. In other cases where the rules were not modified, sessional orders had been agreed to and adopted to provide for more equality among groups. An example of such includes expanding the ex-officio status to all leaders or facilitators of recognized groups in the last Parliament.

In December 2018, the final report of the Special Senate Committee on Senate Modernization, chaired by Senator Greene, concluded that a more equal Senate requires changes on three levels. One of the levels we’re talking about in Senator Woo’s motion is the *Rules of the Senate*. There are two other levels, which are the Senate Administration Rules and the Parliament of Canada Act, but this motion deals specifically with the *Rules of the Senate*.

I would like to quote from page 8 of the English version of the thirteenth report from that special committee:

In many cases, the Senate has already made adjustments within these rules and procedures to accommodate new parliamentary groups and new leadership configurations

They were referring to temporary agreements. They go on to say:

. . . but it is time to make these adjustments more certain.

It’s time to make them permanent. It is time to recognize reality.

As we keep moving toward a more independent Senate, one where senators have more freedom to regroup with other colleagues who share the same ideas on public policy, regional perspectives or other unifying perspectives, we must ensure that the changes proposed by Senator Woo achieve the right balance between two things. The first is levelling the playing field to achieve more equality among the recognized groups, and the second is that we have to respect the fundamental characteristics of this chamber in that one of our main functions is to provide a sober-second-thought review of government bills. We still have a Government Representative in the Senate and a Leader of the Opposition, and that’s the way it should stay.

There are two things at play in Senator Woo’s motion that have led me to make this observation. First, several of these amendments aim simply, as I have said, to level the playing field among all groups. The proposals are consistent in principle, and they make common sense. Some examples of these proposals include consultations by the Speaker with all leaders and facilitators when he is considering extending the adjournment of the Senate. That has been the case; the Speaker has followed that since mid-March.

Other proposals are the agreement of all facilitators and leaders to appoint members onto the Senate Ethics Committee, to extend Senators’ Statements for tributes, to define the terms of time allocation for debate on government bills and to establish the duration of bells for votes.

Several of these changes were identified in the final report of the Special Senate Committee on Senate Modernization in December 2018. Some specific changes proposed by the motion may need, however, a more comprehensive debate. It is for that reason that I would like to table an amendment on the floor of this chamber in order to support that kind of discussion. Specifically, I would like to talk about two of these changes.

The first one is ex-officio status and voting privilege for leaders. Point 12 of Senator Woo’s motion would extend the ex-officio status to all the leaders and the facilitators of the recognized groups, as well as to the leaders of the government and opposition. I agree with that.

However, Senator Woo's motion goes on to suggest that it would not allow leaders to exercise a vote in committees, which is a change. During the last Parliament, and even prior to 2015, the issue of allowing ex-officio members to vote had constituted a bit of a grey zone, especially regarding the Standing Senate Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration. In his speech, Senator Woo stated that he simply wants to prevent surprises in committees in a Senate comprised of many groups.

I believe that the ex-officio voting status for each representative, leader of the groups will be more important than ever in a multi-group Senate. It will ensure that appropriate consideration is given to contentious situations where various groups are at odds. This is particularly important in the committees that are vital to the organization of the Senate, specifically Internal Economy and the Rules Committee.

I submit that we should, therefore, be very careful of expressly prohibiting ex-officio members to vote at committees. We should allow each committee to decide on ex-officio voting in the context of their particular organization.

That's the first item that I wish to deal with in my amendment. The second item is around the nomenclature of critics and spokespersons of a bill.

Points 4 and 17 of the motion by Senator Woo would eliminate, as outlined in Appendix I of the *Rules of the Senate*, the role of the critic in favour of a notion that expects that each group, including the opposition, would have spokespersons who would be allowed to speak for a 45-minute period.

I have no problem with every designated spokesperson or critic getting the full 45 minutes, but we have to recognize and be vigilant around the point that the Senate is part of a bicameral Parliament, mostly modelled after the Westminster parliamentary system. We've had in this chamber a Leader of the Government and a Leader of the Opposition since 1867. Senator Gold still has the privilege of appointing a sponsor to promote a government bill. Therefore, it is my submission that the Leader of the Opposition should still enjoy the same privilege, obligation and responsibility of appointing a critic — no more, no less.

I said earlier that I think the new Senate functions well. It's more dynamic and exciting, but part of the reason is because there is somebody who gets up every morning and tries to figure out how to poke holes in the government's sales pitch. If we don't have that, we will be losing a huge part of that dynamic. We've talked about this before. The fact of the matter is, important decisions should be made by uncomfortable people, and that is the role that the opposition plays.

• (1850)

I'm proposing that the role of critic be retained in the definitions and that we simply add the role of a spokesperson, which would be for groups other than the government and other than the opposition.

I want to say this out loud to our colleagues in the Conservative caucus. I think many Conservative members have expressed concerns about an attack on the opposition. I don't see

anything in this as an attack on the opposition, either overt or covert. The amendments that I am proposing, I think, make doubly sure that that is not the case.

