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The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,
Speaker

CONTENTS

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THE SENATE

Thursday, November 21, 2024

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, it has been almost six months since the *Special Report on Foreign Interference in Canada's Democratic Processes and Institutions* stated that foreign actors cultivated relationships with:

. . . members of Parliament and senators – with a view to having the Canadian act in favour of the foreign actor and against Canada's interests. . . .

It continued, stating that:

. . . some Parliamentarians are, in the words of the intelligence services, “semi-witting or witting” *participants* in the efforts of foreign states to interfere in our politics. . . .

Every leader in the House of Commons who wished to has seen the unredacted version of the report. The leader of the Green Party — not a recognized party in the House of Commons — read the unredacted report in June and declared, “There is no list of MPs who have shown disloyalty to Canada.”

Then the NDP leader read the same report and came to a completely different conclusion. He stated in June, “I am more alarmed today than I was yesterday after having read the report.”

Five weeks ago, the Public Safety Minister testified before the Foreign Interference Commission that it is irresponsible to claim there are traitors or treasonous people sitting in Parliament.

But the very next day, Justin Trudeau testified that he has:

. . . the names of a number of parliamentarians, former parliamentarians and/or candidates in the Conservative Party of Canada who are engaged, or at high risk of, or for whom there is clear intelligence around foreign interference.

I am sure senators noted that the Prime Minister did not say “members of the House of Commons”; he said “parliamentarians,” which, of course, includes senators.

Absent from all these claims and counterclaims is any informed commentary from members of this chamber. That is because, unlike their counterparts in the House of Commons, no leader of a recognized group in the Senate has been permitted to read the unredacted report. That no leader in the Senate has been able to see that full report is nothing short of a disgrace.

Senators have a collective responsibility to speak up and demand equal treatment for our chamber. Colleagues, in Ottawa, you have to fight for your space. If not, the Senate will continue to be marginalized and considered as nothing more than some glorified debating society: always interesting but not really important.

Colleagues, we are the second chamber of Parliament, but that does not make us second-class parliamentarians, nor should we accept to be treated that way. The Senate has to stand up and speak up.

The leaders of the groups in the Senate have a right to know what is in the full version of this report and, if required, a duty to act on what it contains. Thank you, colleagues.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

Hon. Fabian Manning: Honourable senators, today I am pleased to present Chapter 85 of “Telling Our Story.”

The first Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, Joseph R. Smallwood, dominated the political scene of our province for decades. He led Newfoundland and Labrador into Confederation in 1949 and subsequently won six consecutive general elections. On January 18, 1972, Smallwood resigned as premier and was replaced by Frank Moores, leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. This event ended 23 years of Liberal Party government, but this change did not come easily.

On October 6, 1971, Smallwood announced that a provincial election would be held on October 28. When the count ended on October 29, the result was very close to a tie. The Progressive Conservatives had 21 seats, the Liberals had 20 and the New Labrador Party had 1. Six districts had been decided by fewer than 100 votes, with one seat decided by a margin of 8 votes. Recounts were requested in all six districts because the results meant no clear winner had emerged.

Whichever party formed the government would have to elect one of its own members to serve as the Speaker of the House, thus decreasing its number of seats by one. Two months of recounts and court action followed. In the meantime, the narrow election result brought on confusion and political intrigue. Both Moores and Smallwood sought support from Tom Burgess, the lone New Labrador Party member, who held the balance of power.

On November 12, Burgess announced he would be supporting the Progressive Conservatives, giving them a very slim majority. But 10 days later, it became known that the St. Barbe recount could not be completed because, after the deputy returning officer — a lady named Olive Payne — in Polling Station 13 in

the community of Sally's Cove counted the ballots, she accidentally put them in the woodstove and burned them, so no recount was possible as 106 ballots were gone.

The situation ended up in the court, but the judge ruled that the ballot burning was an unfortunate accident and that Ms. Payne had no political motive and had not committed a crime. So, the Progressive Conservatives were back in majority territory, but it was short-lived. Tom Burgess, the New Labrador Party candidate who had joined the Progressive Conservatives, said that the Progressive Conservative leader had promised him a cabinet post. When he did not receive it, Burgess decided to leave the Progressive Conservatives and joined the Liberals. Then another Progressive Conservative member by the name of Hughie Shea was upset because he did not make it into Moores' cabinet, so he quit and joined the Liberals as well.

But as the old saying goes, "It is never over until it is over." Within a short period of time, newly elected Liberal members Augustus Oldford and William Saunders decided to give up their seats altogether. So, when the House finally opened on March 1, 1972, 20 Progressive Conservatives faced 20 Liberals. Tory James Russell was elected Speaker, leaving a government of 19 against an opposition of 20.

That very evening, Premier Moores asked the Lieutenant Governor to dissolve the assembly and call an election. The Lieutenant Governor agreed, and the ensuing election held on March 24, 1972, returned a solid Progressive Conservative majority of 33 seats again 9 Liberals.

After losing the leadership of the Liberal Party in 1974, Joey eventually resigned in June 1977 at the age of 76. The days of Joey's reign over Newfoundland and Labrador had come to an end.

Thank you.

NATIONAL CHILD DAY

Hon. Rosemary Moodie: Honourable senators, I rise to continue the celebration of National Child Day in Canada. National Child Day is a celebration of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the UN on November 20, 1989. By signing that convention, we committed here in Canada to ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential through respect of their rights.

More than just an international convention, it represents a statement of values for Canadians, one that we — as parliamentarians — must work hard to uphold.

As part of yesterday's celebration, I joined with Senators Audette, Burey, Francis, Greenwood, Martin and Pate to host a breakfast along with UNICEF Canada and Campaign 2000. We were fortunate to have had a very successful event featuring our Honourable Speaker Gagné, as well as Saeed Babalola and Shennel Simpson, advocates from Campaign 2000 and UNICEF Canada, respectively.

We had about 150 guests yesterday, so next year, we'll probably be looking for a new venue. Thank you to all colleagues who attended, and I want to especially acknowledge Senator Marty Deacon of Ontario, who led an impromptu seminar in the chamber for dozens of youths who attended the event.

To all the young people who joined us, you made the early morning worth it. Thank you for being with us.

• (1410)

In the afternoon I joined UNICEF Canada for a round table on health, along with other parliamentarians and officials. Once more, I was inspired by the youths' thoughtfulness and hard work in advocating for the needs of children and youth in our health care systems. I am very thankful they shared their time with me.

Colleagues, National Child Day is a great opportunity to engage with children and youth, but it does not have to be only on that day. I encourage us to continue to reach out to young people in our communities, to ensure that their voices — the voices of children — and their rights are respected and upheld throughout Canada every day of the year.

Thank you, *meegwetch*.

THE LATE RAYMOND AHENAKEW

Hon. Marty Klyne: Honourable senators, I rise to honour Ray Ahenakew, who passed in September. I knew Ray for many years and had great respect for him. He had a positive energy about him, he was very competent and he was always approachable and accessible. His passing will leave a mark on all who knew him. He was a son, husband, father, grandfather, brother, friend and mentor. In many ways, he was my mentor.

Ray was a proud member of the Ahtahkakoop First Nation. He was a leader and trailblazer who strengthened First Nations' participation in Saskatchewan's provincial economy.

As CEO of the Meadow Lake Tribal Council, he established a long-term economic development plan spanning forestry, transportation, petroleum, mining and environmental management. The purchase of NorSask Forest Products, for instance, benefited the local economy and guaranteed council member jobs in logging, trucking, millwork and tree planting.

A strong believer in education as a powerful tool for Indigenous advancement, Ray served as president of the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies from 1982 to 1984 and as acting president from 2005 to 2007. He also chaired the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority and the National Labour Training Market Board of Human Resources Development Canada.

Beyond economic development, Ray was a talented hockey player and a good golfer. He was part of a generation of First Nations hockey players in Saskatchewan who came after Freddy Sasakamoose but before Eugene Arcand. He played for the Yorkton Terriers and in various senior intermediate leagues.

Eugene Arcand, sharing his residential school experience, recalled Ray's supportive nature:

Ray knew what I was experiencing. I'd tell him, "I can't do it anymore . . ." He told me, "You can't quit, buddy. You've made it to this level, and you have to keep going because if you quit, they're going to pass judgment on the rest of us."

In closing, I will quote his family in remembering this great individual:

We are deeply grateful and honored that the Creator made him ours. He had a strong work ethic and was a true advocate for First Nations People and his community. His legacy of love, strength, and dedication will live on in all of us.

Thank you, *hiy kitatamihin*.

INSTITUTE FOR CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Tony Loffreda: Honourable senators, I rise to bring to your attention a brand-new report from the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, or ICC, titled *The Leaky Bucket 2024: A Closer Look at Immigrant Onward Migration in Canada*. I hosted a briefing earlier this week on the report, which paints a troubling picture of what's happening in Canada with newcomers.

Canada is viewed internationally as a top destination for immigrants. I am proud of our impressive track record at attracting, retaining and integrating immigrants into the greater Canadian family. Unfortunately, what the ICC's report tells us is that there are cracks in the foundation and we need to take a long, deep look into some of the challenges associated with retention.

As the report advances, it states:

Historically, immigration has been a vehicle for Canada to advance GDP growth, ease labour shortages, improve the worker-to-retiree ratio, and enrich multiculturalism. Onward migration, particularly in the early years, jeopardizes Canada's ability to meet these goals. When immigrants leave, investments in settlement and integration programs are lost.

As we learned, Canada is losing one in every five immigrants to onward migration in the long term. We also discovered that nearly half of onward migrants who came to Canada under the economic immigration category and international students are fleeing the country at alarming rates, limiting our ability to benefit from their skills and education.

[Translation]

Furthermore, we learned that Canada is losing 35% of francophone immigrants in the long term. That is cause for concern, given that the federal government just announced a more aggressive policy on francophone immigration outside Quebec.

That is why the institute is recommending that we expand integration services for francophone immigrants to include a focus on retention.

[English]

The institute is also recommending that the government integrate retention targets into its immigration policy blueprint. The report proposes:

To effectively address retention, policy-makers need a deeper understanding of both the short- and long-term consequences of onward migration. An understanding of who is leaving Canada when will . . . help to inform tailored policies and programs . . .

Honourable senators, Canada will always remain an attractive destination for immigrants, and Canadians will continue to welcome immigrants with open arms and open hearts. However, it's clear that we need to improve the ways we retain and integrate the people the government carefully selects to make Canada their home. Our economy's growth and our nation's prosperity depend upon it.

Thank you, *meegwetch*.

MENOPAUSE FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Hon. Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia: Honourable senators, I rise today to address a complex and multi-faceted issue that impacts millions of women across our country. While World Menopause Month was in October, it is essential that we keep this conversation alive. I want to extend my gratitude to the Menopause Foundation of Canada for their groundbreaking work in raising awareness and advocating for change. Thanks to Janet Ko, Trish Barbato and Elizabeth Gray-Smith.

Menopause is more than a health issue. It is an age and gender equality issue, an economic issue and a workforce issue. There are 10 million women in Canada over the age of 40 who are in some stage of menopause, with many struggling to manage symptoms they may not realize are part of this transition. With over 30 potential symptoms, menopause affects physical, mental and emotional well-being. If unmanaged, it increases the risk of chronic health issues such as osteoporosis, heart disease and genitourinary conditions.

The fastest-growing segment of our workforce is women aged 45 to 55 — a time when many may also be navigating the profound challenges of menopause. The foundation's report underscores the real consequences of this inaction: 540,000 lost work days annually, \$237 million in lost productivity and a staggering \$3.5-billion loss to the economy. Even more troubling is that up to 1 in 10 women leave the workforce entirely, not because they lack talent or dedication but because they are left to face these challenges without adequate support. Women are the backbone of critical sectors, and their absence is felt deeply not just in workplaces but also in the ripple effects on families, communities and our nation's economic stability and growth.

Honourable senators, Canada is falling far behind other nations in addressing menopause. Countries like Australia and the United Kingdom have implemented forward-thinking policies, workplace supports and public health strategies to better support women during this transition. It is time for Canada to catch up.

Making women's health a national priority means ensuring better access to information, education and treatments for menopause. It also means destigmatizing this natural life stage to foster understanding in workplaces, families and communities. Let us commit to building a Canada where menopause is recognized, understood and supported.

Thank you, *meegwetch*.

• (1420)

QUESTION PERIOD

INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

CANADA INFRASTRUCTURE BANK

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, your government's Canada Infrastructure Bank has been operational since the 2017-18 fiscal year. Since then, it has been a complete failure and a total waste of taxpayers' dollars. On Tuesday, a written response was tabled in the Senate to one of my questions on the Order Paper. It shows that, in 2022, almost \$6.8 million in bonuses was handed out to the staff at the Canada Infrastructure Bank.

