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Tuesday, November 29, 2022

The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, November 29, 2022

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

Prayers.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, there have been consultations and there is an agreement to allow a photographer in the Senate Chamber to photograph the introduction of a new senator.

Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

NEW SENATOR

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that the Clerk of the Senate has received a certificate from the Registrar General of Canada showing that Leonard Andrew Cardozo has been summoned to the Senate.

[*Translation*]

INTRODUCTION

The Hon. the Speaker having informed the Senate that there was a senator without waiting to be introduced:

The following honourable senator was introduced; presented His Majesty's writ of summons; took the oath prescribed by law, which was administered by the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel; and was seated:

Hon. Andrew Cardozo, of Ottawa, Ontario, introduced between Hon. Marc Gold, P.C., and Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson.

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that the honourable senator named above had made and subscribed the Declaration of Qualification required by the Constitution Act, 1867, in the presence of the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel, the Commissioner appointed to receive and witness the said declaration.

• (1410)

[*English*]

CONGRATULATIONS ON APPOINTMENT

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, on behalf of my colleagues in the Government Representative Office, I would like to welcome Senator Andrew Cardozo to the Senate of Canada.

While new to this chamber, Senator Cardozo is familiar to many of us through his writing, whether for his monthly contributions to *The Hill Times*, as a regular columnist for the *Toronto Star* or as a contributor on timely and important issues in other major newspapers.

[*Translation*]

As founder of the Pearson Centre for Progressive Policy, he has focused on multiculturalism, anti-racism, diversity and equity, broadcasting and cultural policy as well as skills development — particularly, and most recently, the future of work. His knowledge and experience in all of these areas will be a valuable asset to the Red Chamber.

[*English*]

In a recent interview, Senator Cardozo stated that, as a former CRTC commissioner, he is proudest of being part of the panel that approved the licence for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, which is still going strong more than two decades later.

Besides all of his professional achievements, Senator Cardozo has been an active volunteer with the YMCA-YWCA, the Vancouver Institute of Media Arts and with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ottawa. He was honoured as Big Brother of the Year.

Honourable colleagues, please join me in welcoming Senator Andrew Cardozo.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable Senator Andrew Cardozo, my colleagues in the Senate Conservative Caucus join me in wishing you the warmest of welcomes to the Senate of Canada. Today, you are officially embarking on a new chapter of your life. I'm sure all my Senate colleagues will agree that every new swearing-in ceremony calls us back to reflect on our own and that we have all shared in the excitement and anticipation you are likely feeling today.

This day will forever represent a special moment in your history — one that is marked above all by the honour that has been bestowed upon you and the weight of the responsibility that has been entrusted to you.

As you look ahead to your future in the upper chamber, I hope it is of great reassurance to you that you are not only being called to serve in one of our country's greatest institutions but being welcomed to a new family — the Senate family. While our Senate family is made up of many varying opinions and perspectives that often cause us to disagree, we are all united in our goal and duty, which is to ensure that the best interests of all Canadians are served and represented.

I trust you will keep that at the forefront of your service to Ontarians and all Canadians in the years to come.

Senator Cardozo, your experience and talents are a welcome addition, which will undoubtedly enrich the debates and dialogues of this chamber. Your rich background in public policy

and commitment to the issues that are important to you will guide you in your journey in this institution and make for tremendous contributions to the future of the Senate.

I, along with the rest of our Senate colleagues, look forward to the unique perspective you will bring to our deliberations, and we are eager to work collaboratively with you to deliver the best results for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

On behalf of the Senate Conservative Caucus, congratulations and welcome to the upper chamber.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain: Honourable senators, I am very pleased to join my colleagues from all groups and caucuses in welcoming Senator Leonard Andrew Cardozo.

[*English*]

While it may be the first time, Senator Cardozo, that you are present in this chamber, no one is thinking of you as a stranger to the study of legislation, federal politics, our work in this chamber or to the Senate's overall contribution to Canadian society. Indeed, you have been one of Canada's leading voices on public policy for many years. Whether as a columnist, a professor at the Carleton University's School of Journalism and Communication, a commissioner of the CRTC or as the head of the Pearson Centre for Progressive Policy, you have brought attention to important and sensitive issues. Your contributions have helped Canada become a more progressive and fair country, and I have no doubt that you will pursue that great legacy in your time at the Senate.

Despite your very impressive career, what strikes me the most about you, Senator Cardozo, is your deep social involvement in your community. Over the years, you have been active in the Catholic Centre for Immigrants, the YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region, the Media Awareness Network and the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ottawa. All those organizations were fortunate to count on you for leadership and support.

As President of the Pearson Centre, you have often given a platform for senators to express their views. Many colleagues have been invited to events and conferences. For my part, I remember fondly co-chairing with you a successful panel on the work of Parliament in front of a wide audience of diplomats. I now know that was only the beginning of our collaboration.

You said recently in an interview that the role of the Senate as a place of sober second thought means that legislation is often improved here, and that senators are also able to shine a spotlight on issues that deserve attention. It seems to me you already fully understand what we senators aim to do, as well as what your role and purpose in the chamber are going to be.

I have a feeling you will hit the ground running in your new role, but if you ever find yourself in need of anything, please know that the Independent Senators Group will always be ready to help.

Finally, I also know we share a common passion for the arts. I am very impressed by the artistic side of you. While as a painter you specialize in the abstract, I have a feeling that your contribution as a senator will be a tangible one.

From all the members of the Independent Senators Group, I wish you a warm welcome to the Senate of Canada. I have no doubt that you are in the right place at the right time.

Thank you, *meegwetch*.

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, on behalf of my colleagues in the Progressive Senate Group, I'm pleased to join with other leaders in welcoming another new voice to this chamber.

Senator Cardozo, I couldn't resist finding some apt words from former Prime Minister Pearson in recognition of him being the namesake of your think tank. He once said:

We must keep on trying to solve problems, one by one, stage by stage, if not on the basis of confidence and cooperation, at least on that of mutual toleration and self-interest.

I'm sure, Senator Cardozo, you're aware of the source, but for the benefit of others who might not, that was part of his Nobel Lecture on peace, delivered before he was prime minister. He was speaking about diplomacy during the Cold War. Although this speech was delivered 65 years ago, I think we can all imagine a time of tension between Washington and Moscow.

It is my belief that those words can also be of use here as you take your place in the upper chamber. We, too, are trying to solve problems, and although you will find differing proposed solutions — and that is a good thing — it is often necessary to remind ourselves that we all have the same self-interest: trying to make this country, Canada — and indeed, the world — a better place.

Senator Cardozo, you describe yourself on LinkedIn as a “wanna-be thinker in search of better ideas.” In this day and age, we can find things everywhere, Senator Cardozo. I certainly hope that you find some here. I know I speak for all Progressive senators when I say that we look forward to hearing what ideas you have brought with you.

• (1420)

On behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, welcome to the Senate of Canada. We look forward to working with you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Scott Tannas: On behalf of the Canadian Senators Group, I add my voice today in welcoming Senator Andrew Cardozo to the Senate of Canada.

When you were appointed, your biography said the following:

Andrew Cardozo is a recognized expert on public policy, a columnist, and artist. A think-tank leader, his public policy areas of expertise span Canadian government and politics . . .

As a think-tank leader, you are known for presenting bold new ideas to address sometimes complex issues. I have no doubt that these ideas will find a welcome audience, and maybe, now that you're inside the policy-making machine, your proposals will move forward into action.

I read with interest your November 4, 2019, article in *The Hill Times*, in which you provided some bold proposals to deal with a lack of representation for Alberta and Saskatchewan in policy making at the higher echelons of the Government of Canada. You recommended the appointment to cabinet of some of our Senate colleagues, right here in this chamber, from Alberta and Saskatchewan. They're sitting here now. I sadly noted that I was not on your list. I hope to impress you in the future, and we hope that you will continue with those bold ideas that so many Canadians noticed, admired and identified with.

Welcome again, sir. Your perspective is very welcome here: It's needed.

On behalf of the Canadian Senators Group, we all look forward to working with you.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Alice Cardozo, daughter of the Honourable Senator Cardozo; Anthony Cardozo, his son; and Joann Garbig, a member of his family; along with friends of the honourable senator, including former premier of Ontario Dalton McGuinty.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I received a notice from the Government Representative in the Senate who requests, pursuant to rule 4-3(1), that the time provided for the consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable Jean Lapointe, former senator, whose death occurred on November 18, 2022.

I remind senators that pursuant to our rules, each senator will be allowed only 3 minutes and they may speak only once, and the time for Tributes shall not exceed 15 minutes.

[*Translation*]

TRIBUTES

THE LATE HONOURABLE JEAN LAPOINTE, O.C., O.Q.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, today I rise to pay tribute to former senator Jean Lapointe, who passed away on November 18. I sympathize with all who remember him as a friend.

As a senator, he made many contributions, but people will remember him first and foremost as an actor, singer and comic, an entertainer who spent decades making audiences laugh. His influence on the arts in my province, Quebec, cannot be overstated.

In 1955, he and Jérôme Lemay founded Les Jérolas — the name was a combination of Jérôme and Lapointe — a duo whose blend of music and comedy delighted spectators. Their popularity earned them a coveted appearance on “The Ed Sullivan Show” in 1963 and a sold-out show at the Olympia in Paris. They often appeared on stage at Montreal's most popular cabarets, such as Charivari and La Barak, as well as at venues like Chez Gérard, La Porte Saint-Jean, Le Coronet and Eldorado.

In his career as an actor, former Senator Lapointe won a Genie award and a Jutra award in 2004 for his role in Érik Canuel's film *Le dernier tunnel*. He was honoured at the Just for Laughs gala in 2005 to mark his fiftieth anniversary in the entertainment industry. He was also inducted into the Order of Canada and appointed as an Officer of the Ordre national du Québec. According to his daughter Anne Elizabeth, he was particularly proud of La Maison Jean Lapointe, an addictions treatment centre he founded in 1982 after fighting his own battle with alcoholism.

Quebec lost one of its beloved children, whose career began in Montreal's smoky nightclubs in the 1950s and 1960s. He appeared in the most watched program of that decade, he performed on Paris' most famous stage, and he later served with honour in the Senate of Canada. During his last speech in the Red Chamber, he summarized his career as follows, and I quote: “I did not come here to fight; I came here to try to bring a little peace.”

In 2011, as an artist, he told *La Presse* the following, and I quote:

I don't think an artist retires. I've still got that fire in my belly. As long as I can move, I will keep going. This is my whole life.

That's exactly what he did.

Jean Lapointe is survived by his wife Mercédès, his seven children and his two grandsons. I wish to express my sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to a great Quebecer, an exceptional man who left his mark both on Quebec and the entire country. We are deeply saddened by the recent passing of the Honourable Jean Lapointe.

Above all, I want to express my deepest condolences to his family, his fans and all those from whom he commanded — and will continue to command — admiration and respect. During his maiden speech in the Senate, the Honourable Jean Lapointe shared his views on tributes like the one we are paying him today. He said, and I quote:

I humbly offer a suggestion that would no doubt reduce the time spent on the interminably long tributes occasioned by deaths, retirements, or celebrations of famous people.

I realize that on such occasions some of our colleagues use the opportunity to speak more about themselves. My suggestion is therefore as follows. In the event of a death, or when tributes are made to living persons, I suggest that both Senate leaders make a short speech to mark the occasion.

The good old times.

There may be exceptional circumstances, where people acknowledge that a colleague was a very close personal friend of the departed, and I can accept this.

As you can see, he was very diplomatic.

I'll be brief, dear colleagues, in order to respect his wishes and in honour of his courage to speak to the Senate at the first opportunity made available to him about a matter of general interest. I'll be brief, but I hope nevertheless to do justice to a man with such a brilliant and rich career.

Jean Lapointe was an artist of a thousand talents, a singer-songwriter, humourist and comedian, and throughout his professional life he was generous with his talent and his accomplishments, in this place and elsewhere.

The great success of his duo Les Jérolas earned him two invitations to "The Ed Sullivan Show," in 1963 and 1967, which was a first for a Quebec duo. They made an appearance even before the Beatles on that prestigious American show, in addition to appearing twice at the Olympia in Paris, the ultimate venue at the time for francophone artists.

As a senator, Jean Lapointe dedicated himself primarily to defending the interests of people grappling with a gambling or substance addiction. This cause that he championed was a major theme throughout his personal and professional life.

He embodied a model of courage that required you to never deny, to get back up again and again, to succeed and to give back. His legacy will remain in our collective memory and live on through La Maison Jean Lapointe, which he established and which continues to help the vulnerable.

It is thanks to him that many people now find the strength to ask for help and receive the help they need. For this, as well as the artistic and compassionate legacy he leaves behind, my message to him is, "Bravo, Honourable Jean Lapointe."

• (1430)

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Tannas: Honourable senators, I rise to pay tribute to the late Jean Lapointe, a senator from Saurel, Quebec. He was an actor, singer, comedian and philanthropist before later becoming a senator. He was a true artist in every sense of the word.

He began his career in the arts playing characters in Quebec cabarets in the fifties, and became half of the comedic group Les Jérolas until 1974. He was also a movie and TV star with 36 acting credits, including playing Maurice Duplessis in a TV miniseries in 1978, showing that he was clearly destined to be in politics later in life. As a singer-songwriter, he recorded 18 albums, and wrote and performed some classic music known to an entire generation of young, school-aged francophones across Canada.

Throughout his life, Jean Lapointe battled personal demons with addiction. In 1982, an addiction treatment centre in Montreal was renamed La Maison Jean Lapointe for which he was a board member. To support the centre, the Jean Lapointe Foundation was founded, and today supports youth centres in Montreal and Trois-Rivières. These centres have treated over 38,000 individuals with addictions.

