



DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION



44th PARLIAMENT



VOLUME 153



NUMBER 164

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,
Speaker

CONTENTS

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

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

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

THE SENATE

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

THE LATE REVEREND WALLACE SMITH SR.

Hon. Wanda Thomas Bernard: Honourable senators, I rise today grateful to be on Algonquin Anishinaabeg territory to pay tribute to the life and legacy of a beloved figure from North Preston, Nova Scotia, Rev. Wallace Smith Sr., who passed away peacefully on October 3, 2023, at the age of 82.

Reverend Smith was a man of many talents and profound influence. His connection with faith and music shaped his journey. From the early 1960s to his retirement, he dedicated himself to music, leaving a significant mark on the gospel scene.

In the mid-1970s, guided by divine inspiration, he founded the Gospel Heirs, a group that had widespread admiration throughout Nova Scotia and Canada. This group captivated audiences for nearly three decades. Following this retirement, he continued to inspire as the lead singer of The Sanctified Brothers, another gospel group from North Preston. Reverend Smith's musical skills earned him numerous accolades, including induction into the Rev. Dr. William P. Oliver Wall of Honour and receiving the African Nova Scotian Music Association Lifetime Achievement Award.

He served his community as a deacon and an assistant pastor, ultimately becoming the first ordained pastor from North Preston where he served for over twenty years, fondly known as "the people's pastor." During his tenure, the church flourished both spiritually and physically, impacting countless lives through his captivating ministries.

In addition to his spiritual guidance, he dealt with social issues impacting the community. As I reflected on his life, I was reminded of his work with the Association of Black Social Workers to help break the silence around violence in our communities. His unwavering commitment to the upbuilding of his community led his son, Wallace Jr., to call him "Superman."

Honourable colleagues, as we remember Rev. Wallace Smith Sr., let us honour his life of service, love and devotion to God, family and community. His legacy will forever inspire us to strive for a well-lived life and to continue his mission of helping others along the way.

I thank his wife, Sister Frances, and family for sharing him with us.

Asante. Thank you.

INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF SOLEIMAN FAQIRI

Hon. Peter M. Boehm: Honourable senators, I rise today to provide an update on the ongoing tragic case of Soleiman Faqiri, who, on December 15, 2016, died as a result of injuries he sustained from guards while in custody in a segregation unit at the Central East Correctional Centre in Lindsay, Ontario.

This is the second time I am speaking about this case in this chamber, colleagues; the first time being on October 2, 2020. The reason for today's statement is to note the recent launch of the inquest, on November 20, into Soleiman's needless death.

On December 4, 2016, at the age of 30, Soleiman, who had diagnosed schizophrenia, allegedly attacked a neighbour, but, despite his serious mental illness, was taken to a correctional centre instead of a mental health facility.

Soleiman was found dead in his cell 11 days later after a violent altercation with several guards. He was struck multiple times by guards, pepper-sprayed twice without his face being decontaminated, shackled, face down and had a spit hood over his head.

The inquest, expected to conclude next week on December 8, has revealed previously unreleased video of Soleiman's last moments and has heard from professionals who, in one way or another, were associated with observing or attending to him — those meant to keep him safe. The video is difficult to watch, but I would encourage senators and the Canadian public to do so.

The inquest has revealed that, despite it being clear that Soleiman needed medical care in the days before his death, he was never transferred to a hospital.

Three years ago, the coroner's report did not cite a cause of death, but found that Soleiman suffered 50 instances of blunt impact trauma. We now know he died as a direct result of the injuries inflicted upon him by guards and being restrained face down.

Almost seven years after his death, justice for "Soli" — as he is known to the family that loves him — is still proving elusive.

His death is a devastating example of systemic racism in both our correctional and law enforcement systems, not to mention a condemnation of the systemic failure to properly assess and care for individuals with severe mental illness.

Led by his brother, Yusuf, Soli's family has been fighting for justice since his death.

Will this inquest provide closure for them? Probably not. At best, it might bring changes to the systems that allowed this travesty of justice to occur so that it never happens again.

I conclude with the point I made on this case three years ago. While we consider the systemic problems that contributed to this tragedy and how to rectify them, we must also remember the human element: that a family lost its beloved son and brother. The inquest into Soli's death cannot bring him back to his family, but it can stop another family from having to suffer as the Faqiris have.

Thank you.

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Dr. Maureen Topps from the Medical Council of Canada. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Ravalia.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

MEDICAL COUNCIL OF CANADA

Hon. Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia: Honourable senators, I rise today to knowledge the importance of the Medical Council of Canada in ensuring the highest level of medical care by maintaining excellence in physician assessment in Canada.