Senator Housakos: Outrageous.

Senator Plett: Last year, that amount hit \$8.1 million — just in bonuses.

Leader, you don't like it when we say, "It's not worth the cost." How can you possibly justify these bonuses at the Canada Infrastructure Bank, which has produced zero infrastructure?

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

Bonuses paid to senior employees, whether in the public or private sector, are negotiated as part of their overall compensation packages. I have no information about the targets or metrics that were applied to them and for which those amounts were paid out.

The Canada Infrastructure Bank was set up and is designed to provide an opportunity to accelerate much-needed construction for Canada's infrastructure, which had been neglected for far too long. It works in partnership with the private sector and the public sector.

Projects of important scale take time to develop, and market forces also play a role in that pace, but the government remains convinced that it is a necessary tool to help advance Canada's goals.

Senator Plett: Leader, the metrics that you used to negotiate were, "Do nothing, produce nothing and we'll give you a bonus." The Canada Infrastructure Bank hasn't completed one project. It burns through money, lacks transparency and has been plagued by scandals. It hasn't attracted the private sector investment we were promised, either — far from it.

Does that sound like success to you, leader? Two and a half years ago, a House committee said it should be abolished. Why hasn't it been?

Senator Housakos: The Liberal Party set it up.

Senator Gold: Again, the Canada Infrastructure Bank was designed to provide an additional platform through which important investments could be made. The government remains hopeful that it will fulfill that premise.

FINANCE

COST OF LIVING

Hon. Leo Housakos (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Earlier today, Prime Minister Trudeau was asked by a reporter why he is sending money to people making \$150,000 a year, because that's a lot of money. Our leader — well, your leader, the great Canadian Prime Minister — said:

... costs have gone up for everyone. Even someone making \$140,000 a year is cutting back on restaurants and is thinking twice about groceries they can buy.

Senator Plett: Oh my.

Senator Housakos: Unbelievable.

Leader, if the Prime Minister thinks that people making \$140,000 need help from his government just to afford daily life in Canada, how does he think low-income families — truly poor Canadians — and middle-class Canadians are doing?

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

There are a number of programs that the government announced today to help all Canadians top up their resources during this upcoming holiday season so that their families can enjoy what every family has a right to enjoy, whether that's a meal out in a restaurant, children's clothing, footwear or car seats.

I'm sure you have not yet criticized — and I'm waiting to hear what else you will say about it — the GST/HST exemption across the country, which will help all Canadians get through this holiday season with a little bit extra in their pockets. In addition,

the Working Canadians Rebate is designed to get additional cash into the hands of Canadians, many of whom have many children and need that help.

Senator Housakos: This is nine and a half years of the Trudeau government driving up this historic cost of living. Now, on the eve of an election, they are taking half measures.

Again, the Prime Minister said that costs have gone up for everyone. Doesn't it follow that costs have gone up for everyone on everything? Shouldn't he get rid of the actual root cause? Doesn't that mean axing the carbon tax, which is the root cause that created this mess?

Don't offer people lining up at food banks a two-month GST holiday right before hiking the carbon tax again, which you will do very soon.

Shouldn't you be axing the tax that's causing the problem?

Senator Plett: Hear, hear.

Senator Gold: For perhaps the hundredth time in this chamber, with all respect, Senator Housakos, your understanding of the economic impact of the tax on carbon and pollution is simply incorrect. Again, no matter how many times you beat the same drum, the fact remains that this government is committed to fighting climate change through a tax on pollution. It's also committed to investing in Canadians, as it did with the announcements today to which you referred.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Hon. Tony Loffreda: Senator Gold, Montreal nearly declared a state of emergency for our homeless this week. While the mayor acknowledged the urgency of the matter, she expressed that declaring a state of emergency would not be the most effective approach. She emphasized the need for collaboration with provincial and federal governments to secure additional resources and support for the city's homeless population.

What steps is the federal government taking to collaborate effectively with provinces and municipalities to streamline housing policies and accelerate the creation of affordable housing for Canadians? With housing affordability reaching a critical tipping point, many Canadians are struggling to secure adequate housing. While various provincial and municipal initiatives aim to address this crisis, stronger federal leadership and intergovernmental collaboration are essential.

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

The government has launched Solving the Housing Crisis: Canada's Housing Plan, which lays out an ambitious whole-of-government approach to addressing the housing crisis by building more homes, making it easier to own or rent a home and helping Canadians who cannot afford a home. Specific to streamlining housing policies with provinces and municipalities through the

Housing Accelerator Fund, as colleagues would know, the government finalized 179 agreements with municipalities across the country to fast-track approval for homes.

Additionally, in our hometown of Montreal, the government recently announced an investment of nearly \$71 million for the construction of 207 purpose-built rental units. Just last week, the federal government provided nearly \$364 million in investments to the four projects to help build 989 units in Montreal.

Senator Loffreda: Thank you for that answer and for those investments.

While collaboration is essential, the federal government's role in funding and setting policy is pivotal. Given the significant delays often associated with federal housing programs, can you provide a timeline for when Canadians can expect to see tangible results from these various initiatives?

Furthermore, what specific measures is the government implementing to ensure that funding reaches the communities that need it most, without unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question.

In addition to the other measures I've described here — including work to provide easier-to-build, easier-to-design and easier-to-approve housing — in the context of the 179 agreements with municipalities, I understand that this is designed to build 107,000 additional homes over the next three years and unlock over 750,000 new homes for Canadians over the next decade.

FINANCE

CANADA PENSION PLAN FUND

Hon. Rosa Galvez: Senator Gold, the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, or OSFI, acknowledged that Canada's financial institutions, notably our pension plans, invest in renewable energy and nature internationally while they are doubling down on fossil fuel investment domestically. This troubling trend hinders Canada's transition and negatively impacts Canadian innovation, competitiveness and productivity.

The government released a voluntarily sustainable investment taxonomy. What further actions does it plan to take to reverse the domestic trends of energy investment? What new authorities can it give to the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, or OSFI, to encourage more investment towards renewable and climate-aligned energy projects?

• (1430)

[English]

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

As I think most of us understand in the 21st century, a competitive economy is a net-zero economy. Our government is seizing Canada's economic advantages to attract investment to ensure that Canadian workers and communities benefit from their fair share in the global race to net zero.

That's why, as you mentioned, the government released made-in-Canada sustainable investment guidelines and climate disclosures for large companies. This will accelerate the flow of private capital. It will grow our economy and create good jobs. It will advance our progress to net-zero emissions by 2050. These sustainable finance initiatives will mobilize further private sector capital towards activities essential to building a sustainable net-zero economy for Canadians.

Senator Galvez: It has been reported that a managing director at CPP Investments, Mr. Chambers, also sits on the board of Teine Energy, an oil and gas company advocating for the withdrawal of the federal oil and gas emission cap. A conflict of interest between these two roles is evident in favouring short-term profit and fuelling the climate crisis while the other should be focused on the long-term well-being of workers.

Moreover, 7 out of the 11 largest Canadian pension managers have at least one director who is currently a director or executive of a fossil fuel company.

[Translation]

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry, Senator Galvez, but you only get 30 seconds for a supplementary question.

[English]

Senator Gold: Thank you for raising this issue, senator. I believe I know where you're going with this question.

Canada is in a unique and challenging position because we are a country that produces oil and gas, and our economy and the well-being of many regions continues to depend on that. Also, we are a country that is leading in the fight against climate change.

With regard to pension plans and who sits on them, these are independent organizations, and they make their own decisions —

[Translation]

The Hon. the Speaker: The limit is 30 seconds for the answer as well.

PUBLIC SAFETY

FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Senator Gold, as you know, it's very hard to keep a secret in Ottawa, and more and more people have read the unredacted version of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians *Special Report on Foreign Interference in Canada's Democratic Processes and Institutions*.

I'm wondering: Have you been told by any minister, political staffer or federal government employee that senators have been named in the unredacted report?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Senator Downe, I appreciate your doggedness on this particular issue. As I have said on a number of occasions, the expressed interest of you and some colleagues has been communicated to the minister, but to the best of my knowledge, there has been no change in policy at the government.

I do not have access to that report. I haven't read it. In that regard, I really can't comment on any other matter. I will continue to transmit the views of the Senate to the relevant minister.

Senator Downe: Thank you, Senator Gold, but I didn't ask if you have been briefed or read the report. I know you haven't.

My question was: Have you heard any comment from any minister, federal government officials or staffers about senators being named in the report, an aside similar to "that senator is fortunate he's not in jail"? Have you heard any comment about any senator involved or named in the report?

Senator Gold: I'm sorry if I wasn't clear. The answer is no, I haven't heard any such matter.

CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND

Hon. Rodger Cuzner: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. It is about the Housing Accelerator Fund.

With the demand for housing that exists across the country, the vast majority of leaders who have accessed this fund or benefited from it have reacted with enthusiasm and excitement. It seems to be reaching communities from coast to coast to coast, big cities — I think the investments in Montreal are obviously impressive — but smaller jurisdictions and First Nations as well. We're hearing this consistently from mayors across this country.

Can the Government Representative provide the chamber with some actual data on the number of communities involved nationally, the amount of money being leveraged, the number of

homes built and the number under construction? Could you share with us the pertinent performance metrics being driven by this fund?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you. I don't have all of the information that you asked because things are at various stages of negotiation and development. As I mentioned in an answer to a previous question, I think it's 179 such agreements.

You are quite right to underline the enthusiasm with which communities across the country have received it, and indeed, the enthusiasm with which elected members in those communities have also applauded the initiative of this government to work with municipalities to accelerate the building of much-needed housing.

I will certainly make inquiries as to the status of it. It's a work-in-progress. I have every confidence that the government will continue to work with municipalities as they will with provinces and territories, as they have been, in order to provide the housing that Canadians absolutely need.

Senator Cuzner: Thank you very much. In my home province of Nova Scotia, I understand there were 16 municipalities and First Nations that have accessed the fund. I read a quote recently from Mayor Lennie White from Westville, where he referred to the program as a "game changer" for his community. They received a significant investment, but it's spread over four years.

Senator Gold, should there be a change in government, can you assure the chamber and those civic leaders who are driving these projects that these game-changing financial investments will continue?

Senator Gold: Just as I am not able to provide guarantees for future funding under the current government, I certainly am not in a position to comment on what a future government, were there to be a change in government, will do except it is not without importance to note that the leader of the Conservative Party has made quite ado about slashing the funding to this and many other programs to help housing.

FINANCE

COST OF LIVING

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Leader, a recent survey from the Salvation Army found that 58% of parents are facing food-related challenges. One in four parents reported that they eat less so that their children can eat, period.

Of these parents, 90% said they were spending less on groceries so they can pay their bills, 86% report buying less nutritious food because it's cheaper and 84% of these parents reduce the size of their meals or skip meals entirely because groceries are unaffordable. These are not just statistics or Conservative talking points, leader. They are parents struggling to feed their children. Why should so many Canadians have to live like this?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): It's both terrible and unacceptable that Canadians and Canadian families are struggling with the cost of food and have to make the trade-offs that you mentioned. The only objection that I could possibly have to your comment, because I think all of us in this chamber would feel the same way, is some of the implicit assumptions that either this government is not doing what it can in that area — and you are entitled to believe that it should be doing more — but it is also the case that the rising cost of food prices — despite talking points, rhyming and otherwise — is a function of global issues, including wars, climate change and supply-chain issues, to say nothing of the regulation of private businesses, which are not within federal jurisdiction.

Colleagues, all of us want to see Canadians be properly fed and nourished and bemoan the fact that they still face so many challenges. This government is committed to doing its part to help Canadians.

Senator Plett: Clearly, your government does not, leader. These are loving and responsible parents who are putting their children first. They're doing the best they can in rough times. They need an end to the carbon tax that has made everything more expensive. There, leader, is your problem.

When will this NDP-Liberal government allow them to vote to axe the tax?

Senator Gold: Well, you managed to start off with quite appropriate empathy towards Canadians and then instrumentalize them once again to make a false equation between the impact of carbon pricing on the cost of food and then pivot to an election.

• (1440)

This government — for so long as it remains the government — will continue to work for the benefit of Canadians, including addressing the challenges that they face with the cost of living.

[Translation]

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Hon. Claude Carignan: Leader, on March 15, 2021, Justin Trudeau announced that his government was granting \$50 million to Lion Electric. At the time, Minister Champagne said that this subsidy would support the creation of good jobs and Canada's prosperity.

Since then, Lion Electric has cut its workforce and is now on the verge of bankruptcy. Its shares have fallen from US\$35 to US\$0.22, which means that the company has lost 94% of its value and is now a penny stock that will be delisted from the New York Stock Exchange.