He was named to the Senate in 2001 and sat in this place until 2010. His personal background dominated his work in the Senate, where he introduced numerous bills to limit the location of video lottery terminals — which are highly addictive to some — to locations where gambling already occurs such as casinos and racetracks.

Senator Lapointe was an Officer of the Order of Canada. His passing is a loss for Quebec, for the arts community and for francophones across Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Claude Carignan: Honourable colleagues, I rise today to pay tribute to a great Quebecer and a great Canadian who passed away on November 18, 2022.

Our former colleague Senator Jean Lapointe passed away surrounded by his loved ones at the age of 86. Following a brilliant career as a comedian, singer, songwriter, actor and philanthropist, Jean Lapointe was appointed to the Senate on June 13, 2001, by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and sat in the Senate as a Liberal — he did have faults, after all — until his mandatory retirement at the age of 75 on December 6, 2010.

I want to extend my condolences to Jean's family, to his many friends and colleagues in the arts and philanthropy communities, and to all Quebecers, because Jean Lapointe was truly part of our family for decades.

In November 2010, a few days before Jean retired from the Senate, I had the honour of paying tribute to him for the occasion. I looked him straight in the eye and said the following, and I quote:

The man I wish to pay tribute to here today is a wonderful friend to people struggling with various addictions, including alcohol, drugs and gambling, a man who understands, as his own song lyrics say, that “Everyone has a Story,” a man who encourages those people to grow, even inviting them to express themselves, saying “Sing me your Song,” a man who has helped and supported others by saying, “Let’s Sing Together.”

In 1982, Jean Lapointe very generously joined the fight against alcoholism by lending his name to a drug treatment centre that would become La Maison Jean Lapointe.

In 1983, he issued a call of hope to people struggling with addictions with the following words, “Bring your sick flowers; we will put them in the sun. Yes, now is the time for sick flowers to come back to life and experience a summer like no other.”

In 1984, my father was one of those flowers who answered his call.

Honourable senators, Jean Lapointe was an infinitely kind and altruistic man with extraordinary artistic talent.

I will close with this little anecdote that Guy Fournier, a Quebec artist involved in the world of communications, shared with us at the time of Jean Lapointe’s death. When Guy Fournier founded the television station Télévision Quatre-Saisons, he said that before going on stage for the big launch, he was overcome with stage fright. This is how he tells the story:

A few minutes before I left my dressing room, there was a knock at the door. It was Jean Lapointe.

“I came to give you a hug to make you feel better.”

I barely knew the guy, but he had guessed that I was scared to death. He hugged me for a solid minute, then whispered in my ear, “You have nothing to worry about. People will like you if they get the feeling you like them. That’s my secret to getting over stage fright.”

I doubt Jean Lapointe ever had stage fright, because Quebecers adored him.

Farewell, Jean.

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Honourable senators, I, too, would like to all too briefly pay tribute to the Honourable Jean Lapointe, an important figure in Quebec, known for his songs and for his great talent as a composer, comedian, impersonator and actor.

Though he is dead, he will continue to live on in the hearts and minds of Quebecers through the lasting memories he created and his remarkable philanthropic institution, La Maison Jean Lapointe, which, for 40 years, has been helping men and women escape the clutches of alcoholism as he did himself.

[Senator Carignan]

He joined this chamber rather unexpectedly in 2001 and held the position for nine years as “a Liberal in quotation marks,” as he was fond of saying. He never liked political posturing in the Senate and he was not shy about speaking out about the ways time was being wasted, something that still happens all too often today.

As Senator Saint-Germain pointed out, in his maiden speech in the Senate, Senator Lapointe proposed to reduce the time spent on the “tributes occasioned by deaths,” which he described as interminably long. Mr. Lapointe, wherever you are today, we’re listening to you and we allocated only 15 minutes to your tributes when you deserve hours of them.

Even though politics made him “unhappy” and “disappointed,” in 2022, he still saw the Senate as “the guardian angel of the people, of minorities and of the poor.”

He arrived in Ottawa a declared and staunch federalist, and said shortly after his retirement that he understood the reality of the two solitudes, saying about Quebecers, and I quote, “We don’t think the same way, we’re not made the same way.”

In an interview with Patrice Roy from Radio-Canada television a few months ago, he said, “One day or another, Quebec will be independent. That’s my wish.”

Those who worked with him unanimously describe him as spirited and tormented, but very compassionate. He sung to Quebecers about things they could relate to.

To his daughter Anne Elizabeth, to his son, Jean-Marie, and to the other members of the Lapointe family, I offer my deepest condolences on the passing of one of our greats.

Thank you.

[*English*]

FIFA WORLD CUP 2022—MIGRANT WORKERS IN QATAR

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, as many of us are watching the World Cup, let us also remember 23-year-old Tej Narayan Tharu from Nepal. In August 2018, Tej died working on the Al Wakrah stadium being built for the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. His mother Sita expressed anguish with these words:

I’m heartbroken. My son has gone for ever. He’s never coming back. He has a small daughter. Life is long and hard. How will she survive?

Senators, those are the heartbreaking words of one mother. Unfortunately, there are thousands of mothers, like her, of migrant workers in Qatar, working towards the World Cup.

In 2021, Human Rights Watch found that foreign workers continued to suffer from punitive and illegal wage deductions, and faced months of unpaid wages for long hours of grueling work in unsafe conditions, with passport confiscations, high recruitment fees and deceptive recruitment practices continuing to be widespread.

• (1440)

Qatar has a labour force of more than 2 million working under these conditions. Even more horrifically, a *Guardian* investigation published last year found that more than 6,500 migrant workers from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have died in Qatar since it won the right to host the World Cup.

Sadly, FIFA continues to be complicit in this tragedy. Instead of condemning the regime, they have written to all 32 teams competing at the World Cup, telling them to “now focus on the football!”

Thankfully, certain teams and nations have spoken up. For example, Paris and other French cities are refusing to screen matches in public areas, despite France being the defending champion.

Denmark is wearing “toned-down” shirts in protest, with kit provider Hummel saying they “don’t wish to be visible during a tournament that has cost thousands of people their lives.”

European football associations from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland have endorsed calls for a compensation fund for migrant workers.

As we become engrossed in these games, let us remember victims like Tej, and 29-year-old Mohammad Shahid Miah, from Bangladesh, who died in one of the numerous, highly unsafe accommodations for migrant workers in Qatar, as the flood water in his room came into contact with an exposed electrical cable, electrocuting him.

While watching the games, let us not forget the senseless loss of life, the families they have left behind and the mothers who will never see their boys return home.

Thank you, senators.

Some 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 Rachel Huntsman. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Dalphond.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*English*]

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Hon. Patricia Bovey: Honourable senators, I am one very proud Canadian, and that pride swelled in me in Sharm el-Sheikh during COP 27.

For the first time at a COP, Canada had a pavilion — due to a request for one having been made a number of times. Our pavilion was a huge success — and, I might add, when all was said and done, it came in under budget.

Its design, programming, staff, energy and humanism contributed to it being a COP hub — not only for Canadians, but for those from other countries as well. The featured Canadian images around the outside became photo op spots — the logo on its wall was a feature point, and the wooden Canada pins made here in Ottawa were coveted.

More importantly, during the two weeks, the staff organized and presented 86 panel discussions with speakers from across Canada of all ages and many disciplines. Topics included each of the issues the Egyptian presidency designated for special days, and other topics of particular relevance to Canada: our climate concerns, research and actions. The presentations were excellent.

I was particularly proud of the contributions made by Canada’s Indigenous representatives. From the pavilion’s opening — featuring Inuit, First Nations and Métis leaders, and a song by the internationally acclaimed drummer, dancer and politician Peter Irniq — to its closing, Canada’s role at COP was strong and recognized.

The honesty and hope expressed articulately by so many speakers was inspiring, and the challenges put out were key. I was particularly encouraged and excited by the Indigenous youth who took part. Colleagues, with their understanding of the precariousness of the world around us, their knowledge of nature and centuries-old Indigenous partnering with nature, their commitment to sustainability and their constructive ways to turn the tide of climate devastation, I have hope. I do have hope for the future.

My concern is how we get to that future. How do we come together here at home, and globally, to renew the land, water and air? Can we really come together as partners from our various fields of endeavour and livelihoods to make that change soon enough? The youth thought so, and they have ideas that are not only worth listening to, but also worth acting upon.

In the midst of the pride I felt for our pavilion, the presentations and the voices of all our presenters, there were other aspects of COP, and its debates and deliberations, which I will speak about at another time.

For now, I start with big congratulations to everyone who planned, participated in and had any hand in the delivery of its programming, and those who spoke on the panels; they all moved the needle. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[Translation]

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Stephen Pike. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Miville-Dechéne.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne: Honourable colleagues, last week I used this time as an opportunity to bring some levity to the chamber and share the story of some Quebec cows in search of freedom.

However, today I have a much more serious message. I want to talk about human beings in search of freedom, for they are trapped in forced labour and child labour around the world. This Friday, December 2, is the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery. It is estimated that 50 million people are victims of modern slavery. This is 10 million more than in 2016. However, it is worth noting that Canada is making progress.

Yesterday, after years of stalling, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development completed its clause-by-clause consideration of Bill S-211, An Act to enact the Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chains Act. It should pass third reading shortly. This will be the culmination of nearly four years of work, in close collaboration with MP John McKay and the All Party Parliamentary Group to End Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

I'd also like to salute someone who's with us in the Senate today, Stephen Pike, a lawyer and expert on governance issues who helped me examine Bill S-211. The Senate voted unanimously to ensure that companies operating in Canada do their part and are transparent about the risk that their supply chains have a captive labour force. That is a starting point.

Modern slavery is a complex problem. These violations of human rights originate in the poverty and vulnerability of one side, and the wealth and power of the other. As Senator Jaffer stated, a current example is the construction and renovation of eight soccer stadiums in Qatar, where fans are currently watching World Cup matches.

Over the past 12 years, hundreds of thousands of Nepali went to work at these construction sites. Known as good, cheap workers, they were assigned the most dangerous jobs according to an investigation by the newspaper *Le Monde*.

Many of these workers had to borrow large sums at exorbitant rates to obtain the necessary papers. They're mostly working to repay the debt incurred to be able to work. It is the vicious circle

of forced labour. Many Nepalese returned home injured or in caskets. Without any compensation, they have left their debts to their families.

In 2020, under pressure from the International Labour Organization, Qatar imposed the adoption of a minimum wage and allowed migrants to change jobs. These reforms were more than necessary.

All these stories were disturbing, of course, but not enough for a boycott. When the lights are up and the matches start, all that is forgotten. Unfortunately, and despite our legislative progress, these migrations of desperate humans, looking to feed their family, could be on the rise because of climate change and the conflicts it fuels.

For wealthy countries like Canada, we need to look reality in the face and show some integrity. I hope we will make the right choice. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[English]

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Sarah Laframboise. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Kutcher.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SUPPORT OUR SCIENCE

Hon. Stan Kutcher: Honourable senators, I rise to bring attention to a group of young people across Canada whose work will provide the scientific discoveries of today and tomorrow, and improve the health and well-being of our grandchildren and their grandchildren.

They belong to a loose affiliation of individuals who spend much of their time working — and working extremely hard. These are the young people who are deeply engaged in scientific research. They are our hope for a much brighter tomorrow.

Yet, they toil in relative obscurity, and their remuneration for the foundational work they do falls well below what we call the "poverty line." They are also the members of Support Our Science. Some of them are in the gallery today.

Support Our Science has one goal: to increase graduate student and post-doctoral funding in Canada. It represents tens of thousands of graduate students and post-doctoral scholars advocating for an increase in funding for those who are on the front line of innovation and transformative research. They are advocating for a living wage so that the next generation of researchers will not need to live in poverty. Yes, you heard that correctly.

• (1450)

These young people — actually, not all so young, aged between 22 and 42 — who are doing the research that will lead to life-saving treatments, better health and well-being for all Canadians, are often living hand-to-mouth.

In Canada, graduate student Tri-Council-awarded scholarships have not increased since 2003. The average salary for a Master of Science candidate is \$19,000 and PhD, \$21,000.

According to Support Our Science, the majority of these federally funded graduate and post-doctoral scholarships amount to less than the minimum wage, forcing some of the brightest minds in Canada to barely get by or to leave the country in order to seek better-funded positions abroad. This is unacceptable.

Support Our Science has two primary requests of the federal government, which has the authority and responsibility for the Tri-Councils. First, increase the value of graduate scholarships and post-doctoral fellowships by 48% to match inflation since 2003 and index it to the Consumer Price Index.

Secondly, increase by 50% the number of graduate scholarships and post-doctoral fellowships awarded by the Tri-Council; this is essential for building our science research capacity.

Such modest investment made now will support the next generation of leaders in science and research and will help Canada to be better equipped to tackle the challenges of today and tomorrow.

We have noted that the acronym for Support Our Science is SOS. We know what that acronym means. Please join me in showing our appreciation to Support Our Science for supporting our science. Thank you, *wela'liog*.

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Ms. Cynthia Black. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Hartling.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

THE LATE BENOÎT DUGUAY

Hon. René Cormier: Honourable senators, some human beings possess such an intense passion for their people and their culture that it becomes their lifelong pursuit.

My Acadian compatriot, Benoît Duguay, who passed away recently at the age of 81, was one such human being. Acadia was saddened to learn of the death of one of its own, a deeply committed journalist, activist and strong advocate for the French language.

