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The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

THE LATE CONSTABLE SHAELYN YANG

Hon. Bev Busson: Honourable senators, I am heartbroken as I stand today to pay tribute to Constable Shaelyn Yang, who was murdered in Burnaby, British Columbia, on October 18, and whose regimental funeral is today.

I speak to you as a colleague, an ex-police officer and mother of an RCMP officer as well. One death in the line of duty is one too many. Sadly, as I speak, I know that this will not be the last tribute that will be given for a fallen officer who will be killed in the line of duty. It is hard to explain why anyone would risk their personal safety on a daily basis, knowing that death or serious injury is just one bad call away.

Let me tell you about Constable Shaelyn Yang: She was only 31 years old when she died, and had so much to live for. She was a wife, a daughter, a sister and a friend to many. She was the poster child of everything you could wish for in a police officer. She was educated, came from a diverse background and had a kind and compassionate personality.

She was born in Taiwan and came to Canada with her family to chase the dream of getting a Western education and becoming a Canadian. She was a University of British Columbia, or UBC, graduate and could have chosen any career, but she always wanted to become a member of the RCMP. As a student, she volunteered for Victim Services at the Richmond detachment, where she was highly regarded by all those who had worked with her.

She graduated from Depot in December 2019 and was posted to the Burnaby detachment. Soon afterward, she joined the special team, working with the weakest and most vulnerable within the mental health and homeless outreach program at Burnaby detachment. It was this generous and selfless calling that ultimately ended her short but important life — at the very hands of someone she was trying to help. She died bravely trying to save the life of a city Parks worker, who was alongside her, as well as her own life.

Colleagues, I have heard comments that this is what the police sign up for, but I can tell you, personally, that this is not what they sign up for, any more than a politician signs up to be harassed, attacked or assassinated. They sign up to make a difference and never imagine they will be a name and a regimental number on a cold stone memorial wall.

Colleagues, when a police officer dies in the line of duty, we often observe a moment of silence, as well as speak highly of their sacrifice, how we respect their role and hope this will never

happen again. I urge you to keep Constable Yang in your thoughts and prayers the next time you speak about the police. We can have a positive effect on the narrative of the unique nature of policing in Canada, and help guard our collective futures. Words matter. Our words matter.

Speaking of words, I would like you to consider the words of a handwritten note left by Constable Yang's police partners on the fence near where she died:

I hope you heard us coming. I drove as fast as I could. You were not alone. I'm sorry I didn't make it in time. We'll take the watch from here. Rest in Peace.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

BATTLE OF HILL 355

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise today to commemorate the historic seventieth anniversary of the Battle of Hill 355 that took place from October 22 to 24, 1952, during the Korean War for the Royal Canadian Regiment, or RCR.

The 1st Battalion of the RCR became engaged in one of the hardest-fought battles in regimental history. Hill 355, christened by the Americans as "Little Gibraltar," would become Canada's second-bloodiest battle of the Korean War.

The 1RCR had been under fire for the better part of a month when, on October 22, the Chinese bombardment intensified, with a total of 44 and a half tons of artillery and mortar shells falling on Canadian positions.

During the first night, B Company's position had been pummelled so hard that the area had become unrecognizable to the dazed and confused Canadian defenders. Whipping in the breeze, their regimental banner, ripped by shell fragments and grimy from dirt and dust, was their only assurance they were still at their position.

The battle would intensify with continued shelling, and wave after wave of Chinese assault troops pouring through smashed defensive lines and abandoned trenches. These savage attacks forced the remaining Canadians to break up into smaller groups, becoming surrounded and cut off from their comrades at various times throughout the night.

When the shelling ceased, it became apparent to the commanders that B Company had been ripped to shreds and was no longer a cohesive force. Slipping away, Hill 355 fell into Chinese hands, but that would last but a moment. Once the Canadians were off the hill, UN mortar and artillery batteries opened up on Hill 355 in coordination with assaults from D and E Companies.

At first, D Company was repulsed by the Chinese defenders, but they stood resolute in their resolve to win back what B Company had fought so hard to keep, and, by 03:31 hours, the hill had been restored to Canadian hands.

Since 1883, the Royal Canadian Regiment has made countless sacrifices, and lost many of its own over its 139 years of service. They fought in horrendous conditions, day and night, in foreign lands, and, despite the odds often placed against them, they persevered and never gave up.

Honourable senators, please join me in recognizing the seventieth anniversary of the Battle of Hill 355 for the RCR. Today and always, let us remember the bravery and the sacrifices of all veterans of the Korean War and other wars, and let us honour our brave men and women in uniform, from all regiments, who serve Canada with pride and distinction.

To our fallen heroes who never returned home — who paid the ultimate price of freedom with their lives — we vow to never forget. We will remember them.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Sheshka Sioui Audette. She is the daughter of the Honourable Senator Audette.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

• (1410)

MOOSE HIDE CAMPAIGN

Hon. Michèle Audette: Good afternoon, senators.