Senator Gold, does the government consider the money that it loaned to Lion Electric to be lost? Is it planning to invest more money in that project?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. In today's world, and especially in a world transitioning toward an economy that is less and less reliant on oil and gas and is focused on other sources of energy, it's always a risk. It's unfortunate that the company is now in a much more precarious position. I don't have any information about the government's intentions with respect to this company or what it plans to do, but it's unfortunate that the Government of Canada's investments, like other investments the provinces made for the same reasons, aren't always as successful as these governments hoped they would be.

Senator Carignan: Lion Electric's directors and officers are being sued in U.S. courts. It's alleged that they lied when Lion Electric was listed on the stock exchange, which happened at the same time as the government loan. Its directors and officers made a significant profit when the company was listed, pocketing millions of dollars for themselves.

Is this another example of Liberal corruption, Senator Gold? Will the government give the Auditor General and the RCMP a mandate to investigate this affair?

Senator Gold: It is not the government's intention to tell the Auditor General what to do. I won't comment on the innuendo about corruption. Again, I have no comment to make.

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne: Senator Gold, because of the distinct vulnerability of temporary foreign workers, the government launched a program in 2019 to give exploited and abused migrants an open work permit that would allow them to get away from their employer.

However, a new Université Laval study found that, even in cases involving serious allegations, this escape route is very, very difficult to take, because preparing the application takes 20 to 30 hours and often requires legal assistance, and processing times just keep getting longer, sometimes as long as five months.

Couldn't we do better?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. I'd like to point out that any harassment, abuse or exploitation of temporary foreign workers is unacceptable. By introducing the open work permit for vulnerable workers, the government has made it easier to get out of abusive situations.

That said, to answer your question, honourable colleague, the government is monitoring and improving its policies and programs to make sure that they serve the best interests of temporary foreign workers and that temporary foreign workers receive fair wages and the same rights and protections. I'll bring the concerns raised by this study to the department's attention.

Senator Miville-Dechêne: It is important to know that half of the farm workers who apply for an open permit are turned down, and yet they report threats of deportation and lower-than-agreed

wages. Unfortunately, that mirrors the findings of the UN Special Rapporteur, who described Canada as "a breeding ground for contemporary forms of slavery."

Why not make the process faster and more humane as quickly as possible?

Senator Gold: As I said, the government is always willing to improve problems that are identified. I will bring this situation to the minister's attention.

[English]

IMMIGRATION LEVELS

Hon. Krista Ross: Senator Gold, the New Brunswick jobs report on the labour market outlook — from 2023 — projected that between 2022 and 2032, the province's population and labour force growth will result in over 132,000 job vacancies, particularly in health care, construction, technology and energy. However, young people entering the labour force for the first time are expected to fill only 54% of those forecasted job openings. In order to bridge the gap between population and labour force growth, the remaining 46% will need to be filled largely through immigration. That means Atlantic Canada definitely needs a long-term approach to immigration.

The government has already made a number of immigration policy changes that are detrimental to our region. Will the government take regional needs into consideration for future changes?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): The government always takes regional interests and needs as well as sectorial interests and needs into consideration.

The changes that the government announced over the last number of months were deemed necessary to ensure that those who do come to Canada are properly accommodated in all respects.

There is no doubt — we hear it from the agricultural sector and from the skilled labour sector — that these changes are posing challenges in many sectors. That is an unavoidable trade-off, unfortunately, as much government policy often is. These are temporary measures put into place for two years, as you know, in order to bring things into line. I'm sure that the government will be attentive to these needs going forward.

Senator Ross: Thank you, Senator Gold.

I'm not disputing that some of those changes do need to be made. One thing I have noted is that the government often likes to talk about bad actors and gives examples by referring to certain colleges, but none of this is happening in Atlantic Canada. Instead of dealing with the root causes of those issues and punishing those bad actors, the government is also penalizing those who are abiding by the rules in good faith. Why do you believe that the government is doing this?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. The government is focusing on the problems which have been identified. There has been a problem in many regions of this country with institutions of education that have misrepresented to students, to say nothing of the bad actors outside of education who literally sell the appearance of a job when none exists.

The government is, again, attentive to the differences and doing what it can to focus itself on —

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

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

CARBON EMISSIONS

Hon. Leo Housakos (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Senator Gold, the NDP-Liberal government's new cap on emissions is a cap on well-paying jobs for middle-class workers in the energy sector. Following the American presidential election, Bill Morneau had this to say about the cap: "Energy security is going to be critical . . ."

He continued:

We're going to need to think about whether we focus on energy security in a way that makes us clearly an important part of the U.S. sector that way. . . . And that means we have to ask ourselves, "is it really the right time for caps on emissions?"

That is an excellent question. What is your response to the man who served as the finance minister for the first five years of the Trudeau government on this issue?

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

There are many questions that all Canadians can and should be posing as we face some uncertainty ahead, given the results of the last election.

It is this government's position that the policies that are in place to cap emissions are an essential tool in the transition to a cleaner, more sustainable economy — one that will continue to attract foreign investment and provide good jobs for Canadians.

• (1450)

The government respects the expertise of Mr. Morneau and others who have served in the past, but the current government's position is that this is an important policy tool that serves the best interests of Canadians.

Senator Housakos: Senator Gold, stop using the environment as an excuse to tax Canadians, when these policies have not worked to do anything for the environment but are pummeling the middle-class.

Leader, how many jobs will be lost in Canada due to your production cap on oil and gas development? How much economic investment will be lost in addition to what we've lost

over the last few years because of your government? Could you confirm that your government conducted this kind of analysis before introducing the cap? If so, can you commit to tabling the relevant documents of the impact of this cap?

Senator Gold: Senator, thank you again for your question.

This government has a serious climate plan. It has a serious plan to help Canadians transition to a net-zero economy. It is based upon its own analysis, and it is based upon science and the best views, including of mainstream economists, and it will continue to move forward in the best interests of Canadians.

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CITIZENSHIP ACT

BILL TO AMEND—MOTION TO AUTHORIZE SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE TO STUDY SUBJECT MATTER—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of November 20, 2024, moved:

That, in accordance with rule 10-11(1), the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology be authorized to examine the subject matter of Bill C-71, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2024), introduced in the House of Commons on May 23, 2024, in advance of the said bill coming before the Senate; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than December 10, 2024.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak briefly on government Motion No. 201, which calls on the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology to carry out a study on Bill C-71.

[English]

The bill establishes a revised framework governing citizenship by descent and restores citizenship to a cohort of people frequently known as the "lost Canadians." It is a matter that the Social Affairs Committee has examined before, notably in the context of legislation proposed by our colleague Senator Martin, Bill S-230 in the last Parliament and Bill S-245 in the current one. Our chamber passed both of these bills, but neither has yet been adopted by the other place.

Bill C-71 is the government's own legislative response to this issue. Colleagues, there is now some urgency to deal with it due to an upcoming court deadline. For your benefit, colleagues, let me provide a quick sequence of recent events to explain how we got here.

Last December, the Ontario Superior Court struck down the first-generation limit on the transmission of citizenship by Canadians born abroad. In her ruling, the judge acknowledged that the right to transmit citizenship need not be limitless and gave the government six months — that is until last June — to enact new, more circumscribed legislation.

The government introduced its bill in May and successfully sought two extensions of the court's deadline, first to August and then to December 19 — in other words, just under a month from now.

Bill C-71 did get debated at second reading in September, but as we know, there has not been much legislative progress in the other place this fall.

The government has given notice of motion that would allow for the quick adoption of Bill C-71 in the House of Commons, but, again, colleagues, it is unclear when — or indeed if — that will happen. The bottom line here is that there is a reasonable chance that this bill will land in our chamber sometime in December, with a court deadline looming and very little time for us to debate and study it at that point.

[*Translation*]

That's why I'm proposing that the committee begin its study of the bill now.

If the committee deems the bill acceptable, we will be able to deal with it when the time comes, and if the committee feels that the bill needs to be amended or studied further, that will still be an option.

[*English*]

It is important to appreciate and to understand what is at stake if the court's deadline passes without new legislation in place. In that scenario, there would essentially be no limits on the transmission of Canadian citizenship by descent. Someone born to a Canadian parent on the other side of the world who never sets foot in Canada and has no connection to this country would nevertheless be able to transmit Canadian citizenship to their children and potentially to future generations, with all the rights and privileges that Canadian citizenship entails.

Even for a country as welcoming and open as Canada is, certain limitations are appropriate, as indeed the court has recognized. Bill C-71 would respect the court's ruling while putting such limitations in place.

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, I encourage you to support the motion currently before us so that the committee can begin its study and the Senate can be ready to examine Bill C-71 when the time comes.

Thank you for your attention.

[*English*]

The Hon. the Speaker: Will you accept a question, Senator Gold?

[*Senator Gold*]

Senator Gold: Yes.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Senator Gold, you are asking for a pre-study. You just introduced the motion five minutes ago. You served us with a notice of motion, I believe, yesterday. Prior to that, there was nothing. Yet, we have the Social Affairs Committee already setting dates for a pre-study.

I am curious as to whether the government directed the Chair of the Social Affairs Committee to start setting committee meetings before there is even a motion contemplated in this chamber. If you did not direct him, would you undertake to find out who directed the committee to start planning a pre-study before we even have a notice of motion in front of this chamber?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. No, my office did not direct and does not direct committees. It did not and does not and would not, nor is it my role as Government Representative to be the Senate's investigator.

The issue of a pre-study was raised with leadership some weeks ago, as you know, and again earlier this week when I expressed my intention to move forward with the motion which I moved today. But, no, my office had nothing to do with the decision that the steering committee might have made or, as you said, did make. I have nothing further to add or to do in that regard.

Senator Plett: Well, of course, it is entirely your duty to find out why somebody is planning meetings based on government legislation. If I ask you why somebody is planning meetings based on government legislation, and you say, "I'm sorry; it is not my job to find out," it absolutely is your job.

• (1500)

My next question, Senator Gold, is that we are being told that possibly we're going to get a bill. There is no indication of that at all in the other place. There is no indication that anything is going to change in the other place. I think at some point the government will, in all likelihood, ask for this extension, which they will, in all likelihood, get. Nevertheless, you say that they are going to move this through at a rapid pace, possibly without any committee meetings over there, and just give it the bum's rush over here.

Here we're being told that our committee believes that one meeting might be enough to study this bill. I'm sorry, Senator Gold, but I don't know why you're doing this. This is a preamble to a question. There is no indication that they expect they need more than one meeting.

What is the rush if they only need one meeting? That's literally like a Committee of the Whole. They need one meeting to get this bill through, and yet we need to do it now, when we have no indication that this bill is coming in front of us.

Senator Gold: Let me explain the body language that you saw. First of all, with all respect, my office had nothing to do with the decision that you have reported, and I do not believe that it is my responsibility or our office's responsibility to interfere with or make inquiries, frankly, as to why a committee — which is the master of its own procedure and its own affairs — decided to raise the issue, I gather, at the steering committee, but I really don't know the circumstances.

Nor was I aware until you raised this question of the issue of how many meetings were raised or discussed. It is certainly not the view of the government that this bill — we have no view, frankly, as to how many meetings, how many sessions or how many witnesses this bill would require. It's precisely because we respect the Senate's role in studying legislation properly, as it sees fit, and because we respect the committee's ability to decide what needs to be done, which witnesses need to be heard and what improvements, if any, need to be brought forward that we're asking the Senate — under these circumstances, with a court deadline approaching — to give the Senate and its committees the mandate to do the work that we were summoned here to do.

With all respect, senator, the urgency is simply to avoid a situation where — whether or not an extension is requested, and whether or not an extension is granted — we in the Senate have no time to do the job which we all believe we were summoned to do and are constitutionally required to do.

That's the purpose of the motion.

Hon. Scott Tannas: Senator Gold, I listened to your speech, and a number of us are not big fans of pre-study, except in specific or unusual circumstances. I think you're building a good case that this is one of those times, so I think this deserves consideration.

I wonder if you have any information with respect to the government's intentions or actions around an application in court.

We've had this before, as you recall, where we were stampeded into making a decision to meet a court date, only to find out after the stampede that they received an extension, and we weren't aware of it.

We found out, though, in that circumstance, that there was a portal you could go to in the Supreme Court of Canada docket to see applications, but, unfortunately, in the lower court, I'm told, there is no such way to find out. The only way we can find out and take that into consideration would be if you tell us what the intentions are or if anything, indeed, has already been done.

Thank you.

Senator Gold: I've made regular inquiries, and, as of this morning or at least as of late last night — and I believe my team would have advised me otherwise, because we're monitoring this — no application has been submitted. I have not been advised yet that a decision has been taken one way or the other.

I do want to take the opportunity to remind colleagues, especially those who are newer in this chamber, that just because a pre-study is done — even in the event that an extension were permitted, that study can continue, and we have, in the past, transformed the pre-study into a committee.