Benoît Duguay was a selfless activist who studied journalism and then began his career in journalism at Radio-Canada Acadie's Moncton station in 1970. Over the course of his impressive career, he was the first parliamentary correspondent in Fredericton, hosted a number of public affairs programs on radio and television, and anchored "Le Ce soir," a news program now known as "Téléjournal Acadie."

He was the founding president of the Acadian section of the Union internationale des journalistes et de la presse de langue française and the organization's international VP for the Americas.

President Chirac made him a knight of France's Legion of Honour during the 1999 Francophonie Summit in Moncton.

A tireless citizen, Mr. Duguay was involved in several organizations after a 30-year career in journalism. He contributed to the Salon du livre de Dieppe, the Association des universités du troisième âge du Nouveau-Brunswick and the magnificent event called Lire et faire lire Acadie. He was the former chair of the New Brunswick Arts Board and spent several years as president of the Association des boursières et boursiers France-Acadie, ABBFA, which offers post-secondary scholarships to young students from France who want to study in Acadia at the Université de Moncton or the Université Sainte-Anne. Benoît Duguay had an unwavering love for the French language, the francophonie and France, as mentioned by his friend and colleague, Louise Imbeault, former director of Radio-Canada Acadie, who said, and I quote:

I think it goes without saying that Benoît was enthusiastic about Acadia, about the francophonie. He was a man who put so much of his energy into defending the French language.

Indeed, Benoît Duguay leaves behind a legacy of enthusiasm, energy, passion, authentic activism and immeasurable love for the magnificent French language, a language that must be protected, defended and promoted more than ever in our country. He had so many qualities that will continue to inspire us for a long time.

All my gratitude, dear Benoît. Rest in peace.

Thank you, *meegwetch*.

Hon. senators: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

THE LATE HONOURABLE JEAN LAPOINTE, O.C., O.Q.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I would now ask that you rise and join me in a moment of silence for our former colleague the late Honourable Jean Lapointe.

(*Honourable senators then stood in silent tribute.*)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Salma Ataullahjan introduced Bill S-257, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act (protecting against discrimination based on political belief).

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY FOREIGN INFLUENCE IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to examine and report on foreign influence in the electoral process in Canada; and

That the committee submit its final report no later than June 30, 2023.

QUESTION PERIOD

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

ELECTION INTEGRITY

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, on November 7 reports surfaced of Chinese interference in our 2019 election, alleging that the Prime Minister had been briefed by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, or CSIS, in January 2020 that 11 federal candidates had been targets of the Chinese Communist Party's, or CCP's, interference campaign.

Following these reports, the Prime Minister allowed the world to believe that he raised the issue of Chinese interference with President Xi Jinping at the G20 summit. Now, weeks after the

original report surfaced, the Prime Minister claims that he had not been briefed on any federal candidates receiving any money from China.

• (1500)

Senator Gold, the Prime Minister's incoherence is completely unbecoming of the magnitude of the issue and, indeed, his office. Can you give us some clarity on what the Prime Minister knew and when he knew about it?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. Safeguarding Canada's electoral system and our institutions is a vital, non-partisan issue that the government takes very seriously. It is understood that the Prime Minister is regularly briefed on security concerns: That's the job of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has also said that he did not receive briefings on specific candidates or the allegations that particular candidates may have been funded illegally. In that regard, that is his statement.

With regard to the issue, nonetheless, security officials have been asked to follow up on the reports. As confirmed by Minister Mendicino, the government is going to cooperate with the parliamentary committee when it comes to the disclosure of allegations that have been addressed by an independent body. In that regard, it's worth noting that there have been independent findings that the elections both in 2019 and in 2021 were fair.

Senator Plett: We can see exactly how seriously the Prime Minister took it. He says one thing when he's talking about what he raised with President Xi and another when he is asked here in Canada about when he was briefed. He's taking it so seriously that he's telling us two different things.

Leader, in just a few short weeks, the story has changed many times. The reports told us that the Prime Minister had been briefed. Now he is saying he hadn't been. It is entirely possible that these reports could have been wrong. If that were the case, why didn't anyone in the apparatus of government say that before now? Are we supposed to believe, government leader, that the Prime Minister raised an issue with the Chinese president that he now claims he had never been briefed on, or did he confront President Xi based on a news article?

Senator Gold, this type of incoherence is unacceptable on the question of the integrity of our democratic process. Is your government being intentionally incoherent to avoid having to answer the question outright?

Senator Gold: The answer to that question is no. The reports of attempts to interfere with our democratic institutions, whether from China or from other countries, are well-known. Indeed, the annual report of NSICOP made the point that the question of Chinese interference is a long-standing concern and preoccupation that is well-known. That is a separate and distinct issue from whether the Prime Minister was briefed on the specific allegations about specific candidates in a specific election.

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu: My question is also for Senator Gold.

Senator Gold, last Friday, before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, Michael Duheme, Deputy Commissioner at the RCMP, revealed the existence of a well-established smuggling ring to bring migrants to Roxham Road, which is very well known.

More and more migrants, who are being exploited by these smugglers with the help of charitable organizations, are entering Canada illegally.

The RCMP says that it is powerless in this situation, which is only getting worse because these smuggling rings are rampant on the other side of the border in the United States, where the laws are different from those in Canada.

Senator Gold, does the Prime Minister of Canada plan to deal with this issue, which he's allowed to worsen for five years, by asking his American counterpart to take action and renegotiate the Safe Third Country Agreement?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question, senator.

With regard to the Roxham Road issue, as I've said many times in this chamber, the government has implemented the structures, institutions and processes required to meet the humanitarian and basic needs of those who show up there in accordance with our international obligations.

The Government of Canada is working closely with the United States government to implement measures and ensure that our border remains safe in both directions.

Senator Boisvenu: Senator Gold, while legal immigrants are waiting up to 10 years to receive a positive response from the government, the RCMP has said that, between January and October 2022, nearly 31,000 migrants were intercepted in Quebec. I don't know how many of them are criminals, but we do know that, in 2021, 469 criminals crossed into Canada at Roxham Road.

According to Mr. Duheme, the RCMP is mobilizing significant material and human resources to manage this massive flow of asylum seekers, which includes many criminals, when these resources could be used to manage crime throughout Canada.

Do you have an answer to the question I asked on October 20 about why the Canada Border Services Agency hasn't investigated the 469 criminals who entered Canada illegally?

Also, do you know how many foreign criminals have been deported from Canada since 2020?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question, senator.

Unfortunately, no, I'm still waiting for the answer to your question, and as soon as I receive it, I'll communicate it to the Senate.

[*English*]

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

NORTH ATLANTIC CARBON OBSERVATORY

Hon. Mary Coyle: Senator Gold, on November 8, I attended a COP 27 panel at the Canada Pavilion on the importance of deep blue carbon. We know that the ocean is the most significant global storage depot of carbon on earth. It holds 50 times more carbon than the atmosphere, soaking up more emissions than all the world's rainforests combined and that the North Atlantic is the most intense carbon sink on the planet. Of carbon, 90% is deep blue carbon, and the panel identified this as the "deep blue hole" in the Paris Agreement — a problematic gap.

Senator Gold, Canada's Ocean Frontier Institute, led by Dr. Anya Waite, is spearheading an international initiative to observe, understand and predict the ocean carbon system in order to make more fully informed climate decisions. Other nations are aligning with this vision, and international conversations at COP 27 supported the creation of a North Atlantic carbon observatory.

Senator Gold, as Mark Carney and others have said, we cannot mitigate what we cannot measure. Will Canada take a leadership role in supporting this critically important climate initiative?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. The government knows and understands that the global ocean plays a vital role in regulating the earth's climate and absorbing carbon. We must keep that in mind as we develop and implement our adaptation measures. If we are to create a truly climate-resilient Canada for future generations, we must ensure that our oceans remain healthy and resilient.

I'm advised that the government has been in conversations with the Ocean Frontier Institute on this issue and looks forward to continuing these discussions to better understand how the government can expand its work to maximize the ocean's contribution to carbon sequestration.

Senator Coyle: Senator Gold, this important opportunity for Canada to take a leadership role in establishing the North Atlantic carbon observatory and moving ocean observations into real climate action along with our international counterparts is urgent and will require significant and creative cooperation among government departments, including Environment and Climate Change Canada as well as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Senator Gold, could you tell us how the government would go about ensuring interdepartmental cooperation so that we don't miss out on leading this critical ocean climate observation effort?

Senator Gold: Thank you. The government's approach to addressing environmental and climate change issues is necessarily a cross-government approach. Indeed, it is one that also engages provincial and territorial governments as well. It's important, as climate change continues to have an impact on our oceans, that we advance adaptation measures and nature-based solutions to support long-term climate resilience for Canada and our communities.

• (1510)

The government is committed to continuing to work across government to address the impacts of climate change. This is evidenced, for example, by the recently announced National Adaptation Strategy.

[Translation]

FINANCE

CRYPTO-CURRENCY

Hon. Clément Gignac: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Since last spring, we've watched the spectacular collapse in the value of several crypto-currencies, including the famous bitcoin, a type of investment recommended at the start of the year by influencers, sports celebrities and even certain political leaders. In the past few weeks, electronic platforms such as FTX and financial intermediaries such as Celsius and BlockFi declared bankruptcy because of poor financial management and even fraud and wrongdoing resulting in financial losses for millions of people.

Senator Gold, it would be unrealistic to think that this issue only affects U.S. citizens. A study released last month by the Ontario Securities Commission indicates that almost 13% of Canadians and up to 25% of young adults between the ages of 25 and 44 have investments in digital assets.

My question, Senator Gold, is the following. While the U.S. Senate is in favour of stricter regulations for digital platforms and crypto-currency financial intermediaries, what does the federal government plan on doing in this file to better regulate this new sector and especially to protect the Canadian public?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. The government knows that it's important to understand the benefits and risks of digital currency and electronic payments, especially in the context of Canada's financial system. Over the past few months, in Canada and around the world, we've seen first-hand the risks associated with the impact that unregulated crypto-currency can have on our economies and our democracies. Globally, we've seen dark forces, such as Russian oligarchs, use crypto-currency to get around economic sanctions and fund a brutal war in Ukraine. Nationally, we've seen the role played by crypto assets in illegal activities, such as the so-called "Freedom Convoy." That's why the government is soon launching a legislative review of the financial sector focused on the digitization of currency and maintaining stability and security in the financial sector.

I'm told that the first phase of the review will be on digital currencies, including stable crypto assets and crypto-currencies. Also, the government continues to communicate with institutions and international partners about the possible repercussions of digital currency on the global financial system.

[English]

ALCOHOL EXCISE TAX

Hon. Jim Quinn: My question is for Senator Gold. Senator Gold, in 2017, Parliament passed the escalator tax on alcohol products, marking the first time parliamentarians do not have a vote on the annual increase of the excise tax on beer, wine and spirits. Instead, the increase is tied to inflation effective April 1 of every year.

Senator Gold, I applaud the federal government's initiatives to ease the significant inflationary pressures on Canadians and Canadian businesses. However, with inflation likely being in excess of an average of at least 6%, if not more, the automatic escalator tax will seriously impact the competitiveness of Canadian business. In 2017, I don't believe that departmental officials and the government expected or planned for the effects of inflation on this escalator clause. This tax ripple through the supply chain will lead to jobs at risk, which I'm also certain will have been an unintended consequence. Why not place a 2% floor on this tax while accruing regional revenue to the federal government, and while giving government initiatives an opportunity to lower inflation without adding fuel to the inflationary fire?

And will the government commit to not imposing an automatic escalator excise tax for 2023?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. The government is not prepared to make such a commitment, senator. The government believes that the excise tax on alcohol products is an appropriate one. It's a modest one, as I said on another occasion recently in this chamber. The increase represents less than a fifth of one cent for a can of beer. In that regard, it is the position of the government that it does not materially add to the inflation pressures that are otherwise on our economy.

Indeed, this summer, the government eliminated the excise duty on low-alcohol beer, which brings the tax treatment of low-alcohol beer in line with the treatment of wines and spirits with the same alcohol content and brings our practices in line with those in other G7 countries.

Senator Quinn: Senator Gold, while I understand that you're saying that it's not a large impact, I'm going to respectfully disagree. In some cases, it's a seven-figure number, and that would be in a medium-sized brewery, such as Moosehead Breweries in Saint John. For certainty and as part of their business planning, if the government is unable to respond in a favourable way, would it not be reasonable to at least convey my concerns to the Minister of Finance that the increase of the alcohol excise tax tied to the inflationary rate will have an

unintended consequence that will seriously impact the competitiveness of Canadian businesses and lead to job losses throughout the supply chain?

Senator Gold: Well, thank you. I will certainly communicate your concerns and this point of view to the minister. It would be my pleasure to do so.

HEALTH

DRUG SHORTAGES

Hon. Judith G. Seidman: My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Senator Gold, over the past four years, I have asked questions of the government about Canadian drug shortages. On December 2018, I asked about a Canada-wide shortage of the antidepressant Wellbutrin. In February 2020, I asked about a shortage of tamoxifen, a drug used as part of hormone therapy to treat breast cancer. In June 2020, I asked about shortages of thyroid drugs, inhalers, blood pressure medication and glaucoma eye drops.

On November 4, CTV reported a shortage in Canada of pediatric amoxicillin, the antibiotic most commonly used for bacterial infections such as those of the ear and chest. Some Canadian manufacturers are saying they won't have any supply available until January 2023.