Pre-Confederation Canada was riddled with an unregulated medical system, with quackery and pseudo-scientific practices very much a part of the landscape.

• (1410)

In 1912, legislation was passed to create high standards and a uniform assessment process for practising physicians. This led to the formation of the Medical Council of Canada, spearheaded by the late Dr. Sir Thomas Roddick.

Today, in addition to assessing every medical school graduate, the council is also responsible for assessing international medical graduates seeking to practise in Canada. Having been on both sides of this coin, I can emphasize the importance and validity of this process.

The council maintains a complete record of all practising doctors of medicine, or MDs; streamlines and simplifies the assessment process; and collaborates with partners to maintain current knowledge, best practices and procedures. There is a focus on ensuring the rigorous and advanced methods of physician assessment, and maintaining a close relationship with medical regulators, educators and allied health groups.

The council continues to adapt to the rapid advancements in digital technologies and pharmacotherapeutics, ensuring excellence in maintaining an assessment process that is current, state of the art and relevant to clinical practice.

The Medical Council of Canada works diligently to adhere to the principles of diversity, inclusion and equity, and has ongoing thoughtful dialogue with Indigenous and Black physicians' groups to ensure that systemic racism is addressed and that the path toward reconciliation continues seamlessly. This priority is further applied in the council's staffing and committee priorities.

One of the key advances of the council has been the establishment of the National Assessment Collaboration — an alliance of Canadian organizations streamlining the process for international medical graduates seeking licensure in our country. A broad coalition of medical organizations works in tandem nationally to advance the assessment of international graduates seeking practice.

I have previously worked very closely on this file, and was delighted to see the stringent adherence to transparency within this process. Volunteer physicians from across the country work with the executive to ensure that various initiatives and exam processes are conducted in a fair manner.

My sincere gratitude goes out to Dr. Ian Bowmer, the previous CEO and executive director of the council, for his untiring efforts in advancing the work of the council.

I would like to acknowledge today the hard work and dedication of Dr. Maureen Topps, who is our guest today. She will complete her term in this position at the end of the year.

Thank you for your invaluable contributions in maintaining the necessary, high-calibre assessments of physicians, and introducing the MCC 360 feedback program, which has provided constructive insight into the behaviours, perceptions and experiences of patients and professionals alike.

Meegwetch. Thank you.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESIDENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

CERTIFICATE OF NOMINATION TABLED

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the certificate of nomination and biographical notes for the proposed appointment of Marie-Chantal Girard to the position of President of the Public Service Commission of Canada.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Government notice of motion.

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Your Honour, may we revert to that at a later time?

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

Some Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Before we grant leave, I would like to know what the motion is about, and why we can't deal with it now.

Senator LaBoucane-Benson: The motion, Senator Plett, is my adjournment motion. I don't have it in front of me, and I would hate to mess that up, because it is important for us to leave on Thursday night.

Senator Plett: In all fairness, I could probably make that motion for you, but, fine, we will grant leave.

The Hon. the Speaker: If I understand rightly, leave is granted to revert back to this item.

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

QUESTION PERIOD

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Leader, last week, we marked an anniversary of sorts here in the Senate. If you look at the end of the Senate's Order Paper, you will see that I have 38 written questions that have been unanswered since, at least, November 23, 2021 — two years ago. In fact, most of them have been there longer than that. Senator Downe has also written a question that has been unanswered since November 25, 2021. Happy anniversary to him as well, I guess. These unanswered questions show the contempt that Trudeau has for the Senate and, indeed, for Canadians.

Leader, what concrete actions have you taken to obtain these answers for us, and would you support a motion in this place calling on the Trudeau government to provide them?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Plett. A bit later, I think we will have an anniversary present for both you and Senator Downe, but I do take your point regarding the delays in receiving answers from the government. It is something that I regret — as I know you do — and I will continue to make every effort to speed up the process. It is important, and I'm not going to hide behind any talking points to deny that.

I would like to reflect upon your suggestion for a motion. I would like to suggest that when the Rules Committee next meets, we shall give some consideration to studying how it is done in other parliaments and, indeed, in the other place, because it would be of assistance to all of us if answers came in a timely fashion.

Senator Plett: Thank you, leader. I appreciate what you are saying.