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

I am proud to be a mother, but I am also proud that more and more men and male senators are walking an important path when it comes to protecting women.

I rise today to tell you about an important day. On October 18, a very large family from across Canada, the Moose Hide Campaign family, reminded us of the importance of protecting women, girls and, of course, children.

[*English*]

As you may already know, the Moose Hide Campaign is a small, Indigenous-led organization that is doing so much for women and children. They fight every day against violence. Last October, I was blessed to meet the family, including Paul, Raven, Sage, and, of course, the mother, to better understand the importance of their campaign.

Also, I witnessed 10 men fasting and doing ceremony on Parliament Hill that one day. They all got together: Canadian, Québécois and Indigenous. I want to say thank you to them: Minister Marc Miller, MP Mike Morrice, MP Gary Vidal, MP Taylor Bachrach, MP Vance Badawey, MP Jaime Battiste, MP Marc Dalton, MP Dan Vandal and MP Yasir Naqvi.

Of course, there is one special thank you — a *tshinashkumitin*, a *wela'lin* — to a man, a friend, a mentor and a senator, Brian Francis. He spent the entire day fasting during a Senate sitting. I say thank you. Thank you so much because I know every effort that you do is for Sheshka and all the women and boys that are here. I say *tshinashkumitin*.

I want to say thank you, Senator Manning. I was listening carefully to your beautiful speech yesterday, and also Senator Boisvenu. We need warriors. We need men walking beside us women.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Grace Kaazan of St. Francis Xavier High School and Manelia Kaazan, former Senate employee. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Wells.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SHOW YOUR 4-H COLOURS DAY

Hon. Robert Black: Honourable senators, I have risen in this chamber on many occasions to highlight the important role that 4-H Canada has played in my life. Today, I rise to highlight both November as 4-H Month and today as Show Your 4-H Colours Day.

Show Your 4-H Colours Day is 4-H's biggest annual event here in Canada. Every year in early November, members and alumni alike don their 4-H green to come together to spread awareness about 4-H and support the positive impacts the 4-H program is making here in Canada and abroad. The event also kicks off the month-long awareness campaign where youth members, volunteer leaders, alumni, 4-H friends and supporters demonstrate their pride in the good work of 4-H.

In celebration of Show Your 4-H Colours Day, landmarks from coast to coast to coast will be lighting up in green tonight — from Halifax City Hall in the east to the Shaw Centre here in Ottawa, and from the CN Tower in Toronto all the way out west to Port Coquitlam City Hall.

For over a century, 4-H clubs across this country have been some of the most highly respected youth development organizations in Canada and around the world. Their goal is to help young Canadians learn to do by doing in a safe, inclusive and fun environment. Today, the organization is responsible for 23,000 youth members aged 6 to 25 and 8,700 volunteers in 1,800 clubs across this country.

As an alumnus and lifelong supporter of 4-H, the annual Show Your 4-H Colours Day is a chance for me to share my respect, admiration for and commitment to the 4-H program in this chamber. As I have previously highlighted, I would not be sitting in this chamber today if it weren't for the skills and experiences that I gained through this important leadership development program.

4-H has been an integral part of the Canadian community for over 100 years, with the simple mission of helping develop the potential of young people across this country to ensure they have the tools they need to become responsible, caring, contributing adults and community leaders.

I believe that the sense of community and interest in making our world a better place to support our youth is why this program continues to thrive and survive.

4-H members pledge their heads to clearer thinking, their hearts to greater loyalty, their hands to larger service and their health to better living for their club, their community, their country and their world. For me, part of what it means to be Canadian is embodied in this 4-H pledge.

Whether or not you are personally connected to this wonderful organization, I hope you will take the time today to celebrate Show Your 4-H Colours Day with me.

Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Niko Brown. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Coyle.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

ALASKA HIGHWAY

EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Pat Duncan: Honourable senators, it is during the month of November that we offer remembrance, as Canadians are reminded of the ultimate sacrifice of so many and of our role in world conflicts.

November 20, 2022, also marks an anniversary of another war effort. This year, November 20 marks the eightieth anniversary of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' meeting at Soldier's Summit near Kluane National Park in the Yukon to mark the completion of what is now known as the Alaska Highway.

The Alaska Highway was considered an option to supply airplanes and supplies to the Soviet Union during the 1941 U.S. Lend-Lease Act. It became a necessity to the U.S. with the

bombing of Pearl Harbor. At the time of its construction, the distance was 2,333 kilometres from Dawson Creek, British Columbia, to Big Delta, Alaska.

Built in only eight months, it was rammed through true wilderness teeming with wildlife, pristine rivers, five mountain ranges and it was the most expensive World War II project undertaken by the U.S. government with an investment of \$147.8 million. Canada provided the right-of-way.