Senator Gold, what action is the Government of Canada taking to ensure that our supply of important medicines is sustainable and reliable?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question and ongoing attention to this very important issue. The Government of Canada has been working with — and continues to work with — domestic manufacturers and foreign suppliers to secure adequate supplies of all medications and drugs needed by Canadians and by our health care system. There is, sometimes, a worldwide challenge, and Canada does — and is doing — its best to secure supplies for Canadians as it has with regard to the issue of acetaminophen, the children's pain medication.

I don't have the details of the specific initiatives on specific drugs, but this chamber should rest assured that the government is working hard with domestic and international partners to address this issue for Canadians.

Senator Seidman: Senator Gold, Canada imports roughly 70% of its finished prescription drug supply, and about 90% of the components used in drugs that are manufactured here come from abroad.

Professor Joel Lexchin, renowned pharmaceutical policy expert at the School of Health Policy & Management at York University in Toronto, has suggested that Canada could produce a small number of critical drugs that are most likely to run out domestically through a Crown corporation or some other subsidized vehicle. This could secure the supply of those 20 to 50 critical drugs and also build capacity to pivot should we face another crisis like COVID-19.

Senator Gold, is the federal government exploring new ways of addressing this ongoing problem?

Senator Gold: Well, the Government of Canada is always exploring ways to ensure that it's fulfilling its responsibilities and obligations to Canadians in this regard. I'll make inquiries about this particular issue and the recommendation of the researcher that you mentioned, and I will report back when I get an answer.

• (1520)

[Translation]

TREASURY BOARD SECRETARIAT

ACCESS TO INFORMATION REQUESTS

Hon. Claude Carignan: My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Leader, *La Presse* says it submitted an access to information request to Justice Canada and was informed a response would be forthcoming within 295 days. My team also submitted an access to information request to Justice Canada on February 3, 2022, almost nine months ago, and the department has yet to produce an answer.

We also submitted an access to information request to Environment and Climate Change Canada. In its response, the department asked us to be more specific about the information we were seeking so as to require less research. We provided those specifics. We were told it could take 150 days. The access to information request we submitted to Canadian Heritage has yielded no response so far.

What's going on with access to information services? Were the civil servants responsible for access to information all trained by Passport Canada?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Your question and the issue you raise are both extremely important and serious. Access to information is fundamental in a democracy. Moreover, the Government of Canada recognizes that there are long delays in many areas and in many departments when it comes to requests for information. There are many reasons for that, but they have nothing to do with your reference to Passport Canada. We need to recruit and retain staff. Efforts are under way and are continuing. Progress is clearly being made. That said, there's a lot of work to be done. The Government of Canada is committed to continuing to make the necessary efforts to respond to requests as quickly as possible.

Senator Carignan: The same goes for your office. On March 31, I asked you a question about the infamous secret trial. Six months later, the answer was that the Public Prosecution Service of Canada, the PPSC, couldn't comment further. Leader, how do you explain that it took six months to say, "No comment"?

Senator Gold: I thank the honourable senator for the question. As the former Leader of the Government in the Senate, you're well versed in the steps and processes within the government.

This isn't a question of access to information. As soon as I'm asked a question to which I don't have the answer, I make the request and my team takes care of it. I'm sorry that it took so long. I'll follow up and try to get an answer as soon as possible.

[English]

FINANCE

CANADA'S INFLATION RATE

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Senator Gold, a recent article in *The Globe and Mail* noted that between 2016 and 2021 the number of people older than 65 with an outstanding mortgage on their residence increased from 1.2 million to 1.5 million. This is an unbelievable 25% increase in only five years, Senator Gold.

This is very concerning, and illustrates the growing challenges that Canadians are having with the skyrocketing costs of everything under your government's tenure. Can you tell me if your government has started to recognize that it is failing Canadians, and that its addiction to ever-increasing spending is making things worse and not better?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. The premises, assumptions and leading questions in your question are simply not ones that the government accepts as true or valid.

The burden that Canadians are feeling, especially those with mortgages now that rates have risen, is a serious one, and I know all senators both sympathize and indeed have empathy for those who are struggling in that regard. But as I've said on far too many occasions to repeat here, the issue of the rising costs of housing, the inflation that has taken root in this country and around the world, measures that the Bank of Canada is taking to combat it and the measures that this government has taken to help Canadians through this are such that this government continues to be proud of the measures taken to help Canadians through this difficulty, and simply asks the Senate to understand the complexity of the issues giving rise to rising housing prices and rising inflation. It is simply not a serious assertion to make that all of these ills can be visited upon any government. Thank you.

Senator Plett: Well, I think we should ask the 1.5 million seniors that are in this predicament whether they agree with your comment that this isn't indeed a valid comment or suggestion.

Senator Gold, a mortgage now costs Canadians 64% of their income. Interest rates are still rising. This is going to make it more and more difficult for Canadians to meet their monthly expenses.

The Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre warned the Prime Minister two years ago that rising interest rates would be the inevitable consequences of inflationary deficits, but your government refused to listen to Mr. Poilievre. Now he is proven correct. Whether you like it or not, Senator Gold, he has been proven correct.

[Senator Gold]

Can you tell me whether your government is prepared to listen now or do Canadians need to brace themselves for even more cost-of-living increases?

Senator Gold: Well, I admire, Senator Plett, your devotion to your leader and your willingness to pass on his messages.

Canadians are in good hands with this government. It is providing needed support to Canadians in a difficult time. It has managed the pandemic and the emergence from the pandemic masterfully. Our inflation rate is lower than most G7 countries. Our credit rating has been solidly reaffirmed, and this government will continue on its prudent and balanced approach to helping Canadians.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: My question is to Senator Gold, and it relates to Canada's newly released Indo-Pacific Strategy. It also picks up on comments that were made yesterday at the University of Ottawa by China's ambassador, where he referred specifically to a point in the strategy that says that China is an increasingly disruptive global power.

Ambassador Cong was quoted as saying:

Unfortunately it seems that Canada has followed the United States practice of creating division and of fomenting confrontation in the region.

He went on to say:

When it comes to China, it distorted facts (and) hyped up the so-called China threat and infringed upon China's internal affairs. We firmly oppose it.

Senator Gold, it is said that diplomacy works best not only talking to our friends. With these developments, please update us on how Canada will keep lines of communication open with this global power, especially in these tense times.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. No Canadian is surprised at the response of the Chinese ambassador and of the Chinese government. They do not like to be called out for their human rights abuses, for their expansionist pretensions in the region and for all the other ways in which it's flouting international norms that it has profited by for many years.

The Indo-Pacific policy announced by the Minister of Foreign Affairs is designed both to strengthen our relationships in the region and, quite frankly, to provide a buffer and counterpoint to the aspects of Chinese assertiveness in the region. But as the minister said, we will confront China where necessary. We will cooperate where also necessary, whether it's on the issue of climate change.

• (1530)

Let's be frank: The Canadian and Chinese economies have grown to be very interdependent. Many sectors, including the agricultural sector, are heavily dependent, and we have to manage this difficult relationship with finesse, but also with firmness, and that is exactly what this policy aims to do.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

LEBANESE HERITAGE MONTH BILL

THIRD READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Jane Cordy moved third reading of Bill S-246, An Act respecting Lebanese Heritage Month.

She said: Honourable senators, as I rise to speak at third reading of Bill S-246, I acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin and Anishinaabe peoples.

It is fitting that I speak today at third reading of this bill, as it is still November, and Bill S-246 would designate the month of November as Lebanese heritage month in Canada. In my second reading speech, I detailed the historical events that make the month of November significant for Lebanese people, and I will not repeat that here, but I will say that last Tuesday, November 22, 2022, Lebanese people around the world celebrated Lebanese Independence Day and 79 years of independence.

On Sunday, November 20, 2022, my city of Halifax celebrated Nova Scotia's Lebanese Heritage Month with a ceremony and the raising of the Lebanese flag in front of City Hall. I was pleased and honoured to be invited to attend the Canadian Lebanon Society of Halifax's event this past Saturday evening, which closed out Lebanese Heritage Month in Nova Scotia with great Lebanese food and great music. These events in Nova Scotia give Lebanese Nova Scotians the opportunity to celebrate and share their culture, their history and their contributions to their home province of Nova Scotia.

When asked during committee examination of the bill about Nova Scotia's Lebanese Heritage Month and what he envisioned a national recognition could contribute, Wadih Fares, Honorary Consul of Lebanon in Halifax, had this to say:

When Nova Scotia declared November as Lebanese Heritage Month, it had a positive impact on our community. It showed that we are seen and we are valued and, in turn, created a stronger partnership between our community and the province. Our culture and heritage are woven into the fabric of Nova Scotia, making the province stronger and more diverse, and I believe that a national Lebanese heritage month will have the same yet even broader-reaching impact.

During the committee hearing, Senator Petitclerc referred to this bill as a tool to help bring people together, and that is exactly what this bill is intended to do. It is a tool to not only show and display Lebanese culture and heritage, but also for other Canadians to learn about Lebanese culture. For it is only when we come together that we can truly get to know one another.

As Mr. Fares said during the committee hearing:

That is the most important thing. We are a multicultural country, and I think we can be a stronger and better country if we know each other better.

Honourable senators, Canada is a country made up of countless cultures and people. Senator Housakos said it very well in his second reading speech when he said:

. . . the reality of the matter is that Canada is essentially strong because of all the sums of all our parts. It is imperative that all our parts feel that Canadian family and recognition.

Mr. Fares echoed this when he spoke of being seen and feeling valued.

This is what I hope Bill S-246 will achieve as we celebrate a national Lebanese heritage month in the years ahead. I want to thank Senator Simons and the bill's critic Senator Housakos for their speeches and support of Bill S-246 at second reading. Also, I want to thank the members of the Social Affairs, Science and Technology Committee for their work, and their excellent questions and comments, at the committee hearing.

I would also like to thank Lena Diab, Member of Parliament for Halifax West, and a prominent member of the Lebanese community in the Halifax area, without whose support this bill would not be here today.

Lastly, I would like to recognize and pay tribute to Mr. Wadih Fares for his passion and dedication — not only to the Lebanese community, but also for a lifetime of positive contributions to his adopted province of Nova Scotia.

In 1976, Mr. Fares immigrated to Canada as a student at the onset of the Lebanese Civil War with nothing more than, as he put it, "my mother's prayers and the will to make a good life in a new country . . ."

Mr. Fares did just that. He gained his Bachelor of Engineering degree from Technical University of Nova Scotia, and a Diploma of Engineering from Dalhousie University. He went on to form his own successful construction company, W.M. Fares Group, which many in Halifax credit with developing the skyline of Halifax over the past 21 years. He has been recognized many times over for his business acumen. He was awarded Halifax Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year, *Atlantic Business Magazine's* Top 50 CEO of the Year award, and named to the *Atlantic Business Magazine's* Hall of Fame. He has received an Honorary Doctorate in Commerce from Saint Mary's University in 2009 and sits on the Dalhousie Board of Governors.

He is the Honorary Consul of Lebanon for the Maritime provinces. He also sat on the Nova Scotia minister's Immigration Advisory Council. These are just a few of his achievements. In 2012, Mr. Fares was recognized for his entrepreneurial spirit and community service, and was invested as a member of the Order of Canada.

Colleagues, Mr. Fares is a perfect example of the entrepreneurial spirit that Senator Housakos spoke of in his speech — which drives many immigrants to carve out the best life possible for themselves and for their families. These opportunities are what our country can provide, and they are the reason that many choose to make Canada their home. Immigrants to Canada can be measured in what they give back economically, socially, culturally, philanthropically and politically.

Honourable senators, immigrants make Canada a better place for all of us. Ontario and Nova Scotia were the first provinces to officially recognize November as Lebanese Heritage Month. My hope is that Bill S-246 will pass through Parliament in a timely manner, and that next year we will celebrate as a nation alongside the 400,000 Lebanese Canadians during the first national Lebanese heritage month.

My bill is a short one, but it has the potential to make a difference to a large number of Canadians — to make them feel seen, and to make them feel valued. I hope that I can count on your support.

Thank you. *Meegwetch. Shukran.*

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, I would be remiss if I did not rise to support this bill, given the role Lebanese immigrants have played in Prince Edward Island.

The first Lebanese immigrants arrived in my province in 1880. They were mostly peddlers who went door to door in rural Prince Edward Island, from farm to farm, often with packs on their backs. The tradition in the days was, because their farms were so remote and isolated, they would stay at the last farm overnight. The family would speak to them as best they could as the immigrants learned English, but they always explained they were coming to Canada as a land of opportunity to escape the oppression of the Turkish regime in their country at the time.

• (1540)

Those immigrants eventually got carts. Then in the 1940s and 1950s, corner grocery stores. Their second generation, like many immigrants to Canada, became professionals, doctors, lawyers, business people and community leaders in many aspects. I had the opportunity to work with one of those leaders, a former premier, Joseph Ghiz — Joseph Atallah Ghiz, I should say, given the bill we're talking about. When I was active in partisan politics, Joe was the leader of the Liberal Party. We were in opposition. We were very concerned there was subtle racism. Would Islanders vote for a person of Lebanese descent, notwithstanding that Joe Ghiz had a master's of law from Harvard, was a well-established, successful lawyer on Prince Edward Island and well-known at the time?

[Senator Cordy]

We were so concerned about this subtle racism that we conducted a public opinion poll, and we were very pleased. The results of Islanders' impressions of the Lebanese community were that they were hard workers, conscientious, family oriented, did not draw any social assistance or welfare, contributed to the community and were great neighbours and friends. After we saw that poll, we realized that the racism was restricted to a very small minority. It was there, unfortunately, but it was not anywhere in the majority. When the election came up, Joe Ghiz became the first Canadian premier of non-European descent elected in Canada. We were delighted that the poll and the reality were one and the same.