Thirteen of my questions have been on the Order Paper since 2020 — three years ago. I want to go over some of the topics: deliverology — do you remember that? — as well as contracts given to the WE Charity; the Senate appointments board; Facebook and Instagram advertising costs; and the amount paid to consultants in relation to emergency pandemic programs.

If refusing to answer a question for three years is not contempt, then what is, leader? We will see how many of these answers are there later on, but I think this is contemptuous.

Senator Gold: I don't agree with your characterization, but, again, I do agree that delays in answers — even when the questions are highly partisan — are, nonetheless, regrettable.

[*Translation*]

JUSTICE

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu: Senator Gold, this week was the start to 12 days of action to end violence against women. Recent statistics from the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability show that femicides have increased by an alarming 20% since 2019, with 184 victims in 2022.

France, a country with twice Canada's population, reported 118 murdered women, or 60% fewer than Canada in 2022. This tragic situation highlights the failure of the government's current strategy.

Considering the scope of the problem, transfer payments to the provinces are only part of the answer. The federal government has exclusive jurisdiction in matters related to the Criminal Code. Why, then, has the government not taken more serious action since 2015, such as introducing stricter legislation to punish the perpetrators of violence against women, instead of sending them home to their living rooms? Is this laxity anything but negligence by the government to better protect women and girls in Canada?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Violence against women and girls is deplorable and tragic. It's not true that the federal government is doing nothing. On the contrary, we're currently conducting a study. I hope that we will soon be able to finalize our study of Bill C-21, which contains important measures to reduce access to the types of firearms that have been used to commit far too many acts of violence against women and girls and to murder them.

• (1420)

We just passed Bill C-48. Thanks to your efforts, honourable senator, this bill contains an amendment that was supported by the government. What that amendment does is reverse the burden of proof in cases involving violence against women.

In short, there is still a lot of work to be done. Every life is precious, and the government is doing everything it can to protect women and girls from violence.

Senator Boisvenu: Senator Gold, don't expect too much from Bill C-21. Just 3% of women in Canada are murdered with a firearm, whereas 60% are murdered with a knife.

This twelve-day period is the only chance that women have to be heard by your government. We need to reconsider the government's approach to the rising number of femicides.

Don't you think that it is insufficient and superficial to merely transfer funding to the provinces? When will the government finally take real, tough action and crack down on those responsible for violence against women?

Senator Gold: I completely agree that no one step, namely, the funding granted to the provinces or the amendments made to the Criminal Code, will ever be enough to address the tragedy of violence against women and girls. However, every step is important, and the government will continue to take those important steps.

[English]

HEALTH

CANADIAN INSTITUTES OF HEALTH RESEARCH

Hon. Stan Kutcher: Senator Gold, the health research community across Canada is raising serious concerns about the need for appropriate funding for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, or CIHR. It is becoming more and more clear that without adequate funding CIHR will not be able to support the research needed to provide a healthier future for Canadians and keep our best researchers here. For example, CIHR funding is now less than 1.5% of the funding of the National Institutes of Health in the U.S.

How can we expect to grow our national health research here at home without increased funding for CIHR?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question, senator. The Government of Canada not only acknowledges the important work that our scientific and research community does on behalf of Canadians — our health and prosperity — but also understands the importance of federal funding in this area, notwithstanding the responsibilities that other levels of government and sectors of society have. Significant investments have been made, as I have underlined here before — more than \$16 billion committed to support research and science across Canada and so on.

It is true that the priorities within these funding envelopes do not always meet the needs and certainly the expectations of certain sectors, whether it is in health or in the humanities. The government will continue to do its best within its financial means to provide funding for the important work that you've underlined.

Senator Kutcher: Senator Gold, there are also concerns being raised that the upcoming federal budget will not only not adequately enhance CIHR funding but, actually, cut the funding that CIHR currently receives. If this happens, that will be a travesty of the first order.

Senator Gold, can you provide our health research community assurances that funding for CIHR will not be cut in the upcoming federal budget?

Senator Gold: I am not in a position to provide such assurances. The assurance that I will give is that the government takes very seriously the legitimate albeit competing demands on its resources, not only from the research community but from all other constituencies — whether that be defence or others — and it will do its very best to continue to move forward and support the research community in Canada, upon which our future clearly depends.

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME

Hon. Kim Pate: My question is for Senator Gold. Last week, P.E.I. released a study outlining a model for a fully funded five-to-seven-year guaranteed livable basic income demonstration project for the province, setting out a path forward for provincial and federal collaboration. For several years, the province has been clear that it has full cross-party support and wants to move ahead with a guaranteed livable basic income but requires federal support to do so.