In 1946, we took over 1,954 kilometres of the road from Dawson Creek through the Yukon to the Alaska border. The Alaska Highway forever changed the Yukon. The influx of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers — 10,000 men — to the home of Yukon First Nations was recognized by Elijah Smith in the document that formed the basis of the Yukon land claim agreements, where it was called, "The Fourth Whiteman — The American Soldier."

In a debate in the Yukon Legislative Assembly, the member for Kluane, Bill Brewster, recognized many Yukon First Nations people who had contributed to the successful completion of the highway project. Piers McDonald added:

. . . many of the people he cited as having played a significant role in the construction were aboriginal people who were encountered by the American military when they came through during the construction and played a significant role in ensuring the progress was as smooth as possible. It was testimony to the incredible patience, as well as goodwill, that native people have traditionally showed when significant events like this have happened in their history.

The relationship with the First Nations of the territory and the very landscape was changed. The legacy did not end with the completion of the military road. When the federal Department of Public Works took responsibility, their employees were housed in Camp Takhini, a subdivision in Whitehorse and the neighbourhood I grew up in. One of our neighbours was the now professor Dr. Ken Coates.

On April 21, 1992, in the Speech from the Throne in the Yukon legislature, then government leader Tony Penikett added:

Recently the government took over responsibility for the Yukon portion of the Alaska Highway and the Haines Road. This transfer comes with \$23 million a year for the next 15 years for reconstruction and maintenance of the road, plus an extra \$20 million over the next four years to help rebuild the worst sections near Swift River. At the same time, the federal government remains responsible for reconstructing what is known as the Shakwak Corridor and will negotiate with the United States government to make sure that the entire section, from Destruction Bay to Beaver Creek, is brought up to standard.

These negotiations continue today with President Biden's recent \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

More than a transportation corridor, the Alaska Highway is a celebration of U.S.-Canada friendship — a cross-border relationship of families, friends, neighbours and nations. The Alaska Highway is fundamental to these relationships and of key importance to North America. I join with my Alaskan neighbours in celebrating the eightieth anniversary of its completion. *Mahsi'cho. Gínáłchish.* Thank you.

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

THE LATE VÉRONIQUE BARBE

Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu: You are quite right, Senator Audette. Men need to walk with you in your path because violence against women is above all a men's issue.

Honourable senators, today, I ask you to join with me in honouring the memory of Véronique Barbe, a 41-year-old woman and mother who was murdered by her husband in her home in Saint-Eustache, Quebec, on September 14, 2017.

On March 3, I introduced Bill S-238 in the Senate, a bill that bears her name and is dedicated to her. This bill is the result of a collaborative effort with her family to prevent any offender from posting photos, videos or other information concerning victims on social media.

Véronique's murderer refused to take down his profile picture on Facebook, photographs of Véronique and other pictures he had shared on his Facebook page.

Honourable senators, this dishonours the victim's memory and is an affront to her family. Véronique's parents will spend every minute of their lives with the memory of the loss of their daughter, who was taken from them so brutally. It is unfair that they have to fight yet again to ensure respect for their daughter's memory.

After a three-year fight, Véronique's parents have finally managed to get the murderer's Facebook account closed and receive an apology from the social media network. Unfortunately, a YouTube video posted by the murderer online shortly before the tragedy, which shows him with Véronique, is still accessible, despite several reports and requests to have this inappropriate content removed.

Honourable senators, let us all stand behind this family and report the video entitled *Intro Ugo & Véro* in order to have YouTube remove it. This video dishonours the memory of Véronique Barbe.

I also want to remind this chamber of the importance of studying Bill S-238 so that victims' families will no longer have to take steps to have content removed that dishonours the memory of their loved one. Going forward, the justice system would be responsible for that.

Honourable colleagues, Véronique's story is the story of a young woman who was killed as a result of domestic violence. This scourge kills far too many women across the country and it is another pandemic that we must tackle. We need to talk about it and mobilize to put a stop to these endless femicides.

I would remind senators that 173 women were murdered in Canada in 2021, 26 of them in Quebec, and two thirds in the context of domestic violence. Last September, a young 36-year-old woman, Karine Bélanger, was murdered and her body set on fire by her partner in Saint-Bernard, in Beauce. He had a long criminal record, and the Quebec parole board released him even though he was at high risk of reoffending and he had violated his parole conditions.

This victim's mother stated the following:

They knew that he was very dangerous. Yet, they let him out. They put him in a halfway house. There was a disconnect and my daughter paid for it

Honourable senators, let us take action to put an end to this scourge. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*English*]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Patrick Brazeau introduced Bill S-254, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages).

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

[*Translation*]

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu introduced Bill S-255, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (murder of an intimate partner, one's own child or an intimate partner's child).