I mention Premier Joseph Ghiz because his son later became premier, Robert Ghiz. We've had many mayors of Lebanese descent and many community leaders. I fully support this bill. The contribution of the Lebanese population of Prince Edward Island has been outstanding. We are the province we are today because of their involvement and leadership, and this bill will recognize that. Thank you, colleagues.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

PROTECTING YOUNG PERSONS FROM EXPOSURE TO PORNOGRAPHY BILL

EIGHTH REPORT OF LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the eighth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs (*Bill S-210, An Act to restrict young persons' online access to sexually explicit material, with an amendment and observations*), presented in the Senate on November 15, 2022.

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer moved the adoption of the report.

She said: Honourable senators, I rise to speak to the eighth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.

Bill S-210 would require organizations to use age-verification methods before making sexually explicit material available online for commercial purposes. It would also allow the Governor-in-Council to make regulations prescribing the types of age-verification methods that these organizations would be required to use.

As chair, I'm required to explain any amendments that were made to the bill.

One amendment was added to the bill during clause-by-clause consideration. This amendment was added to address privacy concerns relating to users providing their personal information for age verification before accessing certain online content, as would be required under this bill. Specifically, the amendment requires the Governor-in-Council, when making regulations, to consider whether the prescribed age-verification methods are reliable; protect user privacy and personal

information; collect personal information only for age-verification purposes; destroy that personal information once age has been verified; and, five, follow best practices for age verification and privacy protection. This amendment reflects concerns about the need for privacy protections that were voiced by witnesses during the committee's study. Thank you, senators.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR A GUARANTEED LIVABLE BASIC INCOME BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Pate, seconded by the Honourable Senator Dean, for the second reading of Bill S-233, An Act to develop a national framework for a guaranteed livable basic income.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

JANE GOODALL BILL

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

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

Hon. Karen Sorensen: Honourable senators, I'm pleased to stand today in support of Bill S-241, the Jane Goodall act.

The long-awaited legislation will ban new captivity of big cats, bears, wolves, sea lions, seals, walruses, certain monkeys and dangerous reptiles at roadside zoos. It will require permits for breeding and acquisition of species like big cats, phase out elephant captivity in Canada and provide limited legal standing for certain species. It will also require designated animal care organizations to meet stringent criteria, including the highest standards of animal care, whistleblower protection, responsible acquisition and no use of animals in circus-style shows.

This bill will not affect the operations of responsible zoos and aquariums who already abide by the highest standards of animal welfare. In fact, the Jane Goodall act has been endorsed by the Calgary Zoo, the Toronto Zoo, Winnipeg's Assiniboine Park Zoo, the Granby Zoo in Quebec and the Montreal Biodome.

I will take this opportunity to address questions that were asked in the chamber last week about why an American organization, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, or AZA, is held up as a standard for animal care as opposed to Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums, or CAZA. CAZA standards have been criticized for being overly broad and subjective, and they do not necessarily remove accreditations from zoos that violate these standards. AZA has higher standards, is much more stringent about enforcing penalties for non-compliance and has historically been quicker to ban inhumane practices.

For example, CAZA banned elephant rides a decade after AZA had already banned them, and only after a vicious elephant attack occurred at a CAZA-accredited zoo. CAZA standards continue to be lower for elephant care. AZA standards allow only protected contact with elephants. What that means is humans cannot be in the enclosure with the elephants, while CAZA allows that sort of contact, which can be distressing to the animal and dangerous for the handlers.

• (1550)

One of my honourable colleagues asked why we would essentially outsource accreditation of Canadian zoos to an American body. Other Canadian professionals, including engineers and medical practitioners, are accredited by American organizations. This is because larger organizations like AZA often have more resources to enforce regulatory standards.

For instance, AZA has access to a wider pool of animal care experts to ensure proper and unbiased inspections of zoos. And because they have more dues-paying members, AZA has the financial cushion to revoke accreditation of those zoos that don't meet their standards.

Canada's AZA-accredited zoos consistently meet the highest standards of animal care, and their support of this bill speaks to its importance.

Before I get to why this bill is necessary, I would like to talk a bit about my local zoo to illustrate the positive impacts of accredited Canadian zoos.

The Calgary Zoo meets the rigorous accreditation standards of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums — WAZA — and the Association of Zoos & Aquariums — AZA. Their conservation arm, known as the Wilder Institute, has spearheaded groundbreaking animal protection and international development efforts in Canada and around the world.

In 1998, the Calgary Zoo's Wilder Institute supported the creation of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary, dedicated to conserving Ghana's endangered hippopotamuses. The sanctuary monitors and protects the hippo population by combining conservation and protected area management with ecotourism and economic development.

The Wilder Institute's work in Ghana is a model for protecting the ecosystem without sacrificing jobs and the economy. In fact, the hippo sanctuary actually creates jobs and industry in the region. The sanctuary embraces responsible ecotourism with a

hippo-viewing platform that allows visitors to admire the majestic creatures while making it easier for conservationists to monitor the animals.

But that's not all. The sanctuary also features an organic shea cooperative and shea butter processing centre, which employs nearly 2,000 local women. This initiative provides employment and income for over 20% of the local population, ensuring that the communities will never have to sacrifice environmental protection in the name of commerce. By employing women, it is helping to advance gender equality in Ghana, allowing women a degree of economic and political equality that did not exist before — all while stabilizing and increasing Ghana's hippo population.

The Calgary Zoo Wilder Institute also does good work close to home. Since 1985, the zoo's off-site conservation breeding facility has ensured the survival of species like whooping cranes and Vancouver Island marmots. Last summer, they broke ground on a new facility in Wheatland County, Alberta, which will allow them to expand their conservation efforts with improved habitats and more space.

As an example of the work they do there, the Wilder Institute has partnered with federal and provincial governments and the Canadian Wildlife Service to protect endangered burrowing owls in the prairies. The institute collects the youngest and least likely to survive owlets and takes care of them through the fall and winter, increasing their odds of survival when they are reintroduced into the wild. They cared for 20 of these tiny owls in 2021 alone.

The zoo is also embarking on a new project to advance their Arctic conservation efforts, including a polar bear sanctuary.

This commitment to animal welfare will be familiar to anyone who has ever toured the Calgary Zoo. Visitors to the zoo will find safe and spacious enclosures that provide a suitable habitat for the animals, not to mention enrichment items that allow them to exercise their bodies and brains. They'll meet experienced staff who understand and prioritize the needs of animals.

What you won't find are degrading circus acts, cruel elephant rides or animal handling activities that cause undue stress to the animals. The Calgary Zoo's own staff do not have any physical contact with the animals except when providing medical treatment.

There could not be more of a difference between accredited, responsible zoos like the Calgary Zoo and unregulated, unaccredited and irresponsible roadside zoos that this bill targets.

CTV's "W5" recently aired a disturbing report on roadside zoos here in Ontario, exposing cruel treatment of animals, ranging from inhumane enclosures and inappropriate contact with humans, to outright physical abuse: alligators trapped in tiny pools full of feces; monkeys confined to small cages, pacing in circles and biting themselves because they have no other stimulation; tigers behind substandard fencing; an animal "trainer" bragging about abusing a defenceless lion cub.

Undercover footage from these roadside zoos has also revealed a cavalier attitude toward the safety of guests, including children. The "W5" report included footage of children sticking their fingers into cages holding sharp-toothed lemurs, and, in one case, an animal handler holding a baby — a human baby — in one arm while petting a lion with the other. This type of recklessness puts the lives of both humans and animals at risk.

In 2016, police were called after a white lion escaped from its enclosure in the Papanack Zoo. The zoo blamed "human error" for the escape. The lion was shot dead.

Due to insufficient regulation, the burden of cracking down on these irresponsible organizations often falls to local municipalities. This is why we need strong federal regulation to prevent these travesties before they occur.

Zoos, at their best, are places of wonder and education. Many conservationists and animal rights activists gained their love of animals and nature from these early experiences.

But animals are not just here for our entertainment. They are sentient beings that feel pain and, for that matter, fear, stress, happiness, affection and perhaps even love. Elephants are herd animals who crave socialization and grieve their dead. Certain apes have been observed comforting other apes in distress, and primate mothers have been observed mourning lost infants, caring for their bodies for weeks or months after death. Octopuses — whom we didn't even believe were sentient until recently — are clever and curious creatures who have been known to solve puzzles and use tools.

When animals don't have the space, privacy and socialization with other animals they need, they act in abnormal ways. Whales in captivity have demonstrated dangerous compulsive tendencies: chewing on the walls of their tank, vomiting up their food to play with it and injuring themselves by ramming into walls. Whales who have been trained to beach themselves as part of their act start to do this compulsively even when not performing, which causes internal organ damage and kidney failure.

Captive animals who aren't properly cared for pose a threat to humans. An orca who performed at SeaWorld for over 20 years was responsible for the violent deaths of three people, including two trainers whom he attacked and pulled under water.

Closer to home, an aggressive elephant killed a handler at Hamilton's African Lion Safari in 1989. Thirty years later, another elephant attack at the same zoo prompted Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums to ban elephant rides.

Many Canadians have fond memories of riding an elephant at the circus, petting a whale at MarineLand and holding snakes at a roadside zoo. But these practices were developed at a time when we knew very little about animals, when we didn't understand that they have emotional needs and that they can become dangerous to themselves and others when those needs aren't met.

But we now know more about animals, and it would be irresponsible to disregard decades of research and observation, not to mention basic principles of dignity and decency, for the sake of our amusement.

I urge my colleagues in the Senate to support this bill.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Would the senator take a question?

Senator Sorensen: Yes, I would love to.

Senator Plett: Don't sound so enthusiastic, Senator Sorensen. When you say things that border on not being correct, then I think you open yourself up to questions.

Senator Sorensen: I am open to your questions.

Senator Plett: Senator Sorensen, I do not think there is a person in this chamber who is opposed to closing roadside zoos, so why do we always add something that isn't subject to debate? This is a debate about accredited zoos and what this bill will do to accredited zoos. Now, you were quite disparaging about CAZA when CAZA, in fact, is a Canadian organization.

Senator Sorensen, we are told it is urgent to pass Bill S-241, but on the day that it passes into law not a single roadside zoo will be closed because of it. Every animal currently in a roadside zoo is grandfathered in and will be left to die in those conditions. It does nothing. I wonder why we are not creating a bill that deals with the situations we have.

CAZA is an accreditation organization, as is AZA. I will get to a question here and give you a chance to answer what I have already asked. Senator Sorensen, the issue that I raised with Senator Dean last week is that Bill S-241 turns over the accreditation of Canadian zoos to an American organization. There is currently a bill before the U.S. House of Representatives called the SWIMS Act. You know what question I'm going to ask. That bill will prohibit the breeding, importation and exportation of orcas, beluga whales, false killer whales and pilot whales for the purposes of public display in the U.S.

• (1600)

That is very similar to rules that Canadian zoos, under CAZA, are already required to abide by. AZA is opposing this bill, yet you want them here accrediting our zoos.

And WAZA, the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, by the way, is not an accreditation organization. CAZA is, as is AZA.

So why do we want to get somebody in here to do the accreditation when they oppose the very things that we or Senator Klyne is trying to do with this bill that they are opposing south of the border?

Senator Sorensen: Thank you for your question, senator.

Regarding AZA, in my mind, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is simply a superior accreditation body with higher standards for animal welfare. That is why I support that accreditation.

I had to research the SWIMS Act, but I did research it. I understand that the SWIMS Act is an outright ban on importing, exporting, transporting and breeding certain cetaceans for public display. You're right that it's probably a stronger bill.

AZA is opposing using that because they believe it is possible for zoos to humanely house some cetaceans under certain conditions.

Hon. Peter Harder (The Hon. the Acting Speaker): Senator Plett, you have 35 seconds.

Senator Plett: Well, I'll get half of my question in.

Again, you want to do something with a bill here where it is grandfathered so much — the elephants that we have now under human care, and the zoos are calling it "under human care," not captivity. The fact of the matter is that Parc Omega and Parc Safari have much larger facilities than Calgary, Toronto or Assiniboine Park — and I've been at all of them. So those animals aren't in little cages —

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Are you asking for five more minutes?

Senator Plett: Was that my 35 seconds?

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: More than.

Senator Plett: I'll do the rest when the next speaker gets up or in my speech. Thank you.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

CANADIAN POSTAL SAFETY BILL

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Pierre J. Dalfond moved second reading of Bill S-256, An Act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act (seizure) and to make related amendments to other Acts.

He said: Honourable senators, today, I'm pleased to begin the second reading of Bill S-256, the Canadian Postal Safety Act.

My bill is rather short with only eight clauses, only one of which is of substance. The others are ancillary amendments to the first clause.

The amendment of substance proposes to amend subsection 40(3) of the Canada Post Corporation Act, which sets out the following principle, and I quote:

Despite any other Act or law, nothing in the course of post is liable to demand, seizure, detention or retention, except as subject to this Act and its regulations

This principle dates back to 1867 with the passage of the Post Office Act. At that time, it was inconceivable to interfere with the operations of the Royal Mail or to read the content of letters one was tasked with delivering. In short, the objective of this law was to protect privacy.

For quite some time, only a postal inspector could detain an item, for instance if it wasn't sufficiently stamped for the class of mail or if it contained items that were illegal to send by post. It would be more than 100 years before any exceptions to the principle of prohibiting interference with mail items were adopted. This was done through the passage of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act in 1984, an amendment to the Customs Act in 1986 and the passage of the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act in 2000.