Last month, you indicated that the government will continue to monitor research and analysis on basic income and that the government is exploring potential short-term and long-term policy responses to address the needs of Canadians.

In what concrete ways will the news from P.E.I. affect the government's approach to guaranteed livable basic income?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question and for your continued advocacy on behalf of this initiative.

In terms of concrete action, the Government of Canada has taken very concrete steps over many years now — from 2015 to 2021 — with various programs. Approximately 2.3 million Canadians have been lifted out of poverty, including more than 650,000 children. These are the concrete steps that the government has taken and will continue to take.

With regard to your question about the P.E.I. study and model, my understanding is, senator, that the government will be reviewing this study as well as other research on basic income in order to determine what the best policy approach is going forward.

Senator Pate: Right now, I feel like I've got Hugh Segal sitting on my shoulder, urging me to ask this: When can P.E.I. expect a response from the federal government to ongoing requests for partnership on this provincial guaranteed livable basic income demonstration project?

Senator Gold: With only 15 seconds left, I don't have time for the kind of run-on sentences that our regretfully departed colleague would have spoken.

I don't have a timeline for that, senator, but I can assure you the government is reviewing it seriously.

INNOVATION

UNIVERSAL BROADBAND FUND

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: My question is for Senator Gold. Since it began, the Universal Broadband Fund has been allocated to each of the four large telecom companies — Bell, Rogers, TELUS and Xplore — to build fibre networks. As you know, I care deeply about ensuring equitable access to internet services in Canada given that we live in an increasingly digital world.

Here is my question: How much money has been given to the other telecommunication companies? How much of these allocations have been claimed by the recipients for completed projects and partially completed projects? How much is currently unclaimed?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. Let me take the opportunity now — I have other opportunities — to thank you for your continued advocacy on behalf of this issue for all rural communities, not only those in the North, which you have served so admirably throughout your career.

I'm going to miss these questions. You are not going to miss the fact that I don't have the answer for you because it is a very specific question. What I will do is to undertake to find the answers and communicate that to you offline, Senator Patterson, as quickly as I can.

Senator D. Patterson: Thank you, Senator Gold. I did give you some notice, and I do try to do that. I'm not trying to ambush you in Question Period, so I appreciate you getting back to me.

Here is my supplementary question: How much money does the Universal Broadband Fund collect annually from the telecommunications surcharge placed on the ratepayers' bills? Please report back to this chamber what the average percentage subsidy by recipient is for the various projects by year and provider for Bell, Rogers, TELUS, Xplore and others.

Senator Gold: I will certainly add those questions to the inquiries I will make. Thank you, senator.

INDIGENOUS SERVICES

INDIGENOUS HOUSING

Hon. Judy A. White: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Gold, the Federal Housing Advocate released a report on Monday focused on Inuit housing. The report painted a devastating picture of the living conditions in Nunatsiavut and Nunavut. It highlighted homelessness, severe overcrowding and homes without adequate water, sanitation or reliable access to heat and energy, along with the spread of mould and disease. Furthermore, these conditions have only worsened over time.

Based on this, I ask what the Government of Canada is doing to address the severe challenges and immediate needs of Inuit housing. Are there any meaningful actions being taken to ensure the Inuit right to housing?

• (1430)

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, senator. I had the opportunity, when I was a member of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, to visit the North, and I saw first-hand how — “challenging” is too nice a word — problematic the housing situation is, and that in the largest city in Nunavut. Add that to the other challenges that residents face — the cost of food and the like.

The government is committed to taking a rights-based approach to housing. In terms of concrete actions, the government has announced \$287 million in immediate funding to address the unmet housing needs, and that builds on work already under way.

This is to ensure that over 40% of the units created under the Rapid Housing Initiative are targeted for Indigenous housing. It is a step in the right direction. The need is huge, as you quite properly pointed out.

Senator White: Thank you for that, Senator Gold.

I am wondering if the government has a long-term strategy to meet unique infrastructure and housing needs of Inuit in the North. Are there any specific programs in place or being developed to address this housing crisis in Nunatsiavut and Nunavut?

Senator Gold: Thank you, senator. In Budget 2022 and 2023, the government is investing \$4.3 billion to implement a co-developed Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy. I understand that the government is currently working with Indigenous peoples to co-develop and implement this strategy, and it is committed to continuing to work in that regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, in addition to investigations by the RCMP and the Auditor General, Public Services and Procurement Canada is also conducting a review of three IT staffing firms involved in the ArriveCAN contract scandal. *The Globe and Mail* reported on November 10 that:

Since 2017, GCStrategies has received \$59-million in federal funding. And over the past 10 years, Coradix and Dalian — which frequently work together — have received a combined \$411-million.