I ask that all of us consider that as we go through this. But that was definitely the lens in which I and my researchers looked through Senator Woo's motion, and it does form the basis for my amendments.

I think we are way past playing politics or using stall tactics on this kind of reform. It is time to finish the job that we initiated some four years ago, in 2016, on modernization.

I genuinely believe that levelling the playing field, as described in this motion, does not reduce the role of opposition or take away tools available to the opposition.

I think we all stand to benefit from the important work that was achieved by the special Senate Committee on Modernization, Senator Woo and other distinguished colleagues in this chamber, relating to amendments to our rules.

MOTION IN AMENDMENT

Hon. Scott Tannas: Therefore, honourable senators, in amendment, I move:

That the motion be not now adopted, but that it be amended:

1. by replacing point number 4 by the following:

"4. by replacing rules 6-3(1)(a), (b), (c) and (d) by the following:

"Leaders and facilitators

(a) any leader or facilitator shall be permitted up to 45 minutes for debate;

Sponsor of a bill

(b) the sponsor of a bill shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading;

Critic of a bill

(c) the critic of a bill shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading;

Spokesperson on a bill

(d) the spokesperson on a bill from each recognized party and recognized parliamentary group, except those of the sponsor and critic, shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading; and

Others

(e) other Senators shall speak for no more than 15 minutes in debate.";

2. in point number 12, by deleting the words “, but shall not vote”;
3. by deleting current point number 13 and renumbering current points number 14 to 18 as points number 13 to 17; and
4. in current point number 17, by replacing sub-point (a) by the following:

“(a) by replacing the words “(*Porte-parole d’un projet de loi*)” at the end of the definition of “Critic of a bill” by the words “(*Critique d’un projet de loi*)”;

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

The Hon. the Speaker: In amendment, it was moved by the Honourable Senator Tannas, seconded by the Honourable Senator Campbell that the motion be not now adopted, but that it be amended, one by replacing point number 4 by the following — shall I dispense?

Hon. Senators: Dispense.

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Woo, on debate.

Hon. Yuen Pau Woo: I will speak briefly to Senator Tannas’s amendments and then ask to take the adjournment for the balance of my time when I finish.

It is obviously too soon for me to give a full speech to respond to Senator Tannas, but I just want to thank him for his very thoughtful intervention.

I would say this as an initial response: From what I heard, he has reiterated the importance of substantive equality among recognized groups in the Senate, and all of his amendments preserve that crucial principle that I tried to convey in the motion, which is to have equality of Senate groups.

He has modified the formula somewhat in a number of cases by what I would call “levelling up” rather than levelling down. This is a term that I used in my speech, and the specific example that he gave, I believe, has to do with *ex officio* status, whereby he believes the leaders and facilitators have the ability to vote on committees as opposed to my version, which takes away the vote from those same leaders and facilitators.

It’s in a sense six and half a dozen. I commend it to all of you to reflect on and to think about, but it does not change the fundamental idea of substantive equality that I was seeking in the motion.

His other innovation, if I can put it that way, is to reintroduce to the motion nomenclature that preserves the pedigree and the history of our institution, particularly the nomenclature around government and opposition, and nomenclature around the sponsor and the critic.

Again, this is an issue of tradition and of respect for the institution, but it’s not an issue of inequality because he also, I believe, has said that while we do want the opposition to

continue to name the critic, other groups have the right to name what we call “spokespersons” and to have the same rights as the critic.

On the face of it, these proposed amendments are very much in the spirit of what the motion originally seeks to do. Of course, we will reflect on them more carefully. I invite all of you to do the same. I look forward to the continuation of this debate when we next pick it up.

(On motion of Senator Woo, debate adjourned.)

MOTION TO STRIKE A SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
SYSTEMIC RACISM—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Lankin, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Pate:

That a Special Senate Committee on Systemic Racism be appointed to conduct a review of systemic racism in Canada;

That, without limiting its mandate, the committee be authorized:

1. to review the extent and scope of anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, and systemic racism in federal institutions and agencies;
2. to review the federal government’s role in eliminating anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, and systemic racism both within federal institutions and agencies and in Canadian society generally; and
3. to identify priorities and recommendations for government action to combat anti-Indigenous, anti-Black, and systemic racism;

That the committee be composed of 12 members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, and that 5 members constitute a quorum;

That the committee have the power to send for persons, papers and records; to hear witnesses; and to publish such papers and evidence from day to day as may be ordered by the committee;

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules or usual practices, and taking into account the exceptional circumstances of the current pandemic of COVID-19, the committee have the power to meet by videoconference or teleconference, if technically feasible for any purposes of:

1. the study authorized by this order;
2. an organization meeting pursuant to rule 12-13; or
3. electing a chair or deputy chair if there is a vacancy in either of those positions;