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COST OF DELEGATION TO THE FUNERAL OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Senator Gold, once again my question concerns the infamous \$6,000 River Suite listed on the invoice from the Corinthia Hotel in London for Canada's delegation to the Queen's funeral.

As it turns out, leader, the hotel room billed on the invoice at £4,800 may in fact be costing Canadians more than the original presumed \$6,000. As Chris Selley points out in his article, the value of the room with the conversion on the actual day of the funeral comes out to C\$7,300.

Leader, it was too much to ask of Canadians at \$6,000, and it is certainly too much to ask of them at \$7,300. Your government still remains silent on whom the occupant of the luxury room was.

Leader, we now definitely know that it was not the Governor General, nor was it former prime minister Stephen Harper. Can you tell us who stayed in the room?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for repeating your question from yesterday. Unfortunately, in the interests of those who have other questions to ask, no doubt of insignificant importance compared to your question, I have nothing further to add to my answer.

Senator Plett: That is the most offensive thing I have heard you say, that some questions are not important enough for you to answer — a question taxpayers want to hear, and you say it is not important, you would rather listen to other questions.

Senator Gold, you have avoided answering the question now for the umpteenth time. Answer the question and we'll stop asking.

Leader, you often thank senators for giving you advance notice of questions they are going to ask. So Senator Gold, I am giving you notice that tomorrow I will ask you again. Hopefully, with this advance, you will be able to get us information and not belittle questions that taxpayers have the right to know.

Leader, Canadians deserve answers, and they are owed the transparency and accountability they were promised by this Prime Minister. We will continue to persist and ask questions on

this matter until we get clarity and an answer. Senator Gold, with this advance notice, can you commit to not have contempt for this chamber and to come prepared to this chamber tomorrow with the information I have asked for?

• (1430)

Senator Gold: I was not belittling the question at all, nor do I have contempt for this chamber, as all colleagues know. It is the case, however, that I do not have the answer to your question. You can ask it tomorrow. If I have the answer tomorrow, I will be happy to provide it.

I do not have the answer and my previous answer, which you have mischaracterized — and if I was misunderstood, my apologies — was simply that —

Senator Plett: If you were misunderstood. Either you apologize or you don't.

The Hon. the Speaker: Order, please.

Senator Gold: I see no purpose in repeating the same answer that I gave yesterday. That was the thrust of my response. I look forward to your questions tomorrow.

[Translation]

NATURAL RESOURCES

ATLANTIC LOOP

Hon. Percy Mockler: Once again, I would like to talk about the Atlantic Loop. Honourable senators, the Atlantic provinces are concerned and need reassurance and support from the federal government regarding the Atlantic Loop. Our daily newspaper, the *Acadie Nouvelle*, printed an article today under the headline "The Atlantic Loop is running out of steam."

One of Atlantic Canada's English-language newspapers, the *Telegraph Journal*, out of New Brunswick, ran an editorial under the headline "Feds must save Loop projects."

My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate, Senator Gold. Can you tell us how many meetings have taken place between federal government representatives and representatives of the Atlantic provinces since September 2022 regarding the Atlantic Loop in order to resolve the problem we are currently facing?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question, esteemed colleague. I don't have the information you're asking for, but I will try to find it and get back to you as soon as possible. That said, it is the position of the Government of Canada that connecting the electrical grids of the four Atlantic provinces and Quebec is key to eliminating our dependence on coal, creating new jobs and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

All communities in Atlantic Canada will benefit from the Atlantic Loop, an initiative that is in the interest of all Canadians, who recognize the need for a clean energy transition. The government remains convinced that this is an excellent project for the Atlantic provinces and for Canada. As Mr. Wilkinson, the Minister of Natural Resources, said recently when he was talking about the problems and barriers we are seeing, this is just a bump in the road. The government remains committed and determined to see this project through.

[English]

Senator Mockler: It is quite a bump in the road. To the Government Representative in the Senate, Senator Gold, for the people in Atlantic Canada to meet their 2030 clean energy targets, the federal government must follow through on its commitment to support the Atlantic Loop as a nation-building project: a \$5-billion initiative.

To inform the house, this project has had the verbal support of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities and the Minister of Economic Development. However, it is not clear, honourable senators, how much money the federal government is willing to invest in a nation-building project for Atlantic Canada.

Senator Gold, this project is essential for the people of New Brunswick and Atlantic Canada to meet our 2030 clean energy targets. Can you please tell us if the federal government is committed to getting the Atlantic Loop back on track without any bumps in the road? How much money are they willing to commit to this project?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. The government is committed to this project. I will repeat: Although I do not know the exact number of meetings, I am advised that there has been constant engagement on this project. Cooperation and collaboration between the federal government, the Government of Quebec and the governments of the Atlantic provinces and their respective utility companies continue and will continue through the Atlantic Loop backbone working table.

The Government of Canada is a steadfast and committed partner to this project. It is committed to working with the other Atlantic provinces and all partners on this important project. The government remains committed to seeing the Atlantic Loop see the light of day.