Under the amendment to the Customs Act, a shipment entering Canada may be subject to inspection by border services officers if they have reason to suspect that its contents are prohibited from being imported into Canada. If this is the case, the shipment, whether a package or an envelope, may be seized. However, an envelope mailed in Canada to someone who resides at a Canadian address cannot be opened by the police or even by a postal inspector. Paragraph 41(1)(c) of the Canada Post Corporation Act states the following, and I quote:

The Corporation may open any mail, other than a letter, to determine in any particular case . . .

(c) whether the mail is non-mailable matter.

The Letter Definition Regulations state that a letter is a mailed item that does not exceed 500 grams. However, postal inspectors may open a parcel if they believe it contains something that is prohibited under legislation that applies to the post. If it is, the item is confiscated and turned over to police.

I will conclude my introduction by saying that Canada Post handles billions of items per year. In 2020, Canada Post delivered 6.4 billion items, of which 2.5 billion were letters, 384 million were parcels and the remainder was advertising.

That is the current situation in Canada.

[English]

To summarize, nothing in the course of the post in Canada is liable to demand, seizure, detention or retention, except if a specific legal exception exists in the Canada Post Corporation

Act or in one of the three laws I referenced. However, items in the mail can be inspected by a postal inspector, but if it is a letter, the inspector cannot open it to complete the inspection.

Thus, a police officer who has reasonable grounds to suspect that an item in the mail contains an illegal drug or a handgun cannot be authorized, pursuant to a warrant issued by a judge, to intercept and seize an item until it is delivered to the addressee or returned to the sender. I am told that letters containing drugs have no return address.

While an item is in the mail, the only option the police have is to work closely with 1 of the 25 inspectors at Canada Post — 25 to cover the whole country. An inspector could then find a way to inspect a parcel and retain it if illegal material is found inside. Subsequently, based on the information communicated by the inspector, the police could seize the item for further investigation and possibly to lay a charge. It is important to remember that if the illegal object — for example, a packet of fentanyl — is in a letter weighing less than 500 grams, it cannot be opened by the postal inspectors. The most they can do, if they identify such a letter, is to remove it from the course of post as non-mailable matter and call the police.

• (1610)

By the way, colleagues, 500 grams of fentanyl currently has a street value of \$30,000.

Incidentally, in 2020, postal inspectors inspected approximately 3,287 items, with 3,067 found to contain non-mailable matter. During that same year, as I said a few minutes ago, Canada Post handled 6.4 billion items. Of these, 384 million were parcels that could be inspected, including being opened, and 2.5 billion items were letter mail, which cannot be opened; the rest were direct marketing materials and advertising.

This context is, unfortunately, well known by criminals, including drug distributors.

In 2019, *Maclean's* reported that the Canada Post system is exploited by drug traffickers in an article entitled, "For fentanyl importers, Canada Post is the shipping method of choice." That article outlines that on the dark web, an anonymous online marketplace for illegal drugs and other contraband, Canada Post appears to be traffickers' preferred shipping method for Canadian orders.

Mike Serr, chief of the Abbotsford Police Department and co-chair of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police Drug Advisory Committee said in 2019:

The word is out there that you don't use the courier service, you use Canada Post because of the limitations to law enforcement.

In the same *Maclean's* report, an anonymously quoted man from London, Ontario, who had ordered fentanyl, heroin and other drugs online from the dark web said:

Some will also offer private courier services at really high prices, but almost always offer Canada Post as the base option. Sending through Canada Post can never be a 100 per cent surefire way to beat the cops, but it works 99.999999 per cent of the time.

A Canada Post carrier told *Maclean's* that the postal system moves too quickly for due diligence:

You don't have time to be discerning as to what you're actually delivering and handling. You're going to throw it in there, get into your truck and get out there as fast as you possibly can.

One carrier told *Maclean's*:

As an employee, you're going, 'Jeez, I didn't sign up for this.' I signed up to be a mailman, to deliver Christmas cards. Not fentanyl.

To complicate the matter further, in a recent judgment from the Supreme Court in Newfoundland and Labrador called *Her Majesty the Queen v. Christopher Gorman*, the judge concluded that the power of the inspector to seize a parcel was unconstitutional, being too broad. The judge granted the Attorney General of Canada one year to fix the problem, until April 12 next year. This judgment was not appealed.

My bill is an attempt to put an end to the perception that our postal service is the best way to ship illegal drugs and other illegal materials.

The Canadian postal safety act's purpose is to assist law enforcement, Indigenous communities and rural municipalities in their efforts to intercept dangerous drugs, particularly fentanyl and other opioids, that could be delivered by the mail system, especially in remote areas.

As such, this bill will facilitate police operations and should reduce harms in Canada, assisting efforts toward this goal of Canada Post inspectors and customs officers.

Rest assured that, under this bill, any detention or search of parcels or letter-sized items in the mail would be subject to the same judicial authorization already required by law in situations for such items while outside the course of post, such as a search warrant.

The aim of this bill is not to weaken or change requirements for searches and seizures, but rather to remove an old statutory limit that prevents police from fully assisting Canada Post inspectors and customs officers in enforcing the law.

Canadians' expectation of privacy in the mail will not be reduced by Bill S-256, although there will no longer be a legal barrier to appropriate authorization of police searches and seizures while an item is in the course of post.

This legislation will simply grant police the same powers for Canada Post mail that police currently have in relation to items shipped by private courier services such as FedEx, UPS or DHL. Incidentally, such powers already apply to Purolator, a courier company 91% owned by Canada Post.

To sum up, section 40(3) of the Canada Post Corporation Act, as drafted now, prevents law enforcement from detaining and seizing items in the course of post. For example, although police may have reasonable grounds to believe that a package of fentanyl or a prohibited weapon is being sent through the mail, the police cannot lawfully detain the item until it has been delivered to the addressee or until a postal inspector has intercepted it independently of the police investigation.

This framework places an unnecessary operational and logistical burden on the police in doing their job and bringing drug traffickers to justice, costing valuable time and resources, including for surveillance, and risking exposure of investigations and missed opportunities.

The current framework also seems to preclude the possibility that some mail should be situationally delayed to identify and remove contraband, such as if a package of fentanyl is dropped in a red postbox and the item risks becoming unidentifiable if mixed with other mail.

As the law stands now, the police cannot go to the red box where somebody has dropped 20 letters and try to seize these letters. They have to call an inspector, and if they are lucky enough and the inspector comes along with a little truck when they empty the mailbox, they can inspect the thing. With judicial authorizations they will be able to seize the letters in that mailbox before they go to the little truck, the distribution centre and sorting centres where billions of items are processed. And, of course, the letter is difficult to retrieve.

Parliament's past actions do suggest that the ability to open letter-sized items, where authorized by law, may be important in intercepting fentanyl. In 2017, Parliament passed Bill C-37 to allow customs officers to open mail weighing less than 30 grams, due to the problem of fentanyl imports. Parliament effected this change by repealing section 99(2) of the Customs Act. At the time, it was said in reply to the Minister of Health, the Honourable Jane Philpott:

My Conservative colleagues have been pushing the government to finally acknowledge the flaws at our borders and grant officers the authority to search and seize suspicious packages weighing less than 30 grams. . . . Removing the "30 grams or less" exemption from the Customs Act is a much-needed step in combatting the opioid crisis facing our country.

• (1620)

Senators, why should the same not be true of Canada Post mail? The change proposed by my bill will be further progress along the lines of Bill C-37, allowing police to detain and search letter-sized items with judicial authorization where sufficient grounds are present to believe that they contain fentanyl or other contraband.

To address this enforcement loophole — I call it a loophole — in the Canada Post Corporation Act, I propose to amend section 40(3) of the statute to read:

. . . nothing in the course of post is liable to demand, seizure, detention or retention, except as subject to this Act and its regulations or an enforcement statute.

In Bill S-256, the term “enforcement statute” means any act of Parliament, any law of a province or territory, or any law of an Indigenous jurisdiction. My intent is an approach of cooperative federalism and reconciliation. Essentially, an illegal item present in the mail will no longer be a barrier to law enforcement for any jurisdiction, while still requiring the same judicial or other authorization necessary for search or seizure in other situations, such as a search warrant.

On this point, it is an important step for any federal statute and our postal system to respect Indigenous jurisdiction, including self-determination to prohibit or limit the importation of certain products into the nations’ territory, provided this is done in a lawful way. This bill aims to facilitate Indigenous and other police forces to enforce Indigenous laws as the federal government works to support Indigenous policing and self-government. At the same time, Bill S-256 does not impose any policy on any Indigenous nation but rather upholds their jurisdiction.

I am encouraged and honoured that the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, or AMC, has supported the goals of this legislation through a resolution adopted at their annual general assembly on October 25-27 of this year. This followed a review of a preliminary draft of the bill as part of my consultations. The AMC represents 62 First Nations across Manitoba. Their resolution reads in part:

WHEREAS, a statutory limitation currently exists whereby police are unable to search packages sent through Canada Post . . .

WHEREAS, legislation is being proposed to the Canada Post Corporation Act that would allow jurisdiction for police forces to search mail in the possession of Canada Post, if duly authorized with a search warrant, for the purpose of seizing contraband . . .

WHEREAS, opioids, firearms, illegal alcohol, and counterfeit items . . . are being sent through mail carriers and are an ongoing issue for First Nations in particularly in northern and isolated First Nations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly calls upon the federal government to amend existing legislation or create a new law . . . ensuring law enforcement’s ability to search and seize mail through Canada Post . . .

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any federal legislation to prevent contraband from entering First Nations should also provide First Nations police forces with the same powers as their federal, provincial, and municipal counterparts . . .

Thank you to Senator McCallum for her help and her leadership in this project. She facilitated the adoption of these resolutions, and I am grateful to her.

This past January, the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported on a death where drugs sent through the mail are believed to have been a contributing factor. This incident occurred in the Sayisi Dene First Nation, the northernmost First Nation in Manitoba. Chief Evan Yassie said in that news report, “Drugs were involved, drugs are involved, and it’s coming in steady through the mail.”

In June of 2021, the Health Canada Expert Task Force on Substance Use released its second report, regarding recommendations on the federal government’s drug policy. One recommendation reads:

Define the role of enforcement as a means to clearly support the aims of the public health framework and legal regulation by focussing on criminal organisations and the illegal toxic drug supply.

Colleagues, Bill S-256 is consistent with this recommendation, as enforcement actions against illegal drug supplies and traffickers, including organized crime groups, are complementary to harm reduction approaches on this public health matter.

In advancing the Canadian postal safety act, I’m happy to be working with Member of Parliament and prospective House of Commons sponsor Ron McKinnon, representing Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam in B.C. From Mr. MacKinnon:

The *Canadian Postal Safety Act* is one more important tool in the harm reduction tool kit which will help get poisonous drugs off our streets. Too many of us have lost friends or family because of the toxic drug crisis. This bill is an important move that will disrupt criminals and save lives.

Mr. McKinnon previously authored the Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act. This was also a private member’s bill, Bill C-224, passed unanimously in 2017, to provide a legal exemption from possession charges or violations of related conditions for persons calling 911 to seek help for an overdose, as well as those at the scene. On May 4 this year, the fifth anniversary of that bill passing, Senator Gold told this chamber that the government will be pleased to work with parliamentarians on potentially expanding the Good Samaritan exemption such as to other non-violent offences.

I am also honoured to be working to close the Canada Post loophole with some members of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police’s Drug Advisory Committee. Canadian police chiefs have been pushing for the change in the Canada Post Corporation Act for years.

Bill S-256 is a response to their call. A resolution adopted in 2015, already seven years ago, calling for police authority to seize illicit drugs, weapons and counterfeit items from the mail where authorized by law. That resolution reads in part:

... BE IT RESOLVED that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police requests the Government of Canada to amend the *Canada Post Corporation Act* to provide police, for the purpose of intercepting contraband, with the ability to obtain judicial authorization to seize, detain or retain parcels or letters while they are in the course of mail and under Canada Post's control.

This was seven years ago. Unfortunately, so far there has been no response from the government to their call.

Chief Mike Serr, co-chair of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police Drug Advisory Committee, and to whom I referred previously, said about my bill:

The legislation responds to the CACP's 2015 Resolution #08 which calls for police authority to seize illicit drugs, weapons, and counterfeit items from the mail, where authorized by law. The CACP Drug Advisory Committee supports legislative changes that provide tools for law enforcement to keep communities safe.

In advancing this bill, I wish to thank particularly Rachel Huntsman, who was in the gallery previously today, also from Newfoundland and Labrador, and Member of the Law Amendments Committee of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, or CACP. Her knowledge, advice and passion have been critically important to launching and shaping this bill. We have been working on this bill together for two years, along with Canada Post, the police chiefs and a lot of other people. I want to thank the Progressive Senate Group for providing research funds to finance this work.

• (1630)

Colleagues, the question with this bill becomes, "What are we waiting for?" I hope a Senate committee will hear from witnesses on this point and, if they reach the same conclusion as I have, that Parliament would proceed to close this loophole as soon as possible.

In conclusion, with Bill S-256, the "Canadian Postal Safety Act," I think we are creating one more tool — an effective tool — to enforce the law and reduce the illicit distribution of fentanyl and other drugs through the mail. I hope that, as a chamber, we will make a difference and adopt this bill on second reading and send it to committee as soon as possible. Thank you, *meegwetch*.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: Senator Dalphond, would you take a question?

Senator Dalphond: Yes, please.

Senator McPhedran: I wonder if you could address in more detail what you would anticipate to be concerns around civil liberties and privacy protections with the proposal for opening mail at a certain measurement.

Senator Dalphond: Thank you very much, Senator McPhedran, for such an important question. As you know, I proposed that it only be done with judicial authorization: A search warrant must be issued. This is the safeguard that is available now for a search of any other distributor of items or parcels in Canada.