There will be no diminution of the Senate's ability to study this bill fully. If, in fact, an extension were to be requested and given, it is all the better for the Senate study to be completed without the pressure of a court deadline.

That's the value — I hesitated to say “virtue” — of a pre-study under these extraordinary circumstances.

Thank you for the question.

(On motion of Senator Housakos, debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of November 20, 2024, moved:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 26, 2024, at 2 p.m.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

[*English*]

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY INDIGENOUS BUSINESSES TO CANADA'S ECONOMY

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

Leave having been given to proceed to Other Business, Inquiries, Order No. 13:

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Klyne, calling the attention of the Senate to the ongoing business and economic contributions made by Indigenous businesses to Canada's economy.

Hon. Mary Jane McCallum: Honourable senators, I rise today to join debate on Inquiry No. 13, which calls the attention of the Senate to the ongoing business and economic contributions made by Indigenous businesses to Canada's economy.

I would like to thank Senator Klyne for initiating this important discussion, which allows senators to highlight the critical and oftentimes overlooked contributions that First Nations, Inuit, Métis and non-status peoples and businesses make to Canada's economic well-being.

As a senator representing Manitoba, it is with great pleasure that I rise to highlight the contributions that First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status peoples and businesses bring to Manitoba's provincial economy.

The information I will largely draw from is presented in a 2019 report entitled, *Indigenous Contributions to the Manitoba Economy*. This comprehensive report, spanning more than 250 pages, was completed through a partnership of Manitoba's Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc., the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. and Brandon University's Rural Development Institute.

As the report states, its objectives are, in part:

To quantify spending amounts by Indigenous and First Nations people in Manitoba in order to calculate their contribution to the provincial economy.

And:

To create projections of Indigenous population and labour force.

Honourable senators, it is important to note that Indigenous contributions in the economic sector are hardly new or emerging. Rather:

First Nations and Inuit peoples had established trade networks and other hallmarks of market economies in North America well before the arrival of Europeans.

• (1510)

Post-contact, the economy of Manitoba was established by First Nations and Métis hunters and traders who were responsible for driving the provincial economy via the fur trade. However, post-contact colonial economic systems quickly became entrenched across the nation, most of which were created and discharged in ways that explicitly excluded or minimized First Nations' ability to participate and contribute within the economic forum.

This has been well-documented and should not come as any surprise, as the restrictive nature of several pieces of critical legislation including the Indian Act, the First Nations Fiscal Management Act and the First Nations Land Management Act have all caused undue burdens when First Nations have attempted to take advantage of economic opportunities or initiate projects of their own volition.

In 2022, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, or INAN, released their second report entitled *Barriers to Economic Development in Indigenous Communities*. I encourage my honourable colleagues to review this report as it gives a concise overview of the many systemic

barriers, be they social, administrative or legislative, that often preclude a more robust involvement of First Nations, Inuit, Métis and non-status peoples in Canada's economy.

In giving a very high-level indication of these myriad barriers, the INAN report reads:

Overcoming barriers to economic development in Indigenous communities would help achieve economic reconciliation and better socioeconomic outcomes for Indigenous peoples. These barriers continue to prevent many First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities and businesses from fully participating in the Canadian economy. Barriers to Indigenous economic development include the legacy of colonialism, the failure to recognize Indigenous jurisdiction, inadequate infrastructure, administrative burdens, limited access to capital, and limited access to federal procurement opportunities. . . .

However, colleagues, the unflinching resilience of First Nations peoples have enabled them to adapt to the new and changing economic conditions they face. First Nations entrepreneurs continue to emerge, oftentimes undertaking work that has a dual purpose of providing economy while also elevating their cultures and traditions.

Additionally, First Nations communities are becoming increasingly adept at entering into strategic partnerships with various governments or industries that serve to open the door for communities to establish viable pathways to own-source revenue.

The 2019 report entitled *Indigenous Contributions to the Manitoba Economy* states:

Indigenous leaders are increasingly embracing and expressing the perspective that success in economic development requires replacing the current economic development approach. All too often, the current approach involves others imposing a development agenda. Here development is framed in purely economic terms such as more jobs, higher educational attainment, and increased income levels. However, for many Indigenous leaders and communities, a more holistic approach is preferred—an approach in which the primary value of economic development is in providing a means to reinvest in the cultural life and social services of the community for the benefit of all. . . .

And I will speak to this in my speech under consultation:

An Indigenous-designed approach to economic development is emerging that emphasizes community success over individual success and improving the lives of everyone over enabling economic disparity. This approach encompasses an outlook that is inclusive of community and aligns with Indigenous cultures.

Accordingly, colleagues, we can start to gain an appreciation for the fact that the economic contributions of First Nations, Inuit, Métis and non-status people in Canada are much more far-reaching than many would suspect. It goes well beyond the dollars and cents of their individual and collective purchasing power or the valuation and profits of their businesses or the

number of jobs they create or sustain. The contributions that our people bring to Canada's economy are starting to impact for the better the core values and principles that these businesses and systems are built on.

Honourable senators, when examining the impact that Indigenous peoples have on Manitoba's provincial economy, it is first helpful to get a sense of the population sizes. As of 2016, in Manitoba's north, there was a population of 52,350 comprising First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. In Manitoba's south, there was an Indigenous population of 170,959, which is a combined population of 223,310.

For spending consideration, it is helpful to break these populations into households:

In the North, there are an estimated 10,980 households with 27% . . . off reserve. In the South, there are an estimated 52,675 households with 85% . . . off reserve.

In total, household spending by Indigenous people in 2016 is \$1,378.8 million. Indigenous households spend \$493.4 million in the North In the South, household spending totalled \$885.4 million

To put these numbers into perspective, colleagues, Manitoba has these results:

Economic impacts from First Nations household spending of \$1,378.8 million in 2016 contributed \$99.1 million toward provincial GDP, created or maintained 691 jobs, and produced \$38.7 million in labour income. . . .

Honourable senators, we can further consider an additional metric by which First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status peoples further contribute to Manitoba's economy based on the expenditures of Indigenous governments.

The *Indigenous Contributions to the Manitoba Economy* report classifies Indigenous government spending as:

. . . remuneration, expenses, and other spending presented in financial statements by First Nations governments, Tribal Councils, and Métis and Inuit organizations. . . .

In the 2015-16 fiscal year, Indigenous government spending totalled \$1.45 billion, with the north accounting for 47% and the south accounting for 53%. The impact of this spending on the Manitoba economy is considerable, as that \$1.45 billion in spending resulted in an impact of \$953.2 million to the GDP while creating or maintaining the equivalent of 19,821 jobs and contributing \$643.3 million in labour income to the greater Manitoba economy.

Colleagues, beyond the spending occurring in Manitoba by Indigenous households and governments, a further metric by which First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status peoples also contribute to Manitoba's provincial economy is via Indigenous businesses. This metric considers more mainstream business endeavours ranging from tourism to construction. However, it also considers estimates from more traditional economic activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping. As it pertains to

these mainstream businesses, in 2016 Manitoba boasted 706 total Indigenous businesses with 87 located in the north and 619 located in the south.

• (1520)

The report estimates these 706 Indigenous businesses collectively spent \$6 billion in 2016. This spending contributed \$1.1 billion to Manitoba's GDP, 13,688 Manitoba jobs and labour income of \$566.4 million.

Honourable senators, to sum up these various findings of the report, in 2016 First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and businesses spent \$9.3 billion. They contributed \$2.3 billion to Manitoba's GDP, representing almost 4% of the provincial GDP. Their spending created or maintained over 35,700 jobs, representing 5.6% of jobs across the province. They provided \$1.1 billion in wages and salaries to workers, while also contributing \$231 million in taxes — 43% going to the provincial government and 57% going to the federal government.

These numbers, colleagues, are formidable. They also represent the tip of the iceberg when considering the potential room for growth in these various areas of Indigenous contributions to Canada's economy.

As highlighted in the 2022 Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, or INAN, report, multiple, profound barriers to entry still exist for First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status people in these arenas.

The growth prospects in Manitoba specifically are unlimited as more opportunities present themselves, particularly given the fact that the Indigenous population is younger than the overall Manitoba population. As such, the Indigenous population is and will remain critical to realizing future economic prospects of both Manitoba and Canada.

Honourable senators, sustaining the momentum First Nations, Inuit, Métis and non-status peoples are achieving via their various economic contributions is critical. The best and most effective path toward unleashing the full potential of Indigenous economic contributions to —

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator McCallum, I'm sorry to interrupt, but your time has expired.

(On motion of Senator Clement, debate adjourned.)

CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

BILL TO AMEND—THIRD READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Pate, seconded by the Honourable Senator Boehm, for the third reading of Bill S-230, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act.

Hon. Colin Deacon: Honourable senators, this item stands adjourned in the name of the Honourable Senator Pate, and I ask for leave that it remain adjourned in her name.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: So ordered.

Senator C. Deacon: Honourable senators, many of you may remember that in the fall of 2018 the Senate passed Bill C-83, which was intended to end solitary confinement in Canada. There were a number of votes, and an amendment was adopted. Ultimately, the amendment was rejected by the government and the bill had support, unamended, by all groups and caucuses in the Senate. The action taken following the passing of that bill was led by the late senator Josée Forest-Niesing, Senator Pate and Senator Klyne, and it was to have senators visit various prisons around the country. This was to gain some understanding about whether this bill was actually going to be implemented and change solitary confinement to structured intervention units — I think that change occurred just in name — and see whether any of the action that was seen to be so important was going to occur.

Many of us made visits; I think about 40 senators made visits to follow up. I went to Dorchester Penitentiary in New Brunswick, Springhill Institution in Nova Scotia and the Nova Institution for Women in Nova Scotia. The memory of the Springhill visit is strong because Senator Forest-Niesing was supposed to be there, but she entered hospital that week and, sadly, never emerged.

This work really is in her memory, and this is a bill that she intended to table in her name — Bill S-230 — which is what I'm speaking to today.

This bill includes recommendations from this chamber that were accepted and sent to the House but rejected by the government, so it's something that has been studied by this chamber. The work that we 40 senators did as we made these visits included observations. Senator Pate recorded a lot of data, and her team did a lot of work putting together a report of our collective findings called *Senators Go to Jail*. I think it may have been downloaded many times because people misinterpreted the title, but it really was an important document. I'll just say that after each visit I wondered why we call our prisons "correctional institutions." Of the people who go into prison, 99% come back into society. In terms of what we're doing in our prisons, if you consider putting conditions for success in place, I think we do the opposite.

I think we need to reflect upon that as a society because, my goodness, why would an entrepreneur care about this issue? When you think about the amount of money that we're spending I think of mental health institutions, and Senator Pate has forgotten more about this issue than I'll ever learn. In women's mental health institutions, we're spending half a million dollars a year per person. Are we getting the results? Maximum-security prisons for men cost over \$200,000 a year per person. Are we

creating the conditions for success so that when people come out we will not see high recidivism rates? Are we enabling them to reintegrate into society in a way that will be successful?

The pointy end of the stick here is the structured intervention units. Those of us who have been married for a long time know that escalating situations will generally get us in a lot more trouble; we all have experience in that. De-escalation is a learned skill and a cultural skill. If it's prioritized in an institution, then that is what happens. If we need solitary confinement, if we need structured intervention units, that means that we're failing at multiple steps along the way; the conditions for success are not in place.

I really respect the continued effort on the part of Senator Pate to see if we can bring about some cultural changes around that pointy end of the stick where we see that we're getting it wrong and people end up in those structured intervention units. There are missteps we have made along the way. We are spending a lot of money in this business.

We all know about overrepresentation in our correctional institutions in this country and that 50% of incarcerated women are Indigenous. We all know about the overrepresentation of many marginalized groups in our prison system. The oversight body had an Indigenous member and Black member, both of whom are a part of the disbanding of that decision to have oversight.

• (1530)

We need to have a voice here. As senators we're all allowed to enter a prison and visit — and we get to come out. I have had three experiences of that, and they were incredibly memorable experiences. I would say, as an entrepreneur, we are spending a lot of money in this space. We have a lot of experience around the world with how things could be done differently.

We must remember that 99% of those who go in will come out again. Are we putting conditions in place for success? Will they potentially cause further damage to themselves, those around them and in their communities, or start to create successes? We have created an inflection point in their time in our correctional institutions.

I am far from convinced that that is what we have today. I appreciate the efforts of Senator Pate in seeing if we can bump ourselves onto a parallel path, maybe as experimentation in certain institutions, but something that helps us head down a slightly different road in the future.

We have the resources. We have the problem. We are not achieving success.

Thank you for your work, Senator Pate.

(Debate adjourned.)