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION

Hon. Marie-Françoise Mégie: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate, Senator Gold. As an immigrant, I am delighted that the Government of Canada is planning to increase its immigration targets. We know that, demographically, a population can grow in three ways: through increased fertility, and we will give that some thought; through decreased mortality, which we are already seeing; or through

increased immigration. Our current population growth is primarily the result of immigration, which continues to shape who we are as Canadians. However, from one census to the next, the proportion of francophones in Canada is shrinking. What percentage of French-speaking immigrants has our government set as a target for Canada to become a truly bilingual country again?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. Ensuring the vitality of francophone communities outside Quebec continues to be a key priority for the Government of Canada, and the government remains committed to achieving the 4.4% target for French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec by 2023. The government continued to strengthen the Francophone Immigration Strategy by implementing targeted initiatives, such as dedicated streams for francophone candidates as part of the temporary residence to permanent residence pathway for essential workers and recent international graduates already in Canada.

The government has consulted widely on issues related to francophone immigration outside Quebec, including through a working group with the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, to jointly examine the possibility of a target beyond 2023, taking into consideration all suggestions as it continues to advance its work. The government looks forward to continuing to work with its partners to advance common interests, taking into account the role that immigration plays in supporting population growth and the vitality of francophone communities.

Senator Mégie: Thank you for your answer, Senator Gold. I just wanted to add a detail: We have heard a lot about immigrant students who want to come to Canada. However, as soon as they fill out the forms, they automatically receive a rejection.

Are there any specific guidelines that Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada could adopt to correct this problem and thereby reduce the growing gap between the francophone and anglophone populations?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. I will follow up with the government to see if there is anything that can be done about this.

• (1440)

[English]

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

BUSINESS OF THE COMMITTEE

Hon. Ratna Omidvar: My question is for the chair of the Internal Economy Committee, Senator Moncion, regarding interpreters and headsets.

We all know there was a really unfortunate incident two weeks ago. The members of the steering committee at the Social Affairs Committee had a discussion about it. What strategies is the Internal Economy Committee taking to ensure the proper quality of headsets and interpretation?

My understanding of your procedure is that witnesses are given a choice: Either they purchase their own headset and request reimbursement for it, or the Senate can ship them a headset. My understanding is that the latter is not used very often. In comparison, in the House of Commons, every witness who is called to testify at committee is automatically shipped a set of headphones.

Do you think that the Senate Finance and Procurement Directorate and not the clerks should adopt this practice of sending witnesses the proper headsets to ensure proper quality of translation and the health of our interpreters?

Also, what else are you planning to do to keep the witnesses and interpreters safe?

Hon. Lucie Moncion: Thank you for the question, Senator Omidvar, and thank you for providing the question before I arrived at the Senate.

There are quite a few questions within your question, so I will start with the first thing about the headsets. The witnesses have a choice: They can either have headsets that are sent to them, or they can purchase the headsets. It depends upon when they are going to be appearing and how long it is going to take for the headsets to get to them. If they ask the Senate to ship the headsets, the headsets will be shipped to them as long as we have enough time for the shipment to get to the witness. If their appearance is within a limited time that does not give them enough time to receive the headsets, they will be asked to purchase headsets and the Senate will reimburse them.

For the House of Commons, they do not always provide headsets automatically. They do when they are asked, but it is not an automatic situation.

The Senate, right now, for all of the witnesses who are going to be appearing on every committee, there is a 48-hour timeline where they are called by Senate Information Services Directorate employees. They do the sound tests with the proper equipment. If they do not have the proper equipment, they are asked to get it or it is shipped. We do the testing before the witnesses will appear. We check internet connections to make sure that when they do appear at committees, it will be working properly for the interpreters.

One thing that is so important — including for all senators — is to be careful. Just a few minutes ago, we had a colleague asking questions and putting his hand over the microphone. You have to remember that these microphones are directly linked to the interpreters' ears. We have to be careful. When we shuffle papers over the microphone, that is also going directly into the ears of our interpreters. We have to be very careful when we are using these systems, whether in committee or in the chamber.

Now, with committee chairs, the Internal Economy Committee is bringing forward a set of rules where, if witnesses are appearing and they do not have the proper headsets, they will not be allowed to testify. That is a rule that will be coming forward.

Sound levels are being monitored in every committee room, so we have to be extra careful, especially the committee chairs, to make sure we do not ask the technicians to raise the volume. There is a mandatory volume level that is safe for our interpreters. That level has to be kept in mind.

Also, regarding witnesses having proper equipment, that is going to be on the chairs of the committees to make sure that this happens.

The other portion of this is that we have been working with the interpreters for quite a while to understand all the problems. We are trying to work with the interpreters to make sure they work in a safe environment and that we, as senators, are able to do our work.