That both senators and witnesses be allowed to participate in meetings of this committee by videoconference or teleconference, with such meetings being considered for all purposes to be meetings of the committee in question, and senators taking part in such meetings being considered for all purposes to be present at the meeting;

That, for greater certainty, and without limiting the general authority granted by this order, when the committee meets by videoconference or teleconference:

1. members of the committee participating count towards quorum;
2. priority be given to ensuring that members of the committee are able to participate;
3. such meetings be considered to be occurring in the parliamentary precinct, irrespective of where participants may be; and
4. the committee be directed to approach in camera meetings with all necessary precaution, taking account of the risks to confidentiality inherent in such technologies;

That, when the committee meets by videoconference or teleconference, the provisions of rule 14-7(2) be applied so as to allow recording or broadcasting through any facilities arranged by the Clerk of the Senate, and, if a meeting being broadcast or recorded cannot be broadcast live, the committee be considered to have fulfilled the requirement that a meeting be public by making any available recording publicly available as soon as possible thereafter;

That there be a minimum of 72 hours' notice for a meeting of the committee by videoconference or teleconference, subject to technical feasibility;

That, the committee be authorized to report from time to time, submit a comprehensive interim report no later than six months after its organization meeting, and submit its final report no later than six months after the tabling or presenting of the comprehensive interim report;

That the committee be permitted to deposit its reports with the Clerk of the Senate if the Senate is not then sitting, with the reports then being deemed to have been tabled or presented in the Senate; and

That the committee retain the powers necessary to publicize its findings for 60 days after submitting its final report.

Hon. Donna Dasko: Senators, I rise today to speak to Senator Bernard's motion, as presented to us by Senator Lankin, to establish a special committee to study anti-black and anti-Indigenous systemic racism in Canada.

Systemic racism is pervasive in this country. I have listened with concern as so many of our colleagues have relayed their experiences with racism over the past several days and weeks, for example, Senator Moodie's portrayal of life as a black person in

Canada; Senator Omidvar's account of double standards right here in the Senate; Senator Anderson's account of living as an Indigenous Canadian and raising Indigenous children in a world where racism is a daily lived experience.

• (1900)

I appreciate the advice of the Cree elders that Senator LaBoucane-Benson shared with us last week. That anger, if properly directed, is a great gift.

I thank my colleagues for sharing their experiences and perspectives with the chamber. While this is a difficult topic, I am grateful for the opportunity to listen and to continue to expand my understanding of how racism manifests itself through our society.

What can or should those of us from non-racialized backgrounds do to fight systemic racism? Last week, our colleague, Senator Brian Francis, said publicly:

Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people cannot be expected to continually do the emotional labour of educating the wider public on the impact of systemic racism.

He went on to point out that non-racialized people must identify our privilege and the benefits that we have accrued at the expense of others. We must also do the work. I take that as a call to action for all of us and for all Canadians of goodwill.

I have spent my entire career in the research business, and research will play a vital role as we go forward. I note, especially over the past few weeks, expressions of opinion from some people wondering if systemic racism even exists or what it means, and expressions coming from those both with privilege, as well as from members of the general public.

Let me begin by putting some data, some facts, to the phenomenon of racism to add to the perspectives that we have heard.

According to the 2016 census, for example, black Canadians earn significantly less than non-racialized Canadians, regardless of how long their families have been in Canada. First-generation black Canadians earn about \$13,000 less annually than immigrants who are not members of visible minorities, and third-generation black Canadians still earn \$16,000 less than third-generation non-visible minorities. Black Canadians are nearly twice as likely as non-visible minorities to experience low incomes and to have higher unemployment levels.

These are just some examples of what systemic racism looks like in Canada, but these dynamics take root long before people enter the workforce. I was particularly struck by the results of a StatCan General Social Survey conducted in 2016, which found that fully 94% of black Canadian youth between the ages of 18 to 25 aspired to obtain a university degree, but only 60% thought that they would actually achieve it. In comparison, 82% of all other youth aspired to a university education, and almost all of them, 79%, felt they would achieve it.

Senators, research is often impersonal and detached, yet this finding speaks to me in particular about how racism can snuff out, block and stifle the aspirations of many motivated young people, just as Senator Moodie so poignantly described in the chamber last week.

Here are some other research findings that speak to systemic racism: Three years ago, my former colleagues at the Environics Institute launched the Black Experience Project in collaboration with Toronto community organizations, to identify issues in Toronto's black community, which is Canada's largest black community. Among their research findings from the large survey of the community are as follows: Two thirds of Toronto's black residents reported experiencing unfair treatment because they are black. Here are a few examples: 59% said that others expected their work to be inferior; 56% reported being treated rudely; 54% reported being observed or followed while in a public place, all because they are black. That was the reason that they gave.

Experiences with police services were just as bleak. Over half of black Torontonians reported that they had been stopped in a public place by police, and among young men aged 25 to 44, the figure was 79%. Thirty-eight per cent of black Torontonians had been harassed or treated rudely by police. Among young black men, that figure was 60%.