**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE
AND DEVELOPMENT ACT**

BILL TO AMEND—FIFTEENTH REPORT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Boehm, seconded by the Honourable Senator Moodie, for the adoption of the fifteenth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (*Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management), with an amendment and observations*), presented in the Senate on November 7, 2024.

Hon. Andrew Cardozo: Colleagues, I rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management), and to speak against the report of the Foreign Affairs and International Trade Committee and the amendment they have put forward.

Our dairy, poultry and egg industries have asked us to pass this bill in its original, unamended form. With the amendment proposed by the committee in place, this bill will not apply to any trade deals currently in force and any renegotiations or deals in the course of being negotiated. It would make the bill ineffective.

I wish to take this time to share a few views of Canadians who support this bill.

Listen to Steve Verheul, our chief trade negotiator from 2017-21 who said:

I really see this more as a political signal of support to the dairy sector and to supply management more broadly. . . .

I don't expect this to have a huge impact on negotiations going forward.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture said:

In practice, Bill C-282 elevates the decision-making threshold to trade away Canadian food security by requiring an explicit decision from Parliament to do so. Were a future government to seek such a concession from Parliament, it is worth noting that such a concession, while adding an additional complexity to the process, could carry even greater weight in the negotiations.

[Translation]

The Fédération des producteurs d'œufs du Québec said:

In the case of eggs, the past 50 years of supply management have proven that there has been no shortage of eggs in Canada. They are of superior quality, since the various programs that producers must comply with ensure that Canadians receive a safe product that is traceable from farm to retailer, high in nutritional content, respects animal welfare and has a low environmental footprint.

[English]

As egg farmers in other provinces have explained to us in their brief to the committee:

Trade agreements are an important part of helping Canada's agricultural sector achieve its full potential. However, pursuing these ambitious targets must not be at the expense of the stability of our food supply and rural communities Bill C-282 will prevent erosion of Canadian egg, poultry and dairy production and ensure we continue to produce staple foods within our borders.

In a brief submitted by Maurice Doyon, Professor of Agriculture at Laval; Bruce Muirhead, Professor of History at Waterloo; and Jodey Nurse, lecturer at the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, these experts on supply management said:

International trade agreements have already worked to disrupt Canada's dairy, eggs, and poultry industries, and any further negotiations could lead to the complete restructuring of these sectors and the communities that they serve. Supply management's ability to provide stability in the countryside should not be undervalued. The Canadian model of supply management has protected supply-managed farmers from the worst excesses of the so-called free market while also providing consumers with a competitively priced and nutritious product.

Colleagues, this bill is about sending a signal to our trade partners. The bar for concessions in this area is high — not impossible, but high. It is high because this is a system that works well for us already.

This bill can only be said to weaken our hand if the objective is actually to give away supply-managed quota. There may be times when we need to do that as part of the overall deal, but it shouldn't be our objective. The amendment as proposed takes away this benefit.

Colleagues, I encourage you to vote against the amendment and the committee's report on Bill C-282 and, in so doing, vote in favour of protecting our agricultural industries, jobs and food supply.

Thank you.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): I have a question, if Senator Cardozo would accept.

Senator Cardozo: Yes.

Senator Plett: Thank you, Senator Cardozo. I find myself, certainly, at least in part, agreeing, maybe not entirely. I believe this is more of a trade bill than a supply management bill.

Be that as it may, you started your speech by indicating that this is something the agricultural sector wanted pretty much across the board — at least the supply management part of it — and you implied that, for those reasons, we should support it. That, I find myself largely agreeing with.

My question, Senator Cardozo, is that we have three bills in a row, all dealing with agriculture. They may be called something else, but we have Bill C-275, Bill C-280 and Bill C-282.

Bill C-275 and C-280 have also been significantly amended and have the same risk of killing those bills if the amendments were to pass, as Bill C-282 does. I agree that this amendment pretty much destroys Bill C-282.

We know the other two were unanimously supported by the stakeholders. The farmers came and begged us, “Please do not put in any amendments.”

On Bill C-280, the producers and stakeholders, it was the same thing.

Both of them have been amended to the point that it would literally kill the bill.

Would you agree, Senator Cardozo, that those amendments should also be defeated, as you suggest this one should be?

Senator Cardozo: Thank you very much for your question, Senator Plett. The discussion today is about Bill C-282. Regarding Bill C-280 — though I am not sure it is proper for me to go into that for too long at this time since it is a different subject — I listened to your speech, and my emotions were the same as your emotions today about my speech. I agreed with some parts of it and really disagreed with others. I think I agreed with some of the content. Perhaps aspects of the approach could have been different.

• (1540)

That said, I will ask you to, if you don't mind, hold your breath to see how I vote on that bill. I am certainly listening with very open ears with respect to Bill C-280.

Senator Plett: One brief supplementary, and thank you for that.

Some of us get emotional when we are really involved in something. Many times, I have found myself getting emotional. I will hold my breath. I may lose that breath after the vote; I hope I don't. Nevertheless, Senator Cardozo, I sincerely hope that you, and everyone else in the chamber, will vote based on the content and not the delivery of my speech. Thank you.

Senator Cardozo: Thank you, senator. A few weeks ago, there was a change in seating arrangements around this chamber, and I find it strange that as I sit closer to and on the same side as you, from time to time, I am in radical agreement on some points. It is causing me some sleepless nights, but I am trying to separate the emotion of a sleepless night from the content of the arguments.

Senator Plett: My wife says the same thing.

[Senator Plett]

Senator Cardozo: I would rather not comment on that part.

Hon. Peter M. Boehm: Would Senator Cardozo take a question?

Senator Cardozo: Sure.

Senator Boehm: Thank you for your remarks, Senator Cardozo. I have a question for you that has a couple of questions within it.

Would you agree that the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA; the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, or CETA; and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, or CPTPP, negotiated over two governments are good deals for Canada? If so, would you agree that our negotiators did a very good job, and that the end result in the last three, where there was a little bit given up — particularly in the dairy sector — there was fair compensation by the government to the producers? If you agree with all of that, would you agree that this bill is unnecessary?

Senator Cardozo: Let me requote Steve Verheul, chief trade negotiator from 2017-21. I would guess you know him quite well and have worked with him. He said, “I really see this more as a political signal of support to the dairy sector and to supply management more broadly.” He continued, saying, “I don't expect this to have a huge impact on negotiations going forward.”

In legislation, we always do a combination of things. Sometimes our bills are strongly weighted in terms of sending signals and explaining values, and at times they are more focused on the minutia of administration. This bill does a bit of both, but perhaps it does more in terms of sending signals and providing a strong sense of support to the supply management of the dairy sector at this time.

Senator Boehm: Thank you, senator. Do you feel that in terms of sending signals, this bill sends an interesting one to the incoming U.S. administration?

Senator Cardozo: That is a really interesting question. We are all thinking a lot about what the new Trump administration means for us. I often find myself torn on this, because we are an independent country and not a colony of the U.S. We are good friends with them. They are our strongest trade partner. At the end of the day, we have to balance where we keep our independence and where we behave like a colony of theirs.

With each issue, we make judgments. You and I might come to slightly different judgments on that issue. I'm not at all suggesting that you would be happy for Canada to be a colony, but we all make judgments of all these complex issues together.

Hon. Mary Coyle: Senator Cardozo, would you take a question?

Senator Cardozo: Sure.

Senator Coyle: Thank you for your speech. You have done a great job of representing the interests of Canada's supply-managed sector, which I think most of us are very supportive of, even if some of us are supportive of the amendment to this bill.

Could you tell us why you are putting so much credence on the statements of one trade negotiator? I do not know what his background is or what his sympathies might be regarding the supply-managed sector. We have heard from many other trade negotiators and specialists who have told us that this is going to be disastrous.

Senator Cardozo: I wouldn't call Steve Verheul just one trade negotiator. He was our chief trade negotiator for a number of key years, fairly recently. I would also listen to the voices of the agriculturalists I quoted, in addition to some experts I quoted as well. It is one of those issues where I do not think that you are wrong and I am right. I think we each hear a number of different views, listen carefully and are influenced by some. I do not think that there is a real right and real wrong on this issue. It is a matter of listening to the various views and taking a position, at the end of the day, on one side or the other.

Senator Coyle: Thank you, Senator Cardozo. Well, 10 members of our Foreign Affairs and International Trade Committee listened well to testimony from a wide range of groups, and they have proposed to this body that this bill actually needs to be amended in the way that it has been in the report that you have heard about.

You talk about the agricultural sector. Tuesday evening, in my speech on the report, you heard me read a long list — though it wasn't an exhaustive list; there are others — of those in our agricultural and non-agricultural sectors who are vehemently opposed to this bill. I am curious: Could you speak to that?

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Cardozo, your time for debate has expired. Are you asking for more time?

An Hon. Senator: Five minutes.

The Hon. the Speaker: I would like to hear Senator Cardozo say what he wants.

Senator Cardozo: I would be happy to answer the senator's question.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Cardozo: Thank you. Indeed, 10 senators have voted in the way you mentioned. There are some 447 parliamentarians altogether, and in the first round in the House of Commons, the vast majority of the 338 there voted for it. In terms of numbers, it is, what, 200 versus 10? Again, some people may feel there is a right and wrong; I do not say that. I think that this is a complex issue. We have to make judgments about what we hear, think and believe and cast a vote at the end of the day.

(On motion of Senator White, debate adjourned.)

• (1550)

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Carignan, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Plett, for the second reading of Bill S-221, An Act to amend the Governor General's Act (retiring annuity and other benefits).

Hon. Leo Housakos (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15 and Senator Carignan is not ready to speak at this time. Therefore, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 4-14(3), I move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of his time on behalf of Senator Carignan.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Debate adjourned.)

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator White, for the second reading of Bill S-271, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act.

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15. I am not quite ready to speak. Therefore, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 4-14(3), I move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Debate adjourned.)

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator White, for the second reading of Bill S-272, An Act to amend the Director of Public Prosecutions Act.

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15 and I am not quite ready to speak at this time. Therefore, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 4-14(3), I move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Debate adjourned.)

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON HEART FAILURE BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

On Other Business, Senate Public Bills, Second Reading, Order No. 25:

Second reading of Bill S-284, An Act to establish a National Framework on Heart Failure.

Hon. Leo Housakos (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15. Therefore, with leave of the Senate, I ask that consideration of this item be postponed until the next sitting of the Senate in the name of Senator Martin.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

CANADA BUSINESS CORPORATIONS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne moved second reading of Bill S-285, An Act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act (purpose of a corporation).

She said: Honourable senators, I move adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

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

(On motion of Senator Miville-Dechêne, debate adjourned.)

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Miville-Dechêne, seconded by the Honourable Senator Boehm, for the second reading of Bill C-332, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (coercive control of intimate partner).

Hon. Nancy J. Hartling: Honourable senators, November is Family Violence Prevention Month in New Brunswick, reminding us to continue to seek solutions to prevent and eliminate intimate partner violence, or IPV. I rise to add my voice to the debate on Bill C-332, which seeks to criminalize coercive control.

This will be one of my last speeches before my retirement, and for the last several months, I have been seriously thinking about this bill, with its ramifications and possible solutions. Thank you, Senator Miville-Dechêne, for sponsoring this important bill. Thank you to the others in our chamber who have spoken on the pros and cons of this bill.

December 6 is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Across Canada, we remember the Montreal Massacre at the École Polytechnique where 14 female engineering students were murdered, targeted solely because they were women. Across Canada, we hold candlelight vigils to honour these women and to remember the many women and children who have lost their lives or have been harmed by gender-based violence. It is a time to analyze and reflect on the progress and the many challenges around gender-based violence.

On April 18, 2020, 22 people died, and 300 others were injured in Portapique, Nova Scotia, and nearby communities. No one will ever forget this tragedy and the many families and communities it affected. The massacre was undertaken by a lone gunman whose actions the Mass Casualty Commission linked to a history of intimate partner violence and coercive control. I grew up in a community not far from Portapique and found it to be unbelievable.

For more than 45 years, I have worked to understand gender-based violence and intimate partner violence, through research, teaching at the nursing school of the University of New Brunswick, or UNB, working with community development, working with clients and their children and giving voices to women's experiences.

We have moved the dial only slightly on this serious issue. As an adult educator, community developer and counselor, I recognize how difficult this work continues to be.

In the early days of my career, I was very hopeful because of champions like our former speaker Muriel McQueen Fergusson and her commitment to ending violence against women.

During the past four decades, I believed that many of us were on the cutting edge of eliminating gender-based violence through research, education and training, including legislation and development of new policies. Definitions were clarified about what IPV means and the many effects on the victims' children. I'm sad to say the violence has not gone away and is, in fact, increasing by the day.