HEALTH

DRUG SHORTAGES

Hon. Jane Cordy: My question is for Senator Gold.

Senator Gold, as we enter cold and flu season, on top of the increasing COVID numbers that we are seeing, families are experiencing an alarming rise in children's illnesses across the country. The Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario here in Ottawa has reported that between the months of May and September, the hospital saw the busiest months in the organization's 50-year history. Officials with the hospital are pointing to a surge in flu and COVID-19 cases. They have seen about 10 times more patients with respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, now than before the pandemic. The virus, which disproportionately affects small children, features symptoms including fever, runny nose and coughing, and can lead to difficulty breathing.

As parents try to alleviate these symptoms for their children with medications from the local pharmacy, they are often finding empty shelves. Last week, Health Canada released a statement recognizing the shortage of infant and children's acetaminophen and ibuprofen, but gave little to no details about how they plan to address this situation. Health Canada says the shortages are because of an increase in demand, but shelves have been empty for months, Senator Gold.

Why are the shelves empty? Also, Senator Gold, could you provide us with details on how Health Canada plans to increase the supply of these much-needed products and get them to families who most need them?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question and for raising this very preoccupying situation for families across the country.

The government shares the concerns of many parents and caregivers about their families and their inability to find pediatric analgesics such as those you have mentioned.

I'm advised that Minister Duclos and Health Canada have spoken to several manufacturers, including Johnson & Johnson, Haleon and Pharmascience to reiterate the urgent need to

collaborate to find immediate solutions to this shortage so that parents and caregivers can have the medicines they need to take care of their children.

Companies that supply Canada have also been provided pathways to import foreign products, and the government is reaching out to additional suppliers to attempt to fill the gap.

Health Canada has issued a public advisory that offers parents and caregivers advice and important safety information. And as the health and safety of children remain the government's top priorities, all options to solve this shortage are on the table.

Senator Cordy: Thank you, Senator Gold. I am very pleased to hear that Minister Duclos is speaking to the manufacturers and that they are looking for other producers for those types of medication for families.

The assumption would be that demand for such products would be very similar to that for the same products south of the border, but anecdotal evidence — and that is people telling stories to the media — from families who have been to the United States report that they are not seeing the same empty shelves in the U.S. as we are seeing here in Canada.

What is the reason for the drastic shortage of infant and children's products in Canada? What are the barriers that are specific to Canada and Canadian distributors that are preventing these products from getting to Canadian shelves, and what will Health Canada do to ease these barriers so that we will have products? I am really pleased that you told us earlier that Minister Duclos is speaking to providers, but it seems that if we are having shortages in Canada, very often it is reflected in the United States or the reverse. But that does not seem to be the case. Is there a reason for that? If there is, can we work at finding solutions?

• (1450)

Senator Gold: Thank you for the supplementary question. I do not know the answer as to why — at least anecdotally — there appears to be less of a shortage south of the border than here. My understanding is that Dr. Supriya Sharma, Health Canada's Chief Medical Advisor, is of the view — and it is indeed confirmed — that the drug shortage is expected to be resolved soon, as manufacturers of these analgesics have significantly increased their production to meet domestic demand. As I mentioned before, I understand that the minister has recently spoken with a number of manufacturers who are committed to maintaining their increased production capacity over the coming months.

I do not want to speculate — that is not helpful — but we do have labelling requirements in Canada. If that is, in fact, one limiting factor for medications that come from outside of the country, I have been told that work will be done in partnership with providers to add information to the labels in both official

languages to ensure that patients and caregivers have the information they need to understand the medication they are taking.

I will make some inquiries, senator, and be happy to report back.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

BUSINESS OF THE COMMITTEE

Hon. Percy E. Downe: My question is to the Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. In 2010, I was contacted by residents of Prince Edward Island who collect a United Kingdom state pension. These pensions are indexed to inflation for pensioners in the United Kingdom as well as for those living in many other countries, including the United States. However, for U.K. pensioners living in Canada, that is not the case. Not only is this unfair to those who face pensions of declining value as a result of inflation, it represents hundreds of millions of dollars — \$450 million, according to one estimate — that is not coming to the benefit of the Canadian economy.

The U.K. government policy stands in sharp contrast to Canada where pension payments are always indexed regardless of where in the world the recipient lives. When I first learned of this situation, I wrote to the finance minister at the time, Jim Flaherty, to ask what the Canadian government was doing to alleviate this problem. He responded that they had been working on it for years, but the U.K. government would not change its position and fix the problem.

Senator Boehm, as the United Kingdom is trying to negotiate a new free trade deal with Canada, this would appear to be an excellent opportunity for the Government of Canada to impress upon its U.K. counterpart that correcting this disparity in order to have all U.K. pensions in Canada indexed is a precondition of any negotiations of a free trade deal.