Another international survey conducted for the Canadian Race Relations Foundation in 2019 found more of the same. The majority of black Canadians across the country, 54%, and over half, 53%, of Indigenous people have personally experienced discrimination due to their race or ethnicity from time to time or, in fact, regularly. Such experience is also shared and reported by significant numbers of South Asians, Chinese and those of other racialized groups.

The COVID crisis has only served to increase the discrimination toward Canadians of Chinese background. A survey conducted by the Angus Reid Institute last week and reported yesterday in the media, found that half of the respondents of Chinese background have been called names or insulted, and 43% report being threatened or intimidated with reasons associated with the pandemic.

These kinds of research findings, and others, speak clearly to the existence of racism in this country.

After quoting to you all these research findings, you might want to reach the conclusion that there is plenty of race-based data to answer all the questions we might have about racism in this country. Unfortunately, this is not the case. In their detailed recommendations on actions to be taken to fight racism, the Parliamentary Black Caucus identified serious data gaps and called on the federal government to immediately lead in the collection and stewardship of disaggregated data, race-based data on police intervention and public sector employment, and the racialization of poverty. To quote the Parliamentary Black Caucus, with respect to those missing numbers, "It is hard to change what one cannot measure."

I support their calls to action. The collection of disaggregated data in many more areas of society is an important step toward developing inclusive social and economic policies.

I want to say that there is actually some good news on this front. Statistics Canada has beefed up its collection of race-based data considerably, with more changes to come. The census, of course, has collected disaggregated race data for many years, as have the annual General Social Surveys and other surveys conducted by StatsCan. An upcoming GSS will look at social identities and discrimination with disaggregated data, and a new division of Statistics Canada called the Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics will be a hub for intersectional analysis.

It is vital that we collect data on gender, disabilities, ethnic origins, immigrant status, language and socio-economic measures to understand how racism intersects with other statuses. Beginning this summer, the mighty monthly Labour Force Survey is, in fact, going to add race-based measures, after 75 years, to all the measures of wages, labour force activity and all of the other statuses that are already collected in the Labour Force Survey.

I would say that Statistics Canada is definitely working on this area, but they still have more work to do. They still have to collect and disaggregate more of their data. That might be some of the good news, but for now the not-so-good news.

• (1910)

The COVID crisis in particular has exposed a serious lack of race-based data in public health, and we have heard the call for more of this data so frequently over these past three months. Much of this missing data, which is the so-called "admin data," is the responsibility of the provinces — most, but not all. Most of the provinces have been very reluctant to collect this data, for whatever reasons they may have. This reluctance carries over into other areas, into education, social services and policing data.

This continued laissez-faire attitude with these sectors is to the detriment of all of us. We must work to change this situation, and I believe that the special committee especially will help keep up the pressure. As we have seen over the past few months, putting pressure on these organizations, the provinces and others to collect the data has actually resulted in some promises on their part to do so. We learned that we have to keep up the pressure, otherwise it's going to go away; they won't make the changes. Therefore, this committee is going to be very helpful for us to keep up the pressure in this area and others.

Colleagues, in conclusion, I support the motion introduced by Senator Lankin on behalf of Senator Bernard to establish a special committee on systemic anti-black and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada. This committee, I believe, is the best way to tackle many issues, not just issues related to data but many others that have been identified by black parliamentarians in their statement on anti-black racism and identified as well by our colleagues here in the chamber.

I look forward to studying the work of the special committee as it moves toward action to end systemic racism in its many forms in this country. Thank you.

Senator Martin: I would like to take the adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. the Speaker: I believe we have another senator who wishes to join the debate first.

Hon. Mary Coyle: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak in support of Motion No. 54, Senator Bernard and Senator Lankin's motion to strike a Senate special committee on racism. I'm honoured to be doing this on the traditional unceded territories of the Algonquin Nation.

The Parliamentary Black Caucus issued a powerfully important statement last week which outline concrete actions it is asking government to undertake. Unfortunately, when Senator Mégie asked for permission for that statement to be tabled in the Senate last week, although clearly supported by the strong voices of the majority of our colleagues, permission was denied. I know many of us found that refusal to be both disappointing and disrespectful.

Our colleagues in the Senate Indigenous working group have come out in support of their Senate colleagues of African descent — Senators Bernard, Mégie, Moodie, Ravalia and Jaffer — who have been working hard as members of the Parliamentary Black Caucus and have come forward with this important motion. This effort to create a special committee, combined with the powerful emergency debate last week and the Committee of the Whole on racism planned for later this week are concrete actions our colleagues have spearheaded to guide and direct us to more actions leading to the results we all want to see.

So why do I and why should we all support this motion to strike this special committee to conduct a review of systemic racism in Canada, and identify priorities and recommendations for government action to combat anti-Indigenous racism, anti-black racism and systemic racism?