My research for this speech brought me to the work of Dr. Carmen Gill, a UNB sociologist and a leading thinker on coercive control. Her 38 years of research helped define coercive control and its impacts, criminalizing coercive control. It has been useful in the U.K., Scotland and Australia. Her research is certainly worth reviewing. On the other hand, my former colleague Kristal LeBlanc, Chief Executive Officer of the Courage Centre in Shediac, a leading women's shelter and family violence resource, has concerns about the potential unforeseen impacts of criminalizing coercive control. Kristal's extensive experience with clients and the centre's courtroom therapy dogs adds real-life value to the discussion.

Colleagues, we have taken steps forward in this place with updates to the divorce law, recognizing coercive control as a factor in determining child custody, passing Bill C-233 to mandate training for judges and adding our voices to Senator Boniface's Inquiry No. 10 around violence against women in rural areas. Senator Manning's bill, Bill S-249, An Act respecting the development of a national strategy for the prevention of intimate partner violence, currently at the report stage, is also a positive development. Now we have Bill C-332. It is before us right now. We cannot rest until all women and children are completely protected.

So what is coercive control exactly? We can start to understand it when we contextualize discrete acts of intimate partner violence, such as assault, forcible confinement or rape, as being a part of a general pattern of behaviours, rather than a one-off incident. The pattern can include less directly violent behaviours, such as stalking, threats, isolation and constant insults and belittlement, but the intent of those who use coercive control methods remains the same: to break down the victim's self-esteem and control in order to engender a state of fear in the victim.

Coercive control is overwhelmingly conducted by men against women. In England and Wales, where coercive control is a criminal offence, 97% of defendants prosecuted for such offences were male. The reasons are manifold, including entrenched gender stereotypes that hold that men are the active partners, the decision makers, and the women are more passive and remain at home. But as gender roles have changed, the ability of men to exert control over the lives and bodies of women has been challenged. Behaviours that might once have been considered normal for men, such as controlling bank accounts and expenditures, are no longer the status quo.

For abusers, this means resorting to coercive control to achieve their ends. It is critical to understand that this is a highly gendered issue, which isn't to say that some women are not also controlling, but they are the exception to the rule. Moreover, women are more at risk due to their historically disadvantaged position relative to men that tended to erase their agency. This is doubly true for racialized and Indigenous women.

• (1600)

The pattern is key here, as it is the only thing linking all these different behaviours, which individually might be considered trivial, but which also robs victims of their sense of self, prevents them from acting on their own behalf and dominates their lives in such a way that many are ultimately unable to escape.

As abusers become more proficient at controlling their partners, the need for them to resort to violence to enforce their control may decrease, but the effect is the same: The victim lives in constant fear of their partner and has become effectively entrapped. What's worse is that the victim has now become completely invisible to the law, as they have no recourse within the criminal justice system since so many of the controlling behaviours are not in themselves criminal.

Coercive control researchers have shown that although physical violence is a very common factor, it need not be employed at all for abusers to achieve complete dominance of their partners.

Researchers such as Evan Stark liken the impact of coercive control to being held hostage. Indeed, perpetrators use the same methods used against hostages, inmates and prisoners of war to ensure their compliance. There are tactics such as instilling a sense of constant surveillance, isolation, threats, gaslighting and unpredictable rewards combined with harsh punishments for seemingly trivial lapses — each behaviour used to break down the victim's sense of reality and control. Violence, in such cases, is used as a tool to instrumentalize the control and to ensure victims understand the consequences of retaliation, should they ever fall out of line.

The power of understanding intimate partner violence as part of coercive and controlling behaviour lies in our ability to reframe the victim's experience as being one of extreme duress and captivity from which escape is made impossible by the partner's complete and utter control. It highlights that such controlling behaviour is intentional, repeated and diffused over time, and its cumulative impacts can be far worse than isolated incidents of violence.

Although physical violence isn't necessary to the entrapment, its use as a tool can be deadly. Research on intimate partner violence has shown that women become increasingly vulnerable to being killed when they are leaving the relationship or have recently left. The reason is simple: As coercive controllers find their authority being challenged, they escalate their tactics sharply, including the use of explosive violence. Tragically, the end result is too often death.

The Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability identified the presence of coercive and controlling behaviour as an important indicator leading to the killing of women. Another study found that abusers who usually use coercive control tactics without physical violence could be just as explosively violent as men who use physical assaults alone when their authority has been challenged.

This finding underscores the fact that intimate partner homicide is not necessarily preceded by physical violence, but rather non-physical abuse and coercive control are often present. The coercive control model of intimate partner violence may therefore be a powerful tool for early intervention to reduce the number of femicides in Canada.

The Mass Casualty Commission came to the same conclusion, recognizing the importance of coercive control in the dynamic of violence and calling for better education and incorporation of the theory at various levels.

The Renfrew County coroner's inquest into the murders of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam also found that coercive control was a defining feature of the relationship of the accused with his victims. It recommends not only increasing education on indicators of coercive control, but also the inclusion of coercive control as a criminal offence.

How does Bill C-332 fit into this? Simply, it adds a new offence to the Criminal Code that everyone commits an offence when engaging in a pattern of coercive control with the intent to cause their intimate partner to believe that their safety is threatened. It then provides a list of the different ways that coercive control manifests — any combination of which could be construed to be an offence.

I want to give credit to the Justice and Human Rights Committee in the other place for their work on this bill, particularly as the list of behaviours is exhaustive and incisive and informed by deep expertise in the field of intimate partner violence. Bill C-332 would represent a paradigm shift in the judicial system's understanding of intimate partner violence which would have the ability to capture the cumulative effects of the crime on victims and would allow them to point to the pattern of behaviours over time and their impact, rather than focusing on isolated incidents of violence that are hard to prove without physical evidence.

The bill envisages strong penalties — up to 10 years of imprisonment — which reflects an understanding of the severity of coercive control. It also contains protections for victims, such as the protection from direct cross-examination of accusers by the accused, again reflecting an understanding of the control dynamic. This is important as the justice system in Canada has been blind up to this point on the cumulative impact and deprivation that coercive control can have on victims.

Bill C-332 is informed by the experiences of England and Wales which were the first to introduce a new offence for coercive control in 2015. As a result of the new law, by early 2019, 17,616 offences of coercive control have been recorded by police, and 308 offenders have been convicted and sentenced, with an average sentence of 20 months.

While those figures may sound impressive, intimate partner violence researchers Stark and Hester are less enthusiastic in their analysis. They observed that while the number of people arrested under the new offence was increasing, they accounted for a tiny fraction of the hundreds of thousands of cases involving partner abuse reported in the same period.

Scotland has also developed coercive control legislation which is understood to be the gold standard in recognizing current and former intimate partners, as it demonstrates the acknowledgement that abuse continues even after separation.

Several Australian states have also passed coercive control laws, which may be valuable to review since Australia's experience — particularly with Indigenous peoples — mirrors Canada's own.

Tackling intimate partner violence through the Criminal Code won't be a done deal. We already know how difficult it is to prosecute acts such as assaults that are already criminalized within the context of intimate partner violence, and although coercive control offences will absolutely give some women the tools they need to remove themselves from dangerous situations, such laws are only as effective as our ability to implement them.

This is where Bill C-332 begins to show some weaknesses. The ability of law enforcement to recognize incidents of coercive control is predicated on the training received by first responders and the tools they have at their disposal, as well as their individual attitudes and perceptions.

Current approaches to police intervention focus on specific incidents, and prosecution is rare unless there is physical evidence. While the coercive control model allows us to take stock of the historical context of the violence, doing so requires a great deal of effort on the part of the victim and the officer responding.

Without an appropriate understanding of the dynamics involved, negative stereotypes espoused by law enforcement about women risk being perpetuated. This includes the belief that only physical violence is real, or that women commit violence against their partner at equal rates as men.

What's worse is that a failure to understand the intensely gendered nature of coercive control may put women at the risk of backlash by abusers who are demonstrably skilled at manipulating the justice system. Women may thus be threatened with criminalization by their abusive partners.

Bill C-332 does not contemplate training for any criminal justice system actors.

There are distinct advantages to the coercive control model of intimate partner violence: It paints a much clearer picture of the impact it has on victims, as well as the intentionality of the behaviour and its persistence through time and place. It links otherwise unrelated incidents as part of a pattern that victims can point to as they try to defend themselves or leave.

As I have indicated in previous interventions in this place, I broadly support the criminalization of coercive control, though I strongly believe that it must be done as part of a whole-of-government approach.

Addressing the root causes of the violence such as poverty, removing barriers to leaving and providing wraparound services such as shelters and housing are all critical to the equation.

Raising more awareness and education are also key to empowering women and their communities to prevent violence, and, later, to intervene if necessary is crucial. Bill C-332 only addresses one of those components which, in my view, poses certain threats.

Colleagues, in honour of the many women and girls who have been killed and those who have been affected by gender-based violence, I urge you to support this bill by sending it to committee for further study so that we can better understand how to make it work. As a result, during the next few months and years ahead, we won't have to hear about the deaths of women trying to leave their abusive relationships so that the words "Until death do us part" don't become their reality.

(On motion of Senator Housakos, debate adjourned.)

• (1610)

PROHIBITION OF THE EXPORT OF HORSES BY AIR FOR SLAUGHTER BILL

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Dalphond, seconded by the Honourable Senator Cordy, for the second reading of Bill C-355, An Act to prohibit the export by air of horses for slaughter and to make related amendments to certain Acts.

Hon. Brent Cotter: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak in support of Bill C-355, An Act to prohibit the export by air of horses for slaughter and to make related amendments to certain Acts. This will be a brief speech. I am happy to address this legislation, which not only concerns the welfare of horses but reflects our collective values as a society with respect to a certain degree of care for all living things, especially sentient creatures.

Each year, horses are shipped from Canada to Japan for slaughter. This is not the case with a number of other developed countries, which prohibit this practice. According to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, or CFIA, since 2013,

approximately 50,000 horses have been sent to be slaughtered and eaten in Japan. Other organizations quote similar numbers, perhaps as many as 20,000 per year. The actual numbers are not so important, but they are large.

These horses endure long transport times, often departing from Edmonton or Winnipeg, with flights lasting a minimum of 12 hours. When factoring in the time for loading, unloading and travel to and from airports, the total travel time can easily double. Indeed, the maximum allowable time is 28 hours, including loading and unloading. This can be a period of time when horses are not required to be fed or watered. Nevertheless, it is a gruelling experience.

Looking beyond transport time, transport conditions for these horses are what many would consider inhumane and unacceptable. Reports of horses suffering injuries or deaths paint a grim picture of transit. While the CFIA recently reported five deaths since 2013, newly released access-to-information documents from the Japanese government show that at least 21 horses died during or in the days after being flown from Canada for slaughter between 2023 and 2024, a single year.

Needless to say, I have some concerns about the quality of oversight of these practices. I note the Canadian Food Inspection Agency now claims their numbers are "under review."

Senators, it appears to me the status quo is insufficient when it comes to air transportation of horses. Whether we lack the necessary enforcement mechanisms or oversight can be debated, but what is certain is that we are collectively treating horses in ways that anyone would describe as mistreatment.

Bill C-355 will help rectify this situation by prohibiting air exports of horses for slaughter, bringing our practices in line with the ethical standards that Canadians expect and deserve, and that have been adopted in other neighbouring countries.

Public sentiment on this issue is overwhelmingly in favour of change with over 36,000 Canadians signing a petition to ban horse exports for slaughter. Additionally, the government committed to prohibiting this practice in 2021, yet no action had been taken until this bill was introduced despite this being in the Minister of Agriculture's mandate letter that year. In that respect, I congratulate Senator Dalphond for sponsoring this bill in this place.

I am personally not much of an animal lover, but on this issue, I am fully committed. Horses, unlike many other domestic animals, give their lives in service to humans. In many ways, they deserve an honourable life and an honourable death. In particular, they deserve not to be farmed as many are and then ill-treated in service of high-end meals for people in other countries.

A long and gruelling flight to their deaths is cruel, and to what end?

In conclusion, I urge all my fellow senators to support this bill. Let us seize this opportunity to stand up for the humane treatment of horses. By prohibiting the air export of horses for slaughter, we can take a significant step toward ending unnecessary suffering and aligning our practices with our collective values.

Thank you.

Hon. Robert Black: Will you take a question, Senator Cotter? Thank you.

I mentioned this to a previous speaker: This is a \$20-million business annually in Canada. What do we tell our producers that farm horses if we say they can't farm horses anymore? This is their livelihood. How do we explain that?

Senator Cotter: We say that, in many areas — and off the top, I say farm cows.

Senator Black: What if we said to all the lawyers who practise: Be a teacher? Same thing — can we do that? That's a question.