Taking this into account and the role of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade in examining free trade agreements, could you advise the Senate on what issues your committee intends to study over the next year, and if the concerns I just raised could also be considered by your committee, hopefully before the conclusion of any free trade agreement with the United Kingdom?

Hon. Peter M. Boehm: Thank you very much, Senator Downe, for your question and your ongoing advocacy on what is clearly an important matter. I would also like to thank you for giving me the proverbial heads-up that you were going to ask the question.

Colleagues, I cannot and will not speak for the government. As you know, Parliament plays no role in negotiating free trade agreements or any other treaty for that matter. However,

transparency from the government is important in these matters so Parliament can play its roles of reviewing implementation legislation and holding the government to account. Of course, the committee that I have the honour to chair has a mandate to examine treaties and international agreements. The last such study was on the bill to implement the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA, the new NAFTA, in 2020.

In response to your question on the agenda of the committee, over the next year, I anticipate a very busy schedule, especially after more than two years of pandemic restrictions. The committee will continue its major study on Canada's foreign service — a fit-for-purpose examination — and elements of the foreign policy machinery within Global Affairs Canada. It will continue its comprehensive review of the provisions and operation of the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, otherwise known as the Sergei Magnitsky Law, and of the Special Economic Measures Act, a review mandated by section 16 of the Sergei Magnitsky Law five years after its entry into force. The committee will continue to regularly hold meetings on the situation in Ukraine.

Of course, there are other topics members have expressed the wish to study. The committee also had legislation referred to it just last week, this being Senator Ataullahjan's Bill S-225, the cluster munitions investment prohibition act. There will likely be more legislation, and if history is any guide, the committee can expect parts of the 2023 budget implementation act in the spring as well.

Related to this specific issue, several members of the committee, including myself, have expressed an interest in studying the progress of existing free trade agreements, or FTAs, because while Canada is exceptionally good at negotiating FTAs, we do not do a very good job of implementing them once they are in force. As you know, on March 24 of this year, Canada and the United Kingdom launched negotiations toward a bilateral free trade agreement in order to replace the Continuity Agreement that is currently in force. I note that before this, when Global Affairs Canada held public consultations between March and April of 2021, Global Affairs Canada received 22 individual submissions and a petition by the Canadian Alliance of British Pensioners with signatures representing 1,266 people, requesting that Canada seek to secure a commitment from the United Kingdom to provide annual pension increases to U.K. state pensioners living in Canada.

In my peripheral knowledge — which is rapidly fading over the past ten years — I do know that the issue was raised by the Harper government, probably after your letter to the late Minister Flaherty. It was also raised with the United Kingdom by the Trudeau government. But to the best of my knowledge, obviously, we do not have any results.

I will not commit to any committee studies on the floor of the Senate, obviously, until we can consult with both the steering committee —

[Senator Boehm]

The Hon. the Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt you, Senator Boehm, but the time for Question Period has expired.

Senators, I would like to make a comment on Question Period. On a normal day, we can get up to 10 or 11 senators asking questions. Today we're down to six. As senators are very much aware, when we have a minister present for Question Period, questions are limited to one minute, and answers to two minutes. If there were an agreement among senators to do that for regular Question Period, I would be very happy to enforce it.

[*Translation*]

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answers to the following oral questions:

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 23, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Housakos, concerning the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 7, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Seidman, concerning the *Tobacco and Vaping Products Act*.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 15, 2022, by the Honourable Senator McPhedran, concerning the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 21, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Plett, concerning the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 23, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Cormier, concerning Canada's Commitment to the Fight Against HIV/AIDS — Global Affairs Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 23, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Cormier, concerning Canada's Commitment to the Fight Against HIV/AIDS — Health Canada.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Leo Housakos on March 23, 2022)

Global Affairs Canada (GAC)

On March 18, 2022, Global Affairs Canada responded to the letter from B'nai Brith Canada related to the Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory of the UN Human Rights Council.

Canada shares some of the concerns expressed in the letter from B'nai Brith Canada regarding the Commission of Inquiry. Canada has raised its concerns about the Commission's scope, unprecedented ongoing nature, and budget in numerous settings. This approach is in keeping with Canada's longstanding opposition to the disproportionate focus placed on Israel in multilateral fora. It also reflects Canada's concern that the Commission of Inquiry may contribute to a politicization of the situation and move us further away from a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

HEALTH

TOBACCO AND VAPING PRODUCTS ACT

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Judith G. Seidman on June 7, 2022)

Health Canada

In March and April 2022, Health Canada sought input from Canadians to inform this review and is reviewing the feedback received. The final report will be tabled in Parliament in fall 2022. It will also be made public on Canada.ca.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

VIENNA CONFERENCE ON THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Marilou McPhedran on June 15, 2022)

Global Affairs Canada (GAC)

Canada remains steadfast in its commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. The Government participated in the Conference on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, which was a valuable forum to better understand the impacts of nuclear weapons use.