The first and obvious reason is that our colleagues with lived experience and expertise are asking us to. We should demonstrate our trust in them and we should follow their lead, just as we should follow the lead of their peers in the broader Canadian society.

Honourable colleagues, three years ago this month, having just completed some really tough cancer treatments, I was attending a Living Beyond Cancer session. Boy, that was a different time. One of the wise resource people at the session was a chaplain named David Maginley. He gave us two challenges. The first one was to make sure we were living the life we had worked so hard to have. And the second, which is the relevant point for this discussion, was to not waste the crisis.

Honourable colleagues, the crises caused by colonialism, discrimination, exploitation and the related racism have been with us for centuries. In fact, our mainstream society has been benefiting from these crises. Our country was built on these crises.

We have the Indian Act; land dispossession of the original peoples of this territory; disenfranchisement; we have thousands of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. We have the impacts of residential schools. We had racially segregated schools. We moved African Nova Scotians around with no respect for their tenancy rights. We relocated Inuit people to

unfamiliar lands and left them to die. We have Indigenous people and Canadians of African descent populating our prisons in disproportionately high numbers. We have them targeted by police and some even killed or have died during wellness checks.

We have a whole variety of uneven social and economic outcomes for Indigenous people and Canadians of African descent. We had crises in Canada long before George Floyd was murdered by the Minneapolis Police and before Chantel Moore, Rodney Levi and Regis Korchinski-Paquet lost their lives and the recent mass Black Lives Matter protests brought millions of people out in their communities across Canada, in the U.S. and around the world.

But this current crisis intersecting with the public health crisis brought on by COVID-19 is a moment we should not waste. Our colleagues calling for the establishment of the Senate special committee on racism are telling us that the time is now. These recent crises have brought about a tipping point in collective consciousness, and we need to act before this moment is squandered.

In her Speech from the Throne opening this Forty-third Parliament, Governor General Julie Payette said:

. . . whether we are from here or chose to come and live here, we share the same desire. We wish to live freely and in peace and harmony. This quest is a bedrock of our nation and informs almost everything we do.

Your role in the democratic process is a privilege and a responsibility.

. . . we serve every single Canadian. Canadians of all genders, faiths, languages, customs or skin colours.

If we put our brains and smarts and altruistic capabilities together, we can do a lot of good. We can help improve the lives of people in our communities, diminish the gaps and inequities here and elsewhere . . .

Colleagues, as senators, we have a responsibility to ensure that all people in Canada have opportunities to share in both shaping our country and enjoying the bounty that many of us take for granted. In order to achieve this, we must understand once and for all and find effective ways to fulfill the promise implicit in the statements black lives matter, Indigenous lives matter. We must listen. We must follow. We must insist on action, and we must hold ourselves and others accountable.

Senator Lankin and others have pointed out the abundance of excellent studies and reports that exist that are overflowing with well-formulated recommendations, calls to action, calls to justice, which have still not been brought into action. These will be central resources for the Senate special committee.

Our colleague Senator Mary Jane McCallum advised us in her letter dated June 18 that, "It is change, real change that we need. I do not feel that the racism faced by Indigenous peoples and the racism faced by the black community should be considered under one catch-all umbrella. Approaching racism with a pan-minority approach will only cause further pain."

By the same token, it will be important to differentiate within each group as well. We know that from the Indigenous Languages Act we passed last year. While it was a positive step forward, it did not recognize the highly differentiated reality of the Inuit and their Inuktitut language.

• (1920)

We know that the realities of African Nova Scotians living in the three historic rural settlements in my part of Nova Scotia live vastly different lives from the realities of the largely black immigrant populations of Montreal or Toronto. We must differentiate.

Ibram Kendi, Guggenheim fellow and founding director of the Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University and author of *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, turns this conversation on the origins of racism and its remedies on their heads. He says:

Education, love and exemplary black people will not deliver America from racism. Racist ideas grow out of discriminatory policies, not the other way around.

Well, not everyone will agree with Mr. Kendi. I believe it isn't either/or. Our colleague Senator Murray Sinclair, former Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, has been quoted as saying, "Education has gotten us into this mess, and education will get us out."

However, Ibram Kendi goes on to say:

The goal is to identify inequalities, identify the policies that create and maintain those inequalities and propose correctives

He mentions six areas for those: criminal justice, education, economics, health, environment and politics. Kendi's book makes the case that the actual foundation of racism is not ignorance and hate but rather self-interest, particularly economic, political and cultural. While Ibram Kendi is largely speaking about the foundations of anti-black racism in the U.S., there are certainly some relevant comparisons in Canada worthy of examining.

On a related point but with a rather different twist, let's consider the story of a river. Picture the river, folks. Picture yourself standing on the edge of the Ottawa River out behind our old historic chamber on Parliament Hill. All of a sudden, a flailing, drowning child goes floating by. Without thinking, you jump in the river, pull the child to shore, and before you can recover, another child is in distress and comes floating by and you dive in and rescue her. Another child comes floating by and another and another. Eventually, hopefully, a wise person will ask, "Who keeps chucking these kids in the river?" And they will head upstream to find out.