Both GCStrategies and Dalian have said they each have just two employees. Coradix has more than 40 employees.

Leader, a significant amount of taxpayer dollars is involved here. If the Trudeau government has concerns about misconduct involving these companies, why are government departments still permitted to keep working with them?

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

Misconduct in procurement is never acceptable. The Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA, as colleagues know — I have said it in the chamber before — has suspended its contracts with GC Strategies, CORADIX and Dalian. The government is aware, as colleagues are as well, that there is an ongoing RCMP investigation. In order to protect the integrity of that investigation, I cannot provide further comments on behalf of the government.

I remind senators that the CBSA has conducted an internal audit and mandated new oversight in its contracting. The government fully expects the CBSA to act on the investigation's findings.

Senator Martin: To clarify, is your government committing to make public the review that Public Services and Procurement Canada is conducting into these three companies? Could you tell us when this review is expected to end?

Senator Gold: To clarify, I do not believe that is what I undertook in my answer to the question, Senator Martin. My answer was that contracts have been suspended, the RCMP is investigating, the CBSA has launched an internal audit and mandated new reporting oversight, and the government expects the CBSA to follow through.

INDUSTRY

MINISTERIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, we used to have something in the federal cabinet called ministerial accountability. It does not exist under

this Trudeau government. There have been serious allegations of conflict of interest and gross mismanagement at Sustainable Development Technology Canada, yet no action was taken.

The Minister of Innovation admits that he has known about these allegations since March 5. Canadians knew nothing about them until whistle-blowers came forward in the media this fall. Since then, Senator Gold, both the chief executive officer and the chair have resigned in disgrace.

Minister Champagne said recently, “The buck stops with me on everything.”

Leader, if no one was fired and no money was recouped, aren't those just empty words?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): No, they are not, senator.

The government takes these allegations very seriously, and these investigations are ongoing. There is a review led by an independent third-party law firm, which will report to the minister. The minister is doing what a responsible minister needs to do and should be doing, which is to look into these matters, get all of the facts and take the appropriate action. When any further action has been determined, it will be announced.

Senator Plett: Well, there is no ministerial accountability under this government, and the more we learned about the slush fund, the worse it gets. The chair is going to step down on December 1. She recently admitted to a House committee she used this green slush fund to give a \$217,000 grant to her own company — shameful. Definitely not worth the cost. Did the minister decide not to fire her because she is a friend of the Prime Minister?

Senator Gold: I have no knowledge of the reasons for which the action was taken. As I said, the government takes these matters seriously. An independent review has been undertaken, and when further measures are to be announced, they will be announced.

FINANCE

NEW RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY REBATE

Hon. Tony Loffreda: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Gold, on September 14 the Prime Minister announced an enhanced Goods and Services Tax Rental Rebate on new purpose-built rental housing to incentivize construction of much-needed rental homes for Canadians. Some provincial governments have also announced the cancellation of provincial sales taxes for similar reasons. What is the estimated cost of this announcement to the federal government? Has there been an assessment of the potential impact of this announcement on rental housing supply? If so, what is this assessment?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, senator. The government estimates that this measure will cost \$4.565 billion in the period

from 2023-24 to 2028-29. I understand further that private-sector economists have reported figures of 200,000 to 300,000 homes being created as a result of the GST rebate if the benefit is expected to be further amplified through provincial actions to lift their tax on rental housing.

Senator Loffreda: Thank you for that answer. The government claims that on a two-bedroom rental unit valued at \$500,000, the rental rebate would deliver \$25,000 in tax relief. That is great news. But there is no guarantee who will enjoy these savings, and there is no mechanism in place to ensure that these savings are passed down to the tenant who, in the end, is the person this measure seeks to help. Will the savings go back to tenants and increase affordability? We must continue to strive to increase housing affordability.

Senator Gold: Thank you. This is about, obviously, making more houses available at better prices for tenants. The GST rebate is a solution aimed at making the math of construction work for the builders, and economists predict that hundreds of thousands, as I said, of new builds will result, and that will increase the supply of rental housing. Supply and demand should benefit tenants.

[Translation]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

ONLINE NEWS ACT

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne: Senator Gold, today we learned that the government struck a last-minute deal with Google under which the corporation will hand over \$100 million per year to support Canadian media. We were expecting a much more generous deal on the order of \$172 million.