Canada has not signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as its provisions are incompatible with Canada's NATO commitments. As such, Canada did not observe the Meeting of States Parties. That said, Canada remains concerned over the slow pace of nuclear disarmament.

Our efforts are rooted in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This Treaty is the foundation for the global pursuit of disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Canada will continue to work with partners and advocate essential steps such as the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and commencing long overdue negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

PUBLIC SAFETY

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Donald Neil Plett on June 21, 2022)

Testifying before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, on July 25, 2022, the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Brenda Lucki said:

"I did not interfere in the investigation around this tragedy. Nor did I experience political interference. Specifically, I was not directed to publicly release information about the weapons used by the perpetrator to help advance pending gun control legislation..."

Keeping the government informed through timely and accurate information sharing is not interference. It's standard procedure and these situational updates are provided without compromising the operational integrity of an investigation."

Further, regarding the April 28, 2020, meeting with Nova Scotia RCMP officials, the Commissioner explained:

"Regarding my use of the word 'promise' during the meeting I had with my team following that press conference, at that time and in that context, I was trying to convey that I had confirmed to the Minister that the information about the weapons would be released during the press conference – a confirmation made based on information I had been provided."

Due to a miscommunication, this was not the case, and I felt I had misinformed the Minister and, by extension, the Prime Minister."

FINANCE

[English]

CANADA'S COMMITMENT TO THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV/AIDS

(Response to question raised by the Honourable René Cormier on June 23, 2022)

Global Affairs Canada (GAC)

Canada remains a strong and generous supporter of the Global Fund, our largest investment in global health. Canada has contributed over \$3.9 billion to the Global Fund since its inception, and this funding has helped save 50 million lives. Recognizing the critical work of the Global Fund in increasing access to prevention, treatment and care for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria around the world, Canada is contributing an additional C\$1.21 billion to the Global Fund's seventh replenishment, as announced by Prime Minister Trudeau on September 21, 2022. This contribution will support the Global Fund's work to save 20 million more lives and to achieve our collective goal of ending HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics by 2030.

(Response to question raised by the Honourable René Cormier on June 23, 2022)

Public Health Agency of Canada

Canada is committed to ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. The twenty-fourth AIDS Conference showcased Canada's response on the world stage including innovations by community-based organizations.

In 2020, an estimated 62,790 people were living with HIV in Canada. In 2021, \$88.5 million was invested by the Government of Canada to address Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections (STBBI), including \$33.4 million by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to support community-based organizations. HIV stakeholders have called for increased funding to \$100 million annually as per Standing Committee reports in 2004 and 2019. Senator Cormier met with the Minister of Health on March 25, 2021, to discuss his motion.

From 2016-17 to 2020-21, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research invested over \$228 million on HIV/AIDS research and over \$63 million on Hepatitis C research. From 2017 to 2022, Indigenous Services Canada allocated \$37.5 million and \$11 million ongoing for STBBI programs and services for First Nations and Inuit communities.

On August 1, 2022, the Government of Canada announced that PHAC would invest \$17.9 million to expand HIV testing in Canada. Of that, \$8 million will go toward a community-based self-testing initiative and \$9.9 million to the National Microbiology Laboratory to expand HIV testing in northern, remote or isolated communities.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION NEGATIVED

Hon. Leo Housakos moved:

That the Senate do now adjourn.

The Hon. the Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say, "Yay."

Some Hon. Senators: Yay.

The Hon. the Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please say, "Nay."

Some Hon. Senators: Nay.

The Hon. the Speaker: In my opinion, the nays have it.

I see two senators rising.

And two honourable senators having risen:

The Hon. the Speaker: Do we have agreement on a bell?

Some Hon. Senators: One hour.

The Hon. the Speaker: Call in the senators.

• (1600)

Motion negatived on the following division:

YEAS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Ataullahjan	Marshall
Batters	Martin
Boisvenu	Mockler
Carignan	Plett
Housakos	Richards
MacDonald	Seidman
Manning	Wells—14

NAYS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Anderson	Gerba
Arnot	Gignac
Audette	Gold
Bellemare	Klyne

Black	Kutcher	Duncan	Sorensen
Boehm	LaBoucane-Benson	Dupuis	Woo
Boniface	Loffreda	Francis	Yussuff—45
Bovey	Marwah	Gagné	
Brazeau	McCallum		
Busson	Mégie		
Clement	Moncion		
Cordy	Omidvar		
Cormier	Osler		
Cotter	Pate	Greene	Verner—3
Coyle	Petitclerc	McPhedran	
Dagenais	Quinn		
Dasko	Ravalia		
Dawson	Ringuette		
Deacon (<i>Nova Scotia</i>)	Saint-Germain		

ABSTENTIONS
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

(At 4:05 p.m., pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on September 21, 2022, the Senate adjourned until 2 p.m., tomorrow.)

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