If you send a letter or an envelope through FedEx or another company, that could be intercepted with judicial authorization. The same would be applicable to Canada Post.

Senator McPhedran: Senator Dalphond, many of the communities that you referenced are considered to be quite geographically remote. Do you see this as being a challenge in receiving the kind of judicial review in the timely manner that would be needed?

Senator Dalphond: Thank you once again for another interesting question. There are two parts to the answer. Most northern communities, when they are small, receive mail service only. No private companies deliver parcels there. The way to get to these remote areas is through the Canada Post system. It is important to say that the sole supplier of services is not subject to the control that would otherwise be available if it were not the sole supplier in these areas.

The second part of the question was about whether it will be easy to get judicial authorization or a warrant. As you may remember, we recently adopted amendments to the Criminal Code that go further than those which had previously been adopted under Bill C-75 that authorized warrants to be issued by email. Police officers can apply for a warrant by email, and would get the authorization back by email. We no longer have to send the police officer waiting in the corridor of a courthouse to get a signature. To answer your question, I think that it will be easy to get.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF RESOURCE EXTRACTION AND DEVELOPMENT—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator LaBoucane-Benson:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources be authorized to examine and report on the cumulative positive and negative

impacts of resource extraction and development, and their effects on environmental, economic and social considerations, when and if the committee is formed; and

That the committee submit its final report no later than December 31, 2022.

(On motion of Senator Wells, debate adjourned.)

THE SENATE

MOTION TO CALL UPON THE PRIME MINISTER TO ADVISE THE GOVERNOR GENERAL TO REVOKE THE HONORIFIC STYLE AND TITLE OF “HONOURABLE” FROM FORMER SENATOR DON MEREDITH—DEBATE

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Verner, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Miville-Dechéne:

That, in light of the reports of the Senate Ethics Officer dated March 9, 2017, and June 28, 2019, concerning the breaches by former Senator Don Meredith of the *Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators* as well as the statement made in the Senate on June 25, 2020, by the chair of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration expressing regrets to the victims of Mr. Meredith’s misconduct, the Senate call upon the Prime Minister to advise Her Excellency the Governor General to take the necessary steps to revoke the honorific style and title of “Honourable” from former senator Don Meredith.

Hon. Mary Jane McCallum: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak in support of Motion No. 81. I would like to thank Senator Verner for having the courage to speak truth to incidents of sexual violence in the Senate workplace. This is not a race issue. This is not a religious issue. This is an issue of violence against employees, and specifically against women, in the Senate.

I would like to acknowledge the survivors for persevering for over 10 years, living trauma-inflicted lives because of inadequacies within our workspace. I would like to apologize that you had to go into survival mode for so long. The fact that the trauma you endured took place publicly and in a space like the Senate is unconscionable.

As senators, we cannot continue to be complicit by remaining silent, nor should we be empowered in our silence through procedural tools like parliamentary privilege, for it is this exact privilege that allowed the first critical report on this issue, the 2016 Quintet report, to remain hidden from the public eye.

I understand that, due to a pending court case, we cannot address all of these issues. However, we must acknowledge that we can address some of these issues, including the matter before us, through Motion No. 81. The court process is entirely separate and parallel from what is occurring in the Senate. This ability to act is afforded to us as adjudicators of our own matters.

Honourable senators, the courts are not addressing the issue of removing the title “Honourable.” The Senate is not foraying into any judicial processes or procedures. As the CBC article on October 6, 2022, stated, Don Meredith was charged by the Ottawa Police Service with three counts of sexual assault and one count of criminal harassment. As we can see, there is an inherent difference in what the court is examining as opposed to the motion before us today.

As many of the senators sitting in the chamber today were not appointed at the time of these egregious acts, including myself, I would like to further highlight some of the activities of Don Meredith. The same CBC article from October 6 brings these issues to light when it states:

Six former Senate employees and a parliamentary constable also have alleged Meredith acted inappropriately toward them while he was serving in the upper house.

The alleged behaviour included unwanted kissing and exposure of his penis, along with yelling and aggressive behaviour in the office.

Honourable senators, it has long been accepted that senators enjoy the privilege of being masters in their own house. With this inherent and recognized privilege comes “disciplinary authority over its members.” These powers are vested in us through section 18 of the Constitution Act, 1867 and section 4 of the Parliament of Canada Act. You will remember that I had raised this with my motion to expel a senator.

In *Parliamentary Privilege, the Canadian Constitution and the Courts*, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal argued that:

... it is unthinkable that Parliament would seek to deny its employees the benefit of labour and human rights protections which Parliament itself has imposed on every other federal employer.

• (1640)

In the matter of privilege, an interim report of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament from 2015 stated that collective rights of the Senate and the House of Commons exist to sanction or discipline for breach of their privileges and for contempt.

Furthermore, in the 2015 report of the Rules Committee entitled *A Matter of Privilege: A Discussion Paper on Canadian Parliamentary Privilege in the 21st Century*, the committee wrote:

... it is for Parliament, not the courts, to determine whether in a particular case the *exercise* of the privilege is necessary or appropriate. In other words, within categories of privilege, Parliament is the judge of the occasion and manner of its exercise and such exercise is not reviewable by the courts.

Is an exercise of these rights appropriate in this case? I say that there was a breach of both privilege and ethics when Don Meredith exhibited forms of violence in the workplace — violence that has been verified. The Senate must do the right thing and remove the title “Honourable” from Don Meredith.

Passing this motion would call on the Prime Minister to begin, in earnest, that process by advising the Governor General to render this ultimate decision.

The critical point is that the Senate will be seen as employing sober second thought, standing up for what is right and supporting our co-workers in their extended fight for justice by voting to remove the title “Honourable” from Don Meredith.

I would like to further quote from the CBC article from October 6 on this matter, which states:

The granting of titles such as “honourable” is a royal prerogative in the hands of the Governor General, who generally acts on the advice of the prime minister of the day.

The article goes on to quote former senator Serge Joyal, who said:

It cannot be done out of fury, anger, vindication or in extreme situations because we happen not to like one person in particular. . . .

Colleagues, we are heeding this advice and are not making this move out of fury. Rather, we are doing it in support and solidarity with our co-workers who have been terribly impacted by Don Meredith.

When it is used as a title for senators, the title “honourable” indicates eminence or distinction. It is a term to denote a person worthy of honour, one who is honest, moral, ethical and principled. It doesn’t belong in the same context as sexual and institutional violence, a form of domestic violence in the workplace.

Do we not have a responsibility to make Canada, and our very institution, a better and safer place for all, not just for us privileged senators? Don’t we have a unique responsibility of serving the public interest as senators with the need to uphold the dignity, honour and integrity of our office and Parliament?

We have a unique role as appointed — not elected — legislators. Our privileges are qualified by our obligations, including those relating to decorum and ethics. As senators, we need to refrain from acting in ways that could reflect adversely on the position of senator or on the institution of the Senate, especially in respect of violence and harassment.

The importance of public perception and public confidence cannot be overstated. We have seen how negative perceptions about a senator’s conduct can harm public confidence in individual senators. Every single one of us in this chamber gets shed in the same harsh light.

I, for one, resent having the despicable behaviour of Don Meredith held up against the work that I do. As senators, we understand the importance of maintaining the highest standards of dignity, both in regard to the integrity of the office and relating to public confidence.

Honourable senators, we have heard the hurt and harm done to our co-workers by the personal conduct of Don Meredith over an extended period of time and his refusal to take responsibility for his actions. There is no place for sexual violence within the institution of Parliament. Only by accepting responsibility that this has gone on too long and by making this long overdue reparation will we be able to move forward toward modernization.

Taking away the title “honourable” sends a message to our institution, an institution where Don Meredith held a senatorial position for too long in light of his shocking actions. It would send a message to all senators that, as part of modernization, we need to review the Senate’s own functioning as an institution and how behaviour like his is explicitly unacceptable in 2022.

Colleagues, this motion represents a step toward restoring connections, accountability, truth, trust and transparency between senators and their employees, and between men and women. This is the least we can offer our co-workers by acknowledging the complicated effects of prolonged and repeated abuse by the allegedly honourable Don Meredith. After 10 years of stagnation, it is time this is done.

In passing this motion, we support the survivors, and turn this into a positive event that can be used as a springboard for change in our collective behaviour and decorum. It would make the Senate a better place. We cannot continue to allow the survivors to be stuck in time, targets of this unresolved trauma. These incidents have been aired and should never be forgotten lest they happen again. If the title is retained, we cannot move forward as an institution.

Meredith ran away in cowardice before he could be expelled. Let us belatedly take the just action of removing the title “honourable” so that his ownership of that title does not continue to taint us all.

We can no longer protect senators at the expense of our staff, who are rendered vulnerable, just because senators are viewed as the apex of this institution. This unilateral protection is unbalanced, and should not be in place today. Staff need protection. They do not need to be told, as has occurred in the past, that they cannot be helped because staff come and go but senators are forever. There is no place in this institution for such thinking.

Colleagues, this place let our employees down. Our employees didn’t let us down. It has been 10 years, and we’re still talking about it. The time to act is now.

I would like to request that a standing vote take place on this motion. Let’s do the honourable thing, and do justice for our co-workers. Thank you, *kinanâskomitin*.

Hon. Scott Tannas: I would like to thank Senator Verner for putting this motion forward, as well as Senator Miville-Dechêne and others for their support.

MOTION IN AMENDMENT FOR THE GOVERNOR GENERAL TO
REVOKE THE HONORIFIC STYLE AND TITLE OF
“HONOURABLE” ADOPTED

Hon. Scott Tannas: Therefore, honourable senators, in amendment, I move:

That the motion be not now adopted, but that it be amended by replacing all the words after the word “That,” by the following:

“in the opinion of the Senate, Her Excellency the Governor General should take the necessary steps to revoke the honorific style and title of “Honourable” from:

- (a) any former senator having been convicted of a criminal offence proceeded with by way of indictment; and
- (b) former senator Don Meredith, in light of the reports of the Senate Ethics Officer dated March 9, 2017, and June 28, 2019, concerning the breaches by the former senator of the *Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators*, as well as the statement made in the Senate on June 25, 2020, by the chair of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration expressing regrets to the victims of Mr. Meredith’s misconduct.”.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Tannas agreed to.)

MOTION, AS AMENDED, FOR THE GOVERNOR GENERAL TO
REVOKE THE HONORIFIC STYLE AND TITLE OF
“HONOURABLE” ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion, as amended, of the Honourable Senator Verner, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Miville-Dechéne:

That, in the opinion of the Senate, Her Excellency the Governor General should take the necessary steps to revoke the honorific style and title of “Honourable” from:

- (a) any former senator having been convicted of a criminal offence proceeded with by way of indictment; and
- (b) former Senator Don Meredith, in light of the reports of the Senate Ethics Officer dated March 9, 2017, and June 28, 2019, concerning the breaches by the former senator of the *Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators*, as well as the statement made in the Senate on June 25, 2020, by the chair of the Standing

Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration expressing regrets to the victims of Mr. Meredith’s misconduct.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, as amended.)

• (1650)

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF CANADIAN
MUNICIPALITIES**

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Simons, calling the attention of the Senate to the challenges and opportunities that Canadian municipalities face, and to the importance of understanding and redefining the relationships between Canada’s municipalities and the federal government.

Hon. Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia: Honourable senators, it is my pleasure to rise to speak to Senator Simons’ inquiry that calls on our chamber to explore the challenges and opportunities that municipalities face, and the importance of understanding and redefining the relationship between Canada’s municipalities and our federal government.

Echoing the sentiments of our honourable colleagues Senators Simons, Cotter, Forest and Sorensen, I would like to emphasize that our constitutional architecture was created in 1867 at a time when 80% of people did not live in municipalities. Now it’s the reverse where most people do.

Our municipalities are the frontline of governance and have the most impact on people’s daily needs, including things such as garbage collection, public transportation, health care services and affordable housing among other services. This drastic shift leaves us with the questions and issues on scales that were never contemplated at the time of Confederation.

From a constitutional perspective, municipalities are creatures of statutes. They only have the powers that are devolved from the province. They have no independent constitutional status meaning the province can take away these powers at will. As our colleagues have outlined, recent Supreme Court of Canada decisions have indicated those municipal powers should be interpreted broadly.

This leads us to the question that Senator Simons has raised: What role does the federal government play in helping support municipalities carry out their essential functions while recognizing the constitutional constraints?

Representing the province of Newfoundland and Labrador at this level, I would like to take this as an opportunity to share what my provincial government has been exploring to further enable our municipalities to respond to the ever-evolving issues raised by residents.

I would like to thank City of St. John's councillor for Ward 4, Ian Froude, as well as the CEO of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, Craig Pollet, for all the work they do for our municipal governments, and for sharing with me their experience and expertise in addressing these critical issues.

First, I would like to start by providing a bit of historical context for the municipal sector in Newfoundland and Labrador, which is relatively young. The first municipal incorporation was in St. John's in 1888, followed by Windsor Station in 1938, almost fifty years later, which was later renamed Windsor. Windsor eventually amalgamated with the town of Grand Falls.

Most of the municipalities today were incorporated in the 1960s and 1970s. At one point, there were well over 300 municipalities and over 1,000 communities. This accelerated pace of development, after 50 years of dormancy, was driven primarily by the financial supports that appeared in the initial decade or so after Newfoundland and Labrador's confederation with Canada in 1949.

Funding was available to support much-needed infrastructure work, but few communities had the organizational capacity to receive or manage this financial support. Hence, municipal councils became the primary means of receiving funds, and incorporation was encouraged across the province.