This is a simple illustration employed by the Upstream institute for a healthy society, which recently joined forces with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. In the case of Canada, we need to ask ourselves whose babies are drowning in the river. They're not my little pink-and-white middle-class ones. Why are those babies there and in such large numbers? Finally, what are we doing about it?

As we strike this special Senate committee on systemic racism, let's make sure we don't continue to suffer from what the institute calls downstream thinking. Rather, let's help the mainstream look upstream. While we can't ignore the downstream where we find far too many of our fellow racialized Canadians, let's ask the committee to look at what urgent, smart policies and investments — remember Senator Omidvar made the important point about following the money — can be put in place upstream.

Honourable colleagues, as we allow ourselves to start to look past this pandemic lockdown period, our Prime Minister, other societal leaders and many Canadians are talking about building back better, building back greener and building back fairer.

Racism, with its many deadly manifestations in our society, is a national shame and can no longer be tolerated if we truly want to build Canada back better and fairer. Black Canadians, Indigenous peoples and other racialized Canadians are telling us they are tired of the status quo. They are tired of carrying the burden. They have had enough. Haven't we as parliamentarians all had enough too?

Striking the Special Senate Committee on Systemic Racism with a robust mandate and populated with our capable colleagues is an important action I hope we can all get behind.

Moses Coady, the namesake of the institute I used to work at once said, "In a democracy people don't sit in the economic and social bleachers; they all play the game."

Honourable colleagues, let's support the motion of Senator Lankin and Senator Bernard. Let's make sure that once and for all we have everyone engaged in our democracy and benefiting fairly from it, no matter what colour their skin is or who their ancestors were. Let's exercise our privilege and responsibility. Let's not let more drowning babies continue to float downstream. Honourable senators, let's not waste this crisis. Colleagues, let's do the right thing. Thank you. *Welalioq*.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

ARCTIC

MOTION TO PLACE FOURTH REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE TABLED DURING THE FIRST SESSION OF FORTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT ON ORDERS OF THE DAY ADOPTED

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson, pursuant to notice of June 16, 2020, moved:

That the fourth report of the Special Committee on the Arctic entitled *Northern Lights: A Wake-Up Call for the Future of Canada*, tabled in the Senate on June 11, 2019, during the First session of the Forty-second Parliament, be placed on the Orders of the Day under Other Business, Reports of Committees – Other, for consideration two days hence.

He said: Honourable senators, this motion would enable us to revive the report for the consideration of and potential adoption by senators. If this motion passes, I would not only be moving for adoption of the report, but, more importantly, for a government response. I feel these steps are important to ensure that the hard work of senators who participated in the report is recognized and leveraged to ensure real change for the Arctic.

I plan to expound upon why I feel it's important to adopt the report and the request for a government response, but the first step is the adoption of this motion. So I would ask honourable senators to support our colleagues and me who were on the Arctic Committee by voting in favour of this motion. Thank you.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

THE SENATE

MOTION TO CEASE THE PROVISIONS OF MOTION NO. 37 ADOPTED ON MARCH 11, 2020—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Pierre J. Dalfond, pursuant to notice of June 16, 2020, moved:

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, previous order or usual practice, upon the adoption of this motion, the provisions of the motion adopted by the Senate on March 11, 2020, relating to committees, as moved by the Honourable Senator Woo and seconded by the Honourable Senator Plett, cease to have effect.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise to urge this chamber to reconsider and repeal the motion adopted without notice and debate on March 11 of this year. The motion presently before us achieves that result.

Rest assured, honourable colleagues, if that motion had been printed on the Order Paper further to a notice, there would have been non-affiliated senators who would have refused their consent to have it passed without debate, and it would not have passed before the COVID adjournment.

The March 11 motion contains many measures of concern. Yesterday I spoke about the creation of additional paid positions, and I won't repeat my comments.

Today I will focus on the content of the motion restricting the freedom of movement of senators by superceding a part of our *Rules*. The motion stated:

. . . if a senator ceases to be a member of a particular recognized party or recognized parliamentary group for any reason, he or she simultaneously cease to be a member of any committee of which he or she is then a member, with the resulting vacancy to be filled by the leader or facilitator of the party or group to which the senator had belonged. . .

• (1930)

This provision is a clear departure from the *Rules of the Senate*. The standard rule 12-2 (3) states:

. . . Senators appointed to the standing committees and the standing joint committees shall serve for the duration of the session.

Honourable senators, this rule goes back to 1982, with the current wording in place since 2012. Structurally, this rule guards against the undue centralization of power in Senate leaderships, an important safeguard for independent decision-making.