Senator Cotter: It's a question of — I was going to say "apples and oranges" — but horses and cows, perhaps. I don't know that we have declared that the behaviour of all lawyers is unethical by any measure. Admittedly, we could find some whom meet that criterion, but we tend not to make that decision collectively with respect to the whole area. I would say, with respect to some lawyers, maybe they should become teachers. I did. Thank you.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): I am an animal lover, actually. You say farm cows instead of horses. If it is poor treatment that we are subjecting the horses to, I'm not sure whether you are suggesting it's okay to offer poor treatment to cows, which is what I got out of your answer. I would say treating any animal cruelly should be punishable by some sort of penalty.

You say that these horses need to have some special recognition because they give their lives for the sake of people. Actually, the ones that give their lives for slaughter are doing it for people, as well, because people are eating them. But these animals have not been in the service of helping people. These are animals that have been bred, born and raised for this purpose. It's not that we're taking an animal that has served under the RCMP very diligently — yes, I'm getting to my question, Your Honour — and offering their services, and now we're going to slaughter them.

My question is this, Senator Cotter: The bill says that it's okay to slaughter the horse for human consumption. Animal Justice is not opposed to that. They are not opposed to flying these horses to Japan and selling these horses there, either, as a saddle horse, pet or work horse. That's okay. It's only wrong if we send them by air and then slaughter them over there. So we can slaughter them and we can send them by air, but we can't do both.

How do you square that circle? Does that make a whole lot of sense? It's absolutely as cruel to send that horse for 14 hours in the same crate if we're going to use it for some other purposes than sushi at the other end.

[Senator Cotter]

Senator Cotter: I agree with the point of the ill-treatment of horses by that kind of transport for any purpose.

Senator Plett: I really didn't get an answer to my first question. Maybe Senator Cotter doesn't want to answer it.

Let me ask you this question again. You're saying it is cruel treatment to put them in a crate. I imagine you've seen the conditions; I imagine you've seen these crates in an airplane, which is how you know that's how they're being shipped. Have you also seen how they are being shipped from Ontario in a truck all the way to Calgary? They stop at intervals to get unloaded, be rested and get water. But that transportation in the truck is a whole lot rougher than the transportation in the airplane would be. When that airplane lifts off, that's a pretty smooth ride.

So, again, we're saying it's okay to transport them by truck right across the country from Ontario all the way to Calgary or Edmonton because that's not cruel or unusual punishment. That would mean that if we shipped them from Ontario to over there, then slaughtered them, that would be okay, but if we put them on an airplane, it would not. These things need to make sense, Senator Cotter.

• (1620)

How does it make sense to you that it's okay to ship them in a truck, starting and stopping, going around corners and curves where these animals have to brace themselves, and that it is not the same as in an airplane? Have you seen them in the trailers? You have obviously seen them in an airplane because you know how they are being treated in them.

Senator Cotter: I don't have to experience everything personally to believe that it might be true, Senator Plett. I don't think that you have actually stood in an airplane for 16 hours non-stop without a break to do whatever you might do. It's the same case with respect to horses. If that were the case, they would just keep driving across the country in those trucks because they like to stand. You and I both know that there are ways of trying to be humane toward horses, and I take it as a matter of principle that this is an inhumane way to treat horses. It is the transport that concerns me.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Thank you for your speech, Senator Cotter. Some people seem to be saying that banning horse meat farming in favour of exporting live animals to Japan is like forbidding lawyers from practising law. There's nothing in the law that prohibits the sale of horses for slaughter in Canada. That's entirely permissible. There's nothing preventing people from slaughtering them and then shipping the frozen or canned meat to Japan for consumption there. What's being eliminated is stressful transportation that causes the animals suffering. When Quebec lawyers were told they could no longer do auto insurance

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Senator Dalphond, do you have a question?

Senator Dalphond: Yes. I'm getting to it, and I promise it won't be as long as Senator Plett's. In Quebec, when lawyers stopped being allowed to argue car accident cases, it didn't become illegal. Lawyers simply did other things. Isn't it true that farmers who raise horses can still make money off those horses by selling them to Canadian abattoirs?

[English]

Senator Cotter: I feel as though my small intervention has provided the opportunity for some of my colleagues to give little speeches and then ask a small question. I agree with Senator Dalphond.

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Your Honour, I'm not sure of the Rules. Do I have to give a speech, or can I go directly to a question? I will skip the speech.

I was not aware of this horse issue until it came up here. As an Atlantic Canadian, I'm very concerned about our lobster industry, which is valued at over \$3 billion as of two years ago. We ship to Asia. As you know, Senator Cotter, in China, fresh lobsters are important; they don't want frozen lobsters. How is this bill going to impact that when they're also shipped live in airplanes to Asia, a similar distance, obviously, and under similar conditions?

Senator Cotter: I think it's sort of a slippery slope question that you're asking, senator. If I may say, the most legitimate part of your question regards where in the continuum one draws a line. I don't entirely know the answer to that, but it must be somewhere between horses and lobsters.

If I may continue on this point, just to be clear, I'm supportive of lobsters being shipped live.

(On motion of Senator Housakos, debate adjourned.)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE EFFECTS OF IDENTITY FRAUD ON FURTHER MARGINALIZING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator Campbell:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples be authorized to examine and report on the misrepresentation of Indigenous ancestry, inadequate self-identification standards and the profound effects that such identity fraud has on further marginalizing Indigenous people, in particular Indigenous women; and

That the committee submit its final report no later than December 31, 2023.

Hon. Leo Housakos (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise today to voice my support for Senator McCallum's proposed study into Indigenous identity and the implications of false claims of such identity. Considering the complexities of Indigenous identity and its impact on policy, representation and the rights of Indigenous peoples in Canada, the importance of moving forward with this study cannot be overstated.

Further, never has something been more crystallized to me than has been the need for this study by the recent events surrounding the now former minister Randy Boissonnault. Learning that someone in as high a position in this country as a federal cabinet minister can lie about being Indigenous to further his career and personal business dealings, including attempting to fraudulently secure funding from his own government, perfectly brought into focus what Senator McCallum described when she moved this motion.

An Hon. Senator: Hear, hear.

Senator Housakos: As Senator McCallum said:

Playing Indian is the increasingly common practice of non-Indigenous . . . people making especially public claims to Indigenous identity, sometimes for great financial gain and career advancement.

It is vital to recognize that these claims carry real consequences. Individuals who falsely claim Indigenous identity may benefit from opportunities intended for those with legitimate claims to Indigenous status. These benefits could include funding, as we've seen in the example of former Minister Boissonnault, recognition in educational or employment initiatives or a position in public policy discussions where Indigenous perspectives are crucial, again, as we saw with MP Boissonnault.

This not only distorts the truth but further perpetuates systemic inequities. False or unsubstantiated claims of Indigenous identity erode the legitimacy of Indigenous communities and diminish the voices of those who genuinely carry the heritage, culture and lived experiences of Indigenous people. Such false claims, especially from individuals in positions of power or influence, can also distort public perception of what it means to be Indigenous. This is not a minor issue, colleagues. It is a matter of representation, rights and access to resources that have historically been denied to Indigenous people.

I'd also like to draw your attention to something else Senator McCallum said in her speech, quoting the Indigenous Women's Collective. She stated:

. . . the most insidious harm caused by "pretendianism" is how it most hurts Indigenous people who are reconnecting to their culture and identity. . . .

She continued, saying:

"Pretendians" perversely claim the vulnerability and violence experienced by Indigenous peoples as their own and then use it to their own callous and self-centred purposes.

In adopting this motion, the committee would be required to examine social, cultural and legal implications of false claims to Indigenous heritage in what would be an essential step forward for ensuring the integrity and authenticity of Indigenous representation in our national discourse.

I think that MP Boissonnault's case highlights the need to ensure that any claims of Indigenous identity are not used to exploit or marginalize those who have long created the burdens of such marginalization. Indigenous people in Canada have faced centuries of dispossession, erasure and discrimination. Their voices, experiences and rights must be safeguarded.

Second, the study is essential for establishing clear and fair guidelines around Indigenous identity. There are existing criteria for membership in many Indigenous communities, whether defined by descent, culture or family connection. However, these criteria can sometimes be misunderstood, misused or deliberately manipulated for personal gain. This is something Senator LaBoucane-Benson spoke about as a Métis in her remarks on this motion:

. . . Métis identity is not something you can claim simply by vaguely pointing in the direction of an Indigenous ancestor. Rather, it's something very specific.

• (1630)

A study would clarify this criterion and establish guidelines for identifying Indigenous people in a way that is transparent and consistent with Indigenous community standards, and not based on self-identification alone.

Third, such a study would allow us to address narratives that seek to define or dilute Indigenous identity for political and economic purposes. By providing a forum for robust evidence-based discussion, we can move beyond stereotypes and misconceptions and take steps towards real reconciliation.

Finally, we cannot overlook the ethical considerations that come with Indigenous identity claims. For many Indigenous people, their identity is not a mere label or a symbol. It is a living, breathing experience rooted in culture, community, history and resistance. To treat this identity as something that can be claimed without consequence undermines the very foundation of Indigenous culture.

In light of recent developments, colleagues, I believe it is critical that we begin this study by hearing from Randy Boissonnault himself, as the individual currently and so visibly at the centre of this conversation. His testimony could provide crucial insight into why he made these claims and the broader implications of doing so. Considering that his stated reason for resigning his cabinet post was to allow him to focus on addressing these troubling allegations against him, I would argue that we would be providing him the opportunity and platform to do just that. Moreover, inviting Mr. Boissonnault would underscore the seriousness of the study. It would demonstrate that we're not simply interested in engaging in a theoretical discussion, but are committed to addressing real-world cases and the impact that false claims have on the lives of the Indigenous community.

[Senator Housakos]

In conclusion, the call for a study into Indigenous identity, as championed by Senator Mary Jane McCallum, is not just timely but essential, colleagues. False claims of Indigenous identity, such as those made by Randy Boissonnault, undermine the efforts of those who have long fought for Indigenous rights, recognition and justice. The study is not about singling out individuals, but rather about ensuring the integrity and authenticity of Indigenous identity within Canada's legal, political and social fabric.

By moving forward with this study and inviting Randy Boissonnault as the first witness, we can start a much-needed conversation that will have long-lasting implications for the way we view Indigenous identity in this country. It is a conversation that must be rooted in respect, accountability and, above all, truth.

With that in mind, I want to address something that was said in this chamber yesterday on this matter, in a response I received in regard to the case of Mr. Boissonnault from the government itself.

Honourable colleagues, we have a case of a minister of the Crown, a minister who represents our government, who decided to claim to be Indigenous when he is not Indigenous. We have a prime minister who refused, for days and almost weeks, to fire him for this egregious behaviour, to basically hold him to account, which is the role of the prime minister.

Instead of firing someone who did something as egregious as this or asking him to resign, we received a statement yesterday from the Prime Minister saying that they've agreed for him to step aside for a period of time. That is just not enough, colleagues. Politics cannot seep into things that so egregiously attack the fabric of who we are as Canadians. There comes a point at which even in this institution we have to stand up, and, of course, what has happened over the past few days and weeks has crystallized even more the fact that this motion from Senator McCallum is so necessary.

To be honest, I'm a little surprised that more of us aren't standing up in outrage with what has transpired over the past few weeks. When I asked the government leader a legitimate question in regard to Mr. Boissonnault, he said that I'm scraping the bottom of the barrel because I also pointed out something the Liberal Party of Canada has a hard time digesting: that we currently have a prime minister and a leader of that party, who, on a number of occasions in his life, was wearing blackface and pretending to be a person of colour when he wasn't.

Senator Gold, I know that you roll your eyes about this, but, at the end of the day, that is a fact, and it is not any more acceptable than what Minister Boissonnault has done over the past few weeks. It is not enough to say that people have misinterpreted things or that this is a learning moment. There comes a point in time when you are in a position of authority and leadership in the country when you have to stand up, face the music and take authority. If you want things to change, you hold people to account. When you genuinely do not hold people to account, that is when things never change. We talk about national reconciliation all of the time. We talk about doing right by our Indigenous communities, but we never stand up and do what needs to be done.

MOTION IN AMENDMENT

Hon. Leo Housakos (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Therefore, honourable senators, in amendment, I move:

That the motion be not now adopted, but that it be amended:

1. by deleting the word “and” at the end of the first paragraph and adding the following new paragraph immediately after it:

“That the committee invite the Honourable Randy Boissonnault, P.C., M.P., to appear as the first witness in relation to this study; and”; and

2. by substituting the words “December 31, 2023” with the words “June 15, 2025”.

In order to give the committee an opportunity for a new benchmark and date to be able to carry out this important work, I hope, honourable colleagues, that there will be overwhelming support for doing the right thing and understanding that when it comes to egregious behaviour, it does not matter who carries it out, even if it's the Prime Minister who has summoned you to the Senate of Canada. We need to hold them and their ministers to account.