The government pinned its hopes on the Online News Act to secure funding for Canadian media. Now that Meta has stopped sharing news links and Google will circumvent the act by paying \$100 million per year, what is the government's game plan to ensure that television news, radio stations and small online media outlets get their fair share?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. The new deal with Google is good news for all Canadians. Still, the Government of Canada regrets that Meta has decided to leave Canadians in the lurch.

• (1440)

To answer your question, the government created the Canadian journalism labour tax credit, increased the Canada Periodical Fund that many local media entities rely on, and created the Local Journalism Initiative. These are important measures, and I've been assured that the government will continue to support journalism in various ways. It's important to democracy.

Senator Miville-Dechêne: On precisely this issue, last week you announced an enhanced tax credit worth \$129 million just for print media, so this tax credit you're talking about only

[Senator Gold]

applies to print media. It doesn't include electronic media, like television and radio. In Quebec alone, TVA Group recently laid off 547 employees, and Cogeco is isn't doing well.

It is time to expand eligibility for the journalism tax credit to radio and television?

Senator Gold: That's true. You're absolutely right that with changes in the media environment and ecosystem, it is increasingly important to focus on non-traditional sources and channels, although they've become traditional for an entire generation.

Having said that, the government will continue to study this changing ecosystem to ensure that it can continue to support journalism for the benefit of Canadians and our democracy.

Senator Miville-Dechêne: Thank you.

[English]

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

ETHICS TRAINING

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Leader, I am returning to the importance of ministerial accountability. My question concerns a report from the Ethics Commissioner released in February when yet another member of the Trudeau government broke the Conflict of Interest Act. Former commissioner Mario Dion recommended:

... that the government consider mandating all ministers and parliamentary secretaries to receive training from the Office. Mandating training does not require changes to the regimes; the government must simply decide if it wants to require such training, and the Office will deliver it.

Leader, since this report was released in February, have any cabinet ministers or parliamentary secretaries from the Trudeau government received this ethics training? If so, how many? If not, why not?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): It is very important for senators, for elected officials — all those who hold public office and in whom citizens place their trust — to adhere to the highest standards of behaviour. That applies to us here and, of course, to ministers.

I can speak to this personally. As a member of the King's Privy Council and a holder of public office, I am subject to — as all ministers are — additional ethics codes. I have every confidence that ministers of this and all previous governments have done their best to adhere to the highest standards of conduct expected, properly so, by Canadians of them — and so will, I expect, all future governments.

Senator Martin: My question was regarding whether any cabinet minister or parliamentary secretary has undertaken that training. I would like that response when you can provide it.

In an interview with the *National Post* Mr. Dion said:

If Trudeau is not going to hold himself accountable, and the party is not going to hold him accountable, well, he kind of has to not hold them accountable in return. It's kind of a quid pro quo with his own party members.

Leader, if the Prime Minister can break ethics laws and get away with it not once but twice, how can he hold any member of his government or party to account?

Senator Gold: As all senators know from having gone through the exercise together, one does one's best to comply with those standards, and sometimes the interpretations of those standards don't always jibe with what ultimately is resolved. But once again, we have every right to expect our government and holders of public office, whether here or in the other place, to comply with those standards to which we are properly subject.

TRANSPORT

ANTI-SEMITISM

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Leader, again, there is no ministerial accountability under the Trudeau government — none.

Minister Rodriguez said he learned his former department hired a well-known bigot and anti-Semite as an anti-racism consultant when he saw it in the news on August 22, 2022. Emails recently provided to *The Globe and Mail* show that between August 17 and 19, Minister Rodriguez's personal parliamentary account was included in a series of messages between some of his fellow Liberal MPs, his cabinet colleague Minister Hussen, and even his own chief of staff. The subject line was "Laith Marouf and antisemitic hate speech."

Leader, how are Canadians supposed to square this new information with what the minister claimed earlier this year?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): The minister is on record as explaining that he personally became aware of it through the media. I have every confidence that the minister's statements are correct.

We know, senators, from the volume of correspondence that we receive and that is handled for us by our staff, that not every email that comes to us necessarily gets to our attention in a timely fashion. The person to whom you are referring, not the minister, is someone who is well-known in some circles, certainly in my community circles, but not necessarily known beyond that for the views that he has expressed — and they are odious views, if I may make a personal remark.

The minister has made his statement. I have every confidence that is, in fact, what happened.