The effect of the March 11 motion overriding this rule is to deny senators the right to freely associate with Senate groups of their choosing. Currently, with the March 11 motion still in force, if a senator leaves a group, they will lose their committee seat and cannot participate anymore in that committee as a full member. This is what happened to our colleague Senator Bovey, the new liaison for the Progressive Senate Group, who has been automatically removed from the Foreign Affairs Committee where she had been appointed by a motion adopted by this house on February 20, when she joined the Progressive Senate Group. This punitive consequence is aimed at discouraging senators from becoming non-affiliated or from joining or forming other groups. In turn, this framework of fear and favour is contrary to the equality and free association of senators, centralizing power within leaderships and undermining independent decision-making, as Senator Harder stated a few weeks ago.

In this way, the March 11 motion enhances a traditional mechanism of party discipline, the power of leaderships to control committee seats beyond what we have seen in the past, in the more partisan Senate. This provision is a major step backwards and inconsistent with the reform that I believe most of us, including the Progressives, wish to undertake to build a more independent Senate, that is better able to serve Canadians.

With this motion gone, a proper discussion about the composition of all Senate committees could be initiated. A good place to start negotiations around committee membership would be the fair and transparent rule that senators worked collaboratively to achieve three years ago on June 1, 2017, through the leadership of the Rules Committee chair, the Honourable Senator Joan Fraser — whom I have the honour to succeed as the senator for the division of De Lorimier. Incidentally, De Lorimier was represented way back in the day by the Honourable Senator Dandurand, a very well-known senator for championing reforms at the Senate back at the beginning of the last century.

The rule created on that day respects the equality of non-affiliated senators and all senators' freedom to associate as they choose. That rule, 12-1 states:

At the beginning of each session, the Senate shall appoint a Committee of Selection composed of nine Senators. The initial membership of the committee, as well as any subsequent change to the membership of the committee, shall, as nearly as practicable, be proportionate to the membership of the recognized parties and recognized parliamentary groups. Senators who are not members of such a party or group shall, for this purpose only, be treated as if they were members of a separate group. . . .

In commenting on the rule change at the time, Senator Fraser said:

We addressed ourselves to the fundamental matter of the Committee of Selection. In so doing, we adopted the principle urged by the Modernization Committee and, both in committee and in discussions that one has, upheld — with great conviction by the new members of the Senate, the Independent Senators Group — the principle of proportionality and the idea that the proportions of recognized parties or groups in the chamber should be reflected in the composition of the Committee of Selection. . . .

So, even non-affiliated Senators are entitled to be equally represented on the Selection Committee as full members. Of course, to ensure that there will be seats allocated, as is right, to non-affiliated senators.

Honourable senators, I will additionally note that the 2017 rule provides guidance on the fair composition of the Selection Committee, which also needs to be revisited with the recognition of the Progressives. However, that is a matter beyond the scope of this motion before us tonight, which will simply repeal the ill-advised measures of the March 11 motion, as I have described, which are extraneous to the formation of the Selection Committee.

In closing, I ask all senators to support a more independent, transparent and accountable Senate; one based on collegiality, equality and freedom of association. To that end, I urge senators to adopt the motion that I table, before we resume our discussions on compositions of our committees: standing or special.

[Senator Dalphond]

Together we can recommit to the principles of collegiality, equality of senators, freedom of association of senators and the responsible use of public funds. The result would be a more independent, transparent and accountable Senate that enhances public confidence in this institution and in our work. Let us make no mistake, the March 11 motion has damaged the reputation of the Senate and the credibility of the reform message that many of us, particularly the Progressives, were advancing. Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

[*Translation*]

The Hon. the Speaker: Will you take a question, Senator Dalphond?

Senator Dalphond: Yes.

[*English*]

Hon. Yuen Pau Woo: On the question of credibility, honesty and decency, I want to ask Senator Dalphond to elaborate on an assertion he made during his speech, which is that Senator Bovey has been stripped of her seat on the Foreign Affairs Committee. I would ask him to please provide the evidence for this assertion. First of all, the Foreign Affairs Committee has not been constituted. Second, her name continues to appear on the Selection Committee report that is on our Order Paper. If, in fact, Senator Dalphond, this is not true, will you apologize to Senator Bovey for making this outrageous statement and apologize to the rest of us who have been accused of doing this dastardly thing?

Senator Dalphond: If apologies have to be made, I suspect that they should be made by those that stand behind this motion of March 11.

That being said, to answer your question, Senator Woo, I invite you to read the *Journals of the Senate* of May 15. You will see at the very last line that Senator Bovey has ceased to be a member of the committee.

Senator Woo: I will read the journals of May 15, but to my understanding, the Foreign Affairs Committee has not been constituted. You are probably referring to the committee that was set up specifically for the purposes of the review of the free trade agreement.

Can you confirm, and can you confirm to our colleagues here in particular, that Senator Bovey's name continues to be on the Selection Committee report as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and that no one in the ISG leadership has taken her name off that list?