Today, most municipal governments play a much more complex and embedded role in the lives of the residents they serve. In addition, the legislative and regulatory environments in which municipal governments operate have become much more complex and demanding.

Many simply do not have the administrative, financial or technical capacity to comply with the legislative requirements, such as financial reporting, bylaw enforcement, federal waste water effluent regulations, workplace health and safety regulations and drinking water and waste water system requirements.

Currently, Newfoundland and Labrador has a population of approximately 530,000 people and there are 275 municipalities scattered across my province, wherein 78% of our municipalities have a population of fewer than 1,000 residents. The sheer number of communities and the duplication of services have created a huge administrative and financial strain. Towns are facing significant challenges, such as aging populations, out-migration, uncontested elections, the ability to form committees and councils and a lack of economic opportunities.

Some municipalities are struggling to deliver services to remain viable. Many towns are becoming unsustainable, and are unable to engage in economic development or attract new residents, businesses and professionals such as health care providers. It is clear that we need to take steps to help support the governing structure that municipalities operate within.

Building on public consultations and extensive research, a joint working group on regionalization was established in 2020 to make recommendations to the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs on a plan for regionalization. It was comprised of representatives of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, the professional municipal administrators and representatives from the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

A thorough review and analysis of the recommendations are currently being conducted by my government in Newfoundland and Labrador, with the goal of finalizing a comprehensive plan for regionalization for the province. Regionalization would allow for well-integrated planning, more transparent and accountable municipal governments, improved administration and operational capacities, fair and equitable taxation and the ability to attract and welcome new residents, professionals and tourists.

Municipalities are experiencing great examples of community-sharing services, and they are already seeing these benefits. These examples include access to regional economic development opportunities, fire protection services, land-use planning and infrastructure planning including water systems. Building upon existing collaborations and service sharing will help position communities for economic growth and the ability to be sustainable. By pooling resources, regional governments enhance capacity of what municipalities are able to offer to their residents.

Honourable senators, healthy and sustainable communities are the building blocks of a prosperous province and a prosperous country. Woven together, they comprise the social fabric of a dynamic, robust nation. I hope that we can continue to investigate within and beyond this chamber how all levels of government can collaborate to help support our vibrant communities within Newfoundland and Labrador and across all provinces and territories from coast to coast to coast.

Thank you, *wela'liog*.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Renée Dupuis: Would Senator Ravalia take a question?

[*English*]

Senator Ravalia: With pleasure.

[*Translation*]

Senator Dupuis: Senator Ravalia, in your analysis of the situation in your province of Newfoundland and Labrador, could you tell us how the Newfoundland and Labrador government views the redefining of the direct relationship between municipalities and the federal government? Because that's what we're talking about here.

Did you have the opportunity to find information on the subject or do you know the position of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on the issue?

[*English*]

Senator Ravalia: Thank you for the question. In my discussion with the President of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, this is an ongoing question. The issue within my province is that many small communities have struggled with the concept of regionalization. They are so independent and wish to maintain their local identity, and the thought of sharing services, et cetera, with other communities is quite foreign to them.

• (1700)

There have, obviously, been discussions between the municipalities, the provincial government and federal advisers as to how a process like this can move forward, but, in my province, it remains very much at a relatively early phase. However, we are hoping that examples from other provinces may give us ideas that would allow us to form a robust regionalization program that will enhance our communities. Thank you.

(On motion of Senator Cormier, debate adjourned.)

NET-ZERO EMISSIONS FUTURE

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Coyle, calling the attention of the Senate to the importance of finding solutions to transition Canada's society, economy and resource use in pursuit of a fair, prosperous, sustainable and peaceful net-zero emissions future for our country and the planet.

Hon. Hassan Yussuff: Honourable senators, I rise in support of Senator Coyle's climate inquiry. I do this in the context of my previous life, but I speak to it now in the Senate.

As folks were meeting in Egypt just last week at the COP 27 meeting, we learned that we may not meet our stated objective of lowering the temperature in the world by 1.5 degrees. While many of us may not be dismayed about this, I think we should all be extremely worried.

This is not the first time we have been told that the objectives set by the UN and by many of our national governments are not achievable. Every time we are told we have to make a different choice, it makes me wonder — as a human being, but also as a father — what this planet will look like in the near future.

As governments continue to struggle with how they're going to achieve this objective, we're witnessing challenges around the world every single day that we have not previously seen in our lifetime: Fires rage out of control, and we can't seem to find the resolve as to how we're going to deal with it. Storms that we have never seen in our lifetime are raging and destroying our communities. We ask ourselves the most basic question about

whether we can do something about this. We know what the answer is, but we don't have the resolve to take the necessary steps.

There is the loss of biodiversity — almost every day, we're told that there is a new animal or species at risk. We're not sure if they're going to exist on this planet within our lifetime — never mind the loss of life every time one of these storms or fires rages, whether it's in our communities here in Canada, or around the world.

The ocean is also warming — I continue to watch some documentaries — and we're asking ourselves questions. How long can this continue before we are truly going to be in a crisis position we cannot resolve?

My friends, I know many of the questions we're going to be struggling with regarding the climate are not easy ones. I know this as the former president of the Canadian Labour Congress. Our country made a commitment to phase out coal-fired generation by 2030. There are four provinces in our country — soon to be three — that are still using coal to generate electricity. It's part of who we are. As a matter of fact, if you go back in Canada's history, coal is the foundation of the Industrial Revolution. The workers and communities that benefitted from this didn't do anything wrong. Today we know — the science tells us — that burning coal is not good for the environment or human health, nor is it good for the climate.

However, to ask a worker to give up their job, and stop burning coal because it's the right thing to do should not be seen as an easy thing — never mind the communities that are going to be impacted by this. When you shut down a coal-fired plant, you take away the resources that are generated from that facility; you also take away the tax base that workers depend upon to build their municipality and grow the services they provide. The list goes on.

We can plan to do all of these things in a timely manner. But we did make a commitment to stop burning coal to generate electricity in our country by 2030. In Saskatchewan, we still burn coal to generate electricity. In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, we're still doing this. But 2030 is the objective.

I was asked to co-chair a task force to go out and talk to workers, employers and communities about how we can do this in a way that makes political sense. It was not easy, because talking to workers as a union leader, and telling these workers that their jobs will disappear, is not exactly a pleasant thing you should consciously do unless you're committed to the greater good. I do realize it was an important thing to be done. After all, I've been advocating for solutions to the climate.

I believe workers have an important role to play in dealing with these challenges. As much as they're not at fault, they have an important role to play. At two conventions, I was the president of the congress. We devoted an entire day to talking about climate change. Why was that important? Because I don't believe any government can achieve its climate objective unless workers are part of the solution. They will be impacted. Their jobs will be impacted. Their family life and community will be impacted.

I went about my responsibility to talk to workers. As I went to places, it wasn't easy. Many workers didn't want to hear it. In many of the communities, and in many of the facilities, workers were making anywhere between \$60,000 and \$100,000 a year doing this kind of work, and here I was telling them they had to give this up because that was the decision made by their provincial and federal governments. It was not an easy conversation, but many of the unions that represent these workers agreed that this is an objective we should try to accomplish.

Before I went to Saskatchewan, I was told that I shouldn't go because I would be met with hostility. I told my colleagues that I accepted that as a responsibility and guidance. I told them that none of them had to come, but I had to go.

I did go to Saskatchewan. I met the wonderful people who work in those coal-fired communities. The first thing they asked me was how much I was being paid to do what I was doing. I was wise enough to know not to accept one single honorarium or one penny from the government to co-chair the task force. I said I wasn't being paid to do this, but I recognized it was necessary.

They wanted to know what was going to happen to their community. What would happen to their housing prices? What would happen to their families? Would they have to pick up and move? I didn't have the answers for them. That is what we were trying to assess. But, in the process of talking to them, I recognized they were equally as hopeful as I was that we could figure this out. They know the science, and that burning coal does not match with the reality of when they first entered the industry.

We — here in Ontario — did phase out coal-fired generation. We learned lots from that process. As a result of that, today many of the kids in this province can run out in the summertime, and play in the streets and on playgrounds — and we don't have any more smog alert days to tell them they have to get inside and hide from the outdoors if they have asthma or some breathing challenges.

Saskatchewan, Alberta, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick will have to meet this challenge as to how to phase out coal. But in the process of that, I learned lots: Unless we engage the workers and communities in this conversation, we will be faced with a lot of opposition regarding how to phase out coal. More importantly, with the greater challenge being how to transform the economy to a greener economy, we have to recognize that we cannot discard workers, and simply think we can let them fend for themselves.

We did make 10 recommendations to the federal government — unanimously, all supported by the entire task force. Of course, now the federal government and the provinces have to work to ensure we can meet these objectives.

• (1710)

Equally, the federal government will have to ensure a just transition, as is stated in the UN goal — the Paris Agreement — is something that we can say proudly, as Canada, we are able to do to show workers there is a path forward for them doing the right things.

What I did learn, more importantly, is that as Canadians, too often we talk at each other, not talk with each other. I think with the climate challenge that we face in this country, and as we face around the world, we're going to have to find more ways to talk to each other about what we can all do to achieve this objective.

I think Senator Coyle's climate change inquiry is about how we have more conversations across this country.

I've been fortunate in my history of working in the labour movement to have been to every corner of this great land of ours. I have never seen a place more beautiful in my entire life. I wish every Canadian would have the same opportunity I've had. I have met the wonderful people of this great country. All want to contribute to this, but we have to find a better way as to how to talk to each other to find a way to collaborate.

I know this is not an easy objective. In Alberta, they're just about finished with their coal-fired generation. They've converted those facilities to gas as an interim measure, as they will continue to make other measures to deal with the challenges of how they generate electricity.

In Saskatchewan, they're now embarking on that process. They will have to figure out how they get there, because coal-fired generation is the only way to generate electricity to a large extent to meet the needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are likely to get some of Newfoundland's power. They will be on stream very soon. It will help them get off of coal-fired generation. But it is only one step.

More importantly, what Senator Coyle's inquiry is about is how we have these conversations as Canadians because in the context of the climate challenge, we in Canada have to show leadership on this. More importantly, if we are to meet our 2030 and 2050 goals, time is not on our side. We are going to have to move much faster.

I want to conclude, colleagues, by saying that, like many of you, we're all wondering, every time we see a terrible storm that disrupts our community or a terrible forest fire that our colleagues in some part of this great land are struggling with, how we can avoid that. I know there may not be any answers. Senator Ravalia just talked about how we can work better with municipalities. Our municipalities are not fully equipped to deal with climate challenges. They were built at a time when the infrastructure didn't envision what's coming with storms. How do we revitalize them if we want to achieve the greater good of living in a society where we can actually meet our needs but also make sure our municipalities are going to remain vibrant to provide the services they do?

I want to conclude on a hopeful note. I may not be here on this planet for another hundred years. I know that for a fact. But my young daughter, who is now 14 and might inherit this great country as she grows up, keeps asking me, "Dad, is that animal likely to be around by the time I get to be your age?" I looked at her and I said, "I can't say for certain." That's a terrible thing to tell a child. My parents didn't tell me that. Why am I telling my child this?

The reality, colleagues, is we're going to have to do better. As Canadians, we can do better. Some of the solutions being found to deal with the climate challenge are real, they're in front of us. We're going to have to invest more in them. Equally, we're going to have to work harder with each other if we're going to get there.

To conclude, I want to thank my friend for putting forward the great idea about an inquiry because it will allow us to talk to each other and hopefully find greater consensus to make this country an even better place. Thank you so much.

Hon. Denise Batters: Would Senator Yussuff take a quick question?

Senator Yussuff: Yes.

Senator Batters: Thank you for mentioning my home province of Saskatchewan and the wonderful people there in your speech. I just wondered if, when you were in Saskatchewan, you had an opportunity to see the world-class clean coal technology and carbon capture technology that Saskatchewan has developed and is trying to promote around the world, and the very hopeful future that brings for not only the people of Saskatchewan and Canada but potentially the world. In fact, I'm not sure if you knew this, but a very interesting statistic that I recently heard is that if China used Saskatchewan's clean coal technology for only 15% of their coal plants that they're developing and bringing on stream all the time, that would actually erase all of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions every year. I wonder if you've heard anything about Saskatchewan's clean coal technology and the hopeful future that brings.

Senator Yussuff: Thank you for the question. Not only did I hear about it, I actually saw it first-hand in use. There is a cost associated with it. The technology does work but there is a cost associated with it.

It is true that carbon capture technology has evolved significantly since the development in Saskatchewan, and it's being used in many parts of the world. I can't speak about what

China is going to do, but I know in Canada we can do better. The creation of this technological development shows the creativity in Canada, the many things we're going to have to tackle and how we can come up with ideas and solutions.

I know for the most part that burning coal as a way to generate electricity may be something of the past, but the technology that was developed in Saskatchewan has much broader use not only here in Canada but throughout the world.

Others are learning from this. I was just in Norway and they're going to use carbon capture technology to capture carbon in one place and they're going to store it in the North Sea. That technology exists. The market is now supporting that to happen. Much has been learned from the great people of Saskatchewan in terms of what they did. I'm hopeful the next time I go back to Saskatchewan, which I promised to do next summer, to visit some of the communities that I was a part of; they have made much headway in the challenges they face in how they're going to deal with the coal phase-out in the near future but also be able to continue to generate electricity to meet the needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

(On motion of Senator Clement, debate adjourned.)

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-13(2), I move :

That the Senate do now adjourn.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(At 5:17 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 2 p.m.)

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