Senator Plett: If my chief of staff sends me a note, I see it, and surely the minister should as well. No one was fired for giving a well-known anti-Semite \$133,000 from Canadian taxpayers. No one was reprimanded. As of this past May, none of the money was recouped. Now we learn Minister Rodriguez was sent emails that indicate he knew about this fiasco for at least five days before he admits he did. Where is the ministerial accountability here, leader?

Senator Gold: Again, in the limited time that I have, let me repeat that the minister stated and clarified when he learned of this initiative and he stands by that statement.

[Translation]

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the time for Question Period has expired.

[English]

DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the response to the oral question asked in the Senate on September 20, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Plett, concerning carbon pricing.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

CARBON TAX

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Donald Neil Plett on September 20, 2023)

Information on the impact of the Clean Fuel Regulations on Atlantic Provinces was provided in the *Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement*, which was published with the Regulations in the *Canada Gazette*, Part II on July 6, 2022. That information can be found at: <https://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p2/2022/2022-07-06/html/sor-dors140-eng.html>.

ANSWER TO ORDER PAPER QUESTION TABLED

NATIONAL REVENUE—CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 109, dated November 25, 2021, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Downe, regarding the Canada Revenue Agency.

ADJOURNMENT

[English]

NOTICE OF MOTION

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

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, December 5, 2023, at 2 p.m.

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY**ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS**

FIRST REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Seidman, seconded by the Honourable Senator Poirier, for the adoption of the first report of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, entitled *Consideration of an Inquiry Report from the Senate Ethics Officer*, presented in the Senate on November 21, 2023.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 12-29(2), a decision cannot be taken on this report, as yet. Debate on the report, unless some other senator wishes to adjourn the matter, will be deemed adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate.

Is that agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Pursuant to rule 12-29(2), further debate on the motion was adjourned until the next sitting.)

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RECONCILIATION BILL

THIRD READING—MOTION IN AMENDMENT ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Audette, seconded by the Honourable Senator LaBoucane-Benson, for the third reading of Bill C-29, An Act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation, as amended.

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator McPhedran, seconded by the Honourable Senator McCallum:

That Bill C-29, as amended, be not now read a third time, but that it be further amended in the preamble, on page 1, by replacing lines 1 and 2 with the following:

“Whereas, since time immemorial, First Nations and Inuit peoples — and, post-contact, the Métis Nation — have thrived on and managed and governed”.

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

Honourable senators, the question is as follows: It was moved by the Honourable Senator McPhedran, seconded by the Honourable Senator McCallum:

That Bill C-29, as amended, be not now read a third time, but that it be further amended in the preamble, on page 1, by replacing lines 1 and 2 with —

Shall I dispense, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

• (1450)

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

Some Hon. Senators: Yes.

Some Hon. Senators: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say “yea.”

Some Hon. Senators: Yea.

The Hon. the Speaker: All those against the motion will please say “nay.”

Some Hon. Senators: Nay.

The Hon. the Speaker: I think the “nays” have it.

And two honourable senators having risen:

The Hon. the Speaker: Is there agreement on a bell?

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): One hour.

The Hon. the Speaker: The vote will take place at 3:50 p.m. Call in the senators.

• (1550)

Motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator McPhedran agreed to on the following division:

YEAS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Arnot	McPhedran
Ataullahjan	Mockler
Audette	Moodie
Batters	Oh
Boisvenu	Osler
Burey	Pate
Carignan	Patterson (<i>Nunavut</i>)
Dagenais	Patterson (<i>Ontario</i>)
Deacon (<i>Nova Scotia</i>)	Plett
Duncan	Prosper
Gerba	Quinn
Gignac	Richards
Kingston	Ringuette
MacDonald	Seidman
Marshall	Smith
Martin	Verner
McCallum	Wells
McNair	White—36

NAYS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Bellemare	Harder
Boehm	Hartling
Boniface	Jaffer
Busson	Klyne
Cardozo	Kutcher
Clement	LaBoucane-Benson

Cordy	Loffreda
Cotter	MacAdam
Coyle	Massicotte
Cuzner	Petten
Dasko	Ravalia
Deacon (<i>Ontario</i>)	Ross
Dean	Saint-Germain
Forest	Simons
Francis	Woo
Greenwood	Yussuff—32

ABSTENTIONS THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Dalphond	Miville-Dechêne
Dupuis	Moncion
Gold	Petitclerc—6

THIRD READING—DEBATE

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Audette, seconded by the Honourable Senator LaBoucane-Benson, for the third reading of Bill C-29, An Act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation, as amended.