• (1940)

Senator Dalphond: Honourable senators, if I understand properly, Senator Woo is referring to the Second Report of the Selection Committee, which has been tabled but not voted, so he referred to a draft report. If you want to say that the journal has been superseded by your draft, I'm okay with what you are saying, but I think that the rules say that the journal is what matters. The journal has said that Senator Bovey ceased to be a

member of the current and the still-existing Foreign Affairs Committee, pursuant to which the chair is still being paid the additional salary since February.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

(At 7:41 p.m., the Senate was continued until Thursday, June 25, 2020, at 1:30 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

	PAGE		PAGE
The Senate		Agriculture and Agri-Food	
Tributes to Departing Pages		Temporary Foreign Workers	
Hon. the Speaker	787	Hon. Robert Black	792
		Hon. Marc Gold	792
<hr/>			
SENATORS' STATEMENTS		Crown-Indigenous Relations	
International Thalessemia Day		Action Plan	
Hon. David M. Wells	787	Hon. Pierre J. Dalfond	792
		Hon. Marc Gold	793
Fighting Terrorism		Infrastructure Canada	
Hon. Yuen Pau Woo	787	Report of Parliamentary Budget Officer	
		Hon. Elizabeth Marshall	793
Bill Bell		Hon. Marc Gold	793
Congratulations		Health	
Hon. Vernon White	788	COVID-19 Pandemic	
		Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson	794
Consumer Debt Index		Hon. Marc Gold	794
Hon. Marilou McPhedran	788	COVID-19 Pandemic—Mask Wearing	
		Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne	794
National Sickle Cell Awareness Day		Hon. Marc Gold	794
Hon. Jim Munson	789		
		<hr/>	
ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS		ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Adjournment		Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators	
Notice of Motion		Third Report of Committee—Debate	
Hon. Raymonde Gagné	789	Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson	794
		Business of the Senate	796
Social Affairs, Science and Technology		The Estimates, 2020-21	
Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Meet During		Consideration of Main Estimates and Supplementary	
Sitting of the Senate		Estimates (A) in Committee of the Whole	
Hon. Judith G. Seidman	790	Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, P.C., M.P., President of the Treasury	
		Board	796
QUESTION PERIOD		Hon. Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P., Minister of Finance	797
Foreign Affairs		Glenn Purves, Assistant Secretary, Expenditure Management	
Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752 Tragedy		Sector, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat	800
Hon. Donald Neil Plett	790	Senator Moncion	809
Hon. Marc Gold	790	Report of the Committee of the Whole	
Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps		Hon. Pierrette Ringuette	818
Hon. Yonah Martin	790	Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators	
Hon. Marc Gold	791	Third Report of Committee—Debate Adjourned	
		Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson	819
Justice		Business of the Senate	
China—United States—Detention of Meng Wanzhou		Hon. Raymonde Gagné	819
Hon. Yuen Pau Woo	791	The Estimates, 2020-21	
Hon. Marc Gold	791	Supplementary Estimates (A)—Third Report of National	
		Finance Committee Adopted	
Finance		Hon. Peter Harder	819
Guaranteed Livable Income		Appropriation Bill No. 2, 2020–21 (Bill C-18)	
Hon. Kim Pate	792	Third Reading—Debate Adjourned	
Hon. Marc Gold	792	Hon. Marc Gold	820

CONTENTS

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

	PAGE		PAGE
Appropriation Bill No. 3, 2020–21 (Bill C-19)		The Senate	
Third Reading—Debate Adjourned		Motion to Call Upon the Government to Impose Sanctions against Chinese and/or Hong Kong Officials—Debate Continued	
Hon. Marc Gold	820	Hon. Jim Munson	824
Adjournment		Hon. Marilou McPhedran	826
Motion Adopted		Motion to Amend the <i>Rules of the Senate</i> —Debate Continued	
Hon. Raymonde Gagné	820	Hon. Scott Tannas	830
Criminal Code (Bill S-202)		Motion in Amendment	
Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Continued.	821	Hon. Scott Tannas	831
Constitution Act, 1867		Hon. Yuen Pau Woo	832
Parliament of Canada Act (Bill S-205)		Motion to Strike a Special Committee on Systemic Racism— Debate Continued	
Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Adjourned		Hon. Donna Dasko	833
Hon. Jim Munson	821	Hon. Mary Coyle	835
Department for Women and Gender Equality Act (Bill S-209)		Arctic	
Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Continued		Motion to Place Fourth Report of Special Committee Tabled during the First Session of Forty-second Parliament on Orders of the Day Adopted	
Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond	821	Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson	837
Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators		The Senate	
Second Report of Committee—Debate Continued.	823	Motion to Cease the Provisions of Motion No. 37 Adopted on March 11, 2020—Debate Adjourned	
Motion Concerning Former Senator Don Meredith—Debate Continued	823	Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond	837
National Security and Defence		Hon. Yuen Pau Woo	838
Motion to Authorize Committee to Study the Body of Issues Known as “Intelligence to Evidence”—Debate Continued.	824		