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

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I move the adjournment of the debate.

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

Some Hon. Senators: Yes.

Some Hon. Senators: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: All those in favour of the motion please say “yea.”

Some Hon. Senators: Yea.

The Hon. the Speaker: All those opposed to the motion please say “nay.”

Some Hon. Senators: Nay.

The Hon. the Speaker: I think the “nays” have it.

And two honourable senators having risen:

The Hon. the Speaker: Any agreement on a bell?

An Hon. Senator: Five minutes.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is there leave for five minutes?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: The vote will be held at 4:03 p.m.

Call in the senators.

• (1600)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the question is as follows: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Martin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Seidman, that further debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate.

Motion negatived on the following division:

YEAS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Ataullahjan	Mockler
Batters	Oh
Boisvenu	Plett
Carignan	Richards
MacDonald	Seidman
Martin	Wells—12

NAYS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Arnot	Jaffer
Aucoin	Klyne
Audette	Kutcher
Bellemare	LaBoucane-Benson
Boehm	Loffreda

Boniface	MacAdam
Burey	McPhedran
Busson	Mégie
Cardozo	Miville-Dechéne
Clement	Moodie
Cordy	Osler
Cotter	Pate
Coyle	Patterson (<i>Nunavut</i>)
Cuzner	Patterson (<i>Ontario</i>)
Dagenais	Petitclerc
Dalphond	Petten
Dasko	Prosper
Deacon (<i>Nova Scotia</i>)	Quinn
Deacon (<i>Ontario</i>)	Ravalia
Duncan	Ringuette
Forest	Ross
Francis	Saint-Germain
Gerba	Simons
Gignac	Smith
Gold	Verner
Greenwood	White
Harder	Woo
Hartling	Yussuff—56

ABSTENTIONS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Dupuis	McCallum
Kingston	McNair—4

(At 4:10 p.m., pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on September 21, 2022, the Senate adjourned until 2 p.m., tomorrow.)

CONTENTS

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

	PAGE		PAGE
SENATORS' STATEMENTS		Public Services and Procurement	
The Late Reverend Wallace Smith Sr.		Procurement Process	
Hon. Wanda Thomas Bernard	4982	Hon. Yonah Martin	4987
Inquest into the Death of Soleiman Faqiri		Hon. Marc Gold	4987
Hon. Peter M. Boehm	4982	Industry	
Visitor in the Gallery		Ministerial Accountability	
The Hon. the Speaker	4983	Hon. Donald Neil Plett	4987
Medical Council of Canada		Hon. Marc Gold	4987
Hon. Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia	4983	Finance	
<hr/>		New Residential Rental Property Rebate	
ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS		Hon. Tony Loffreda	4987
President of the Public Service Commission		Hon. Marc Gold	4987
Certificate of Nomination Tabled		Canadian Heritage	
Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson	4983	Online News Act	
Business of the Senate		Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne	4988
Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson	4984	Hon. Marc Gold	4988
Hon. Donald Neil Plett	4984	Privy Council Office	
<hr/>		Ethics Training	
QUESTION PERIOD		Hon. Yonah Martin	4988
Privy Council Office		Hon. Marc Gold	4988
Answers to Written Questions		Transport	
Hon. Donald Neil Plett	4984	Anti-Semitism	
Hon. Marc Gold	4984	Hon. Donald Neil Plett	4989
Justice		Hon. Marc Gold	4989
Violence against Women		Delayed Answer to Oral Question	
Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu	4984	Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson	4989
Hon. Marc Gold	4984	Environment and Climate Change	
Health		Carbon Tax	
Canadian Institutes of Health Research	 4989	
Hon. Stan Kutcher	4985	Answer to Order Paper Question Tabled	
Hon. Marc Gold	4985	National Revenue—Canada Revenue Agency	
Employment and Social Development		Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson	
Guaranteed Livable Income	 4989	
Hon. Kim Pate	4985	Adjourment	
Hon. Marc Gold	4985	Notice of Motion	
Innovation		Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson	
Universal Broadband Fund	 4990	
Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson	4986	<hr/>	
Hon. Marc Gold	4986	ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Indigenous Services		Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators	
Indigenous Housing		First Report of Committee—Debate Continued	
Hon. Judy A. White	4986 4990	
Hon. Marc Gold	4986	National Council for Reconciliation Bill (Bill C-29)	
		Third Reading—Motion in Amendment Adopted	
		Hon. Donald Neil Plett	
	 4991	
		Third Reading—Debate	
		Hon. Yonah Martin	
	 4991	