Thank you, colleagues.

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): I am thrilled, honourable senator, that there is any interest in this chamber for this study. I have to say, maybe on behalf of some other Indigenous senators, that this is great news.

Having spoken with Mr. Boissonnault on several occasions, I know the story, and I do not think that you will get the witness testimony that you are thinking of, but that is fine, if we do decide to call him.

I'm saddened that you have added that clause to this very important motion by Senator McCallum, and now we will be voting on whether Randy Boissonnault should be called rather than on the larger case of “pretendians” and the effect on Indigenous people, because I think it is vast.

My question to you is this: Do you think our time is best spent in calling somebody who may or may not be a “pretendian” and grilling that person, or do you think our time would be better spent calling all the Indigenous experts from across the country who really understand the issue? Senator McCallum began that in her speech about the problem, what it looks like and how we can address it. Do you think our time would be better spent calling those people or grilling someone who may or may not be a “pretendian” and may not have a story that is going to inform the discussion?

Senator Housakos: For someone who may or may not be a “pretendian,” he was asked to step down from the cabinet. Obviously, wherever there is smoke, there is fire. That is number one. Number two, with all due respect, I would like to take the

word of the Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate to the effect that you spoke to him and you can reassure us at that there is not much there, but I would rather have the work of this institution to come to that determination.

Second of all, all I'm asking is for Mr. Boissonnault to take up one panel, one hour, before the senators of the Parliament of Canada to explain his behaviour. It does not impede the committee from calling in all the experts under the sun and carrying out a robust long-term analysis and study — by no means. Mr. Boissonnault will have an hour before Canadians with a non-partisan, strong institution, answering robust questions, and, after that, the committee, of course, has the liberty to call in many witnesses. I do not think that one precludes the other.

Also, to try to diminish a minister of the Crown who has clearly, over the past few days and weeks, exhibited behaviour that is unbecoming of a minister of the Crown by brushing it off and saying, “Well, you know, the Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate had a chat with him. Colleagues, rest assured there is nothing there. All of these articles in the media are a figment of your imagination. The fact that the minister was asked to step aside by the Prime Minister is a figment of your imagination.”—

• (1640)

This is the kind of behaviour where we sweep things under the rug and that never allow this country to get to the bottom of facts and things, and we diminish the view that Canadians have of their institution and parliamentarians when we engage in that sort of behaviour.

Senator LaBoucane-Benson: I did not say that he was or he wasn't. I'm not saying take my word for anything. My question to you was: Where is our time better spent? Asking somebody who may or may not be and what his individual story is or is it better spent talking to people who actually understand the issue? I really want to talk about the issue.

Senator Housakos: You asked the same question, you made the same reference and the answer still stands.

(On motion of Senator Moncion, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

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. Bernadette Clement: Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15, and I am not ready to speak at this time, but I will be soon. Therefore, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 4-14(3), I move adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Debate adjourned.)

[*English*]

ONGOING CONCERNS WITH RESPECT TO CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL, WETLAND, AND FOREST LAND REALLOTMENTS

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Black, calling the attention of the Senate to the ongoing concerns with respect to Canadian agricultural, wetland, and forest land reallootments, as well as potential food, economic, and social insecurities as a result of reduced capacity for farming, pasture, forestry, and food production both domestically and internationally.

Hon. Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia: Honourable colleagues, I rise today to speak to Inquiry No. 16, which addresses the vital issues of Canadian agricultural land management, food security and economic stability.

First, I would like to thank Senator Black for bringing this important conversation to the forefront. Agriculture touches every aspect of our lives — from the food on our tables to the landscapes that define our communities — and yet it is an issue that does not always get the attention that it deserves.

To help understand the importance of agriculture, we must reflect on its roots across our provinces and territories. In Newfoundland and Labrador, families work tirelessly to cultivate fields in rugged and challenging environments, drawing sustenance from land that often gives little in return. For generations, agriculture was not about large-scale production. It was about survival, resilience and an unbreakable bond with the land.

What began as a supplementary practice for fishing families evolved into a thriving commercial sector by the late 1800s, supported by initiatives like the granting of Crown lands for farming. But it wasn't just policies that shaped this transformation. It was the determination of my fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Women, in particular, played a pivotal role, often managing farms while men worked in the fisheries. That legacy of leadership endures today with nearly one quarter of farm operators in Newfoundland and Labrador being women, a testament to their strength and lasting impact on agriculture.

Farming in my province has never been for the faint of heart. It is not just labour intensive. It is capital intensive, requiring significant investments in land, equipment and operations. For small farms, expanding to commercial scale can feel like an insurmountable challenge without substantial financial backing.

The challenges are not just economic. They are generational. Nearly 60% of farm operators in Newfoundland and Labrador are over the age of 55. Who will take their place? Many young people see farming as a financial risk rather than a viable career path, and who can blame them? The barriers to entry are steep and the rewards often seem uncertain. Yet, if we do not attract the next generation, what happens to our food supply? What happens to the communities that depend on these farms?

The provincial government has taken steps to address these issues, allocating \$300,000 for agricultural infrastructure projects, including support for new entrants. These efforts are promising, but they are just the beginning. Supporting a new farmer and strengthening food systems require comprehensible and adaptable approaches that reflect the diverse realities of farmers across Canada.

Food security is not a theoretical concept in my province. It is a daily reality. In our remote communities, access to fresh produce can be limited and costly. That is why local agriculture is so vital. It is not just about feeding people. It is about resilience and independence.

Consider this: Over 34% of farmers in Newfoundland and Labrador sell directly to consumers — double the national average. That connection between farmer and consumer is something special. It is personal. It is local. Farms like Lester's Farm in St. John's embody this spirit. With over 100 varieties of fruits and vegetables, Lester's is not just a farm. It is a community corner store. Families flock there for "you pick" strawberries, petting barns and farmer's markets. It is where children learn that food doesn't come from a store but from the land. Yet farms like Lester's are under pressure from urban expansion, rising costs and shrinking farmland. If we lose these farms, we lose something irreplaceable.

Colleagues, this isn't just a Newfoundland and Labrador story. Across Canada, the pressures on farmland — from urban sprawl to industrial development — are mounting. Senator Black has rightly called for a national strategy to protect our agricultural lands, and I could not agree more, but any strategy must go beyond single-issue solutions and reflect the complexity of the agricultural landscape. Farmers across this land — from small-scale operators to those in non-supply managed sectors — face unique challenges, and these challenges require nuanced flexible approaches.

In my province, we have seen the power of collaboration. Through initiatives like The Way Forward Plan, the province exceeded its goal of 20% food self-sufficiency last year. That is progress, but we cannot stop there. Supporting new farmers, embracing emerging technologies and investing in diverse and sustainable food systems are critical steps to building resilience. Across Canada, we need to protect agricultural land from irreversible loss and strengthen local food systems so every community, rural or urban, has access to fresh, affordable food.

I wish to thank Senator Black for sparking this important conversation. By raising this initiative, you have reminded us of the urgent need to protect the land, our soil, all that sustains us and empowers farmers who nourish us and ensure that agriculture remains at the heart of our communities. Together, we can build a future where Canada's agricultural legacy is defined by resilience, innovation and abundance.

Thank you, *meegwetch*.

(On motion of Senator Clement, debate adjourned.)

FUTURE OF CBC/RADIO-CANADA

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Cardozo, calling the attention of the Senate to the future of the CBC/Radio-Canada.

Hon. Mary Jane McCallum: Honourable senators, I rise to join debate on Senator Cardozo's Inquiry No. 22, which calls the attention of the Senate to the future of the CBC/Radio-Canada.

• (1650)

I would like to extend my thanks to Cheryl McKenzie, Executive Director of News and Current Affairs at the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, or APTN, which is the first national Indigenous broadcaster in the world. Cheryl was instrumental in helping formulate these remarks.

Colleagues, some of you may be wondering why I am speaking about APTN for an inquiry that examines CBC/Radio-Canada. The answer lies in the March 2022 joint press release which announced these two entities' new collaboration focused on creating more Indigenous content for all Canadians to enjoy and have access to.

The 2022 press release stated:

The agreement will enhance both networks' abilities to create First Nations, Inuit and Métis programming, increase access to and awareness of this new content, and connect people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, across the land.

With this new partnership, the two broadcasters committed to working closely on Indigenous productions and news through the following:

Increasing the opportunities, training and resources for Indigenous creators

Collaborating on news and information programming, including sharing content and technical resources . . . and

Expanding the audiences for Indigenous programming

As such, it is easy to see why the future success of CBC/Radio-Canada also bodes well for the future success and growth of APTN.

Honourable senators, first launched in 1999, APTN has served Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences in Canada for over two decades. During this time, the network has steadfastly adhered to its mission:

To share our Peoples' journey, celebrate our cultures, inspire our children and honour the wisdom of our Elders.

APTN has celebrated a recent milestone worthy of recognition. On September 1, 2024, it was APTN's twenty-fifth anniversary. It was also the date that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, or CRTC, approved the launch of APTN's Indigenous languages channel. APTN now provides a minimum of 100 hours per week of programming in a variety of Indigenous languages.

The vision for APTN has always been about protecting and promoting Indigenous languages and cultures. There is nowhere in the world, other than on Turtle Island, where Indigenous peoples can learn our ceremonies, practise our cultures — which are rooted in our languages — and uphold our lifeways and the world view of our ancestors.

Having a national television broadcaster with a significant presence on social media that is devoted to sharing Indigenous perspectives 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year is something that cannot be beat by any other broadcaster. No one is doing more than APTN when it comes to reaching out and amplifying Indigenous peoples and their long-quieted voices.

Furthermore, colleagues, APTN also boasts two daily newscasts in English and one daily newscast in French on both the main channel and the languages channel. This ensures all Indigenous peoples have access to news and information specific to First Nations, Inuit and Métis. The future goal and aspiration for APTN is to one day have access to the resources required to enable the provision of these newscasts in various Indigenous languages.

Honourable senators, when speaking of accessibility across Canada, APTN's French-language weekly news program, "Nouvelles Nationales d'APTN," which was launched in 2019, is another first-in-the-world accomplishment. The CRTC deemed it so important that it ordered this French weekly program as one of APTN's conditions of licence. APTN is grateful for this news program because it opened their eyes to the many Indigenous peoples in Canada who don't speak English but rather speak in both their traditional language as well as French.

Colleagues, the heart of APTN's mandate has always been to serve Indigenous peoples. APTN broadcasts programming on multiple platforms by, for and about Indigenous peoples. As such, the programming is an expression of Indigenous cultures. This is distinct from the mandate of public broadcasters to reflect the diversity of Canada, including Indigenous peoples.

At APTN — especially within the news and current affairs department — their employees, especially interns and work placement students, also get more front-line opportunities faster than you would typically see at any national broadcaster. For example, they have told me stories where they have had people on a six-week work placement — near the end of their post-secondary education in journalism and broadcasting — who showed so much potential that APTN provided them with the requisite training and the chance to anchor their pre-recorded weekend national newscast.

When these individuals proved meritorious, APTN then put them in the chair to anchor their live national newscast. Where else would you see an intern with this kind of transformative opportunity?

At APTN, journalists and broadcast professionals also have the privilege of heightened creative and editorial freedom in producing their work for broadcast. APTN's editorial process emphasizes that their reporters and video journalists are integral to bringing the stories that are the most important in Canada's various regions. While they still have assignments that come from their headquarters, there are not nearly as many layers of management and editors as there are in other national broadcasters. Additionally, the majority of their senior editorial staff is Indigenous.

Honourable senators, it is also worth noting for this collective in the chamber specifically that it wasn't until Canada's forty-fourth federal election in 2021 when an Indigenous journalist was part of the panel putting questions directly to party leaders in the national televised English debate. This occurred because of the existence and recognized journalistic integrity of APTN News.

Certainly, other national broadcasters had Indigenous reporters before 2021, but APTN has been instrumental in pushing the needle forward as it pertains to Indigenous content and participation in the Canadian news and media landscape.

However, it should be noted that APTN's work and impact are not solely limited to Canada's borders. APTN is a founding member of the World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network, or WITBN, where member organizations collaborate and work together to bring global Indigenous news from Indigenous perspectives. WITBN's stated mission, which is of critical import, is the following:

. . . to unite media broadcasters from around the globe in order to preserve and promote our indigenous languages and cultures through collaborative partnerships and the sharing of resources, knowledge, and programming.

By working together, they “. . . aim to increase the reach and understanding of Indigenous issues among all audiences”

Honourable senators, as APTN's Executive Director of News and Current Affairs, Cheryl McKenzie, states:

Fundamentally, Indigenous peoples enjoy a sense of ownership over APTN. This makes it such a unique and cherished broadcaster across Canada.

This sense of pride, ownership and impact have been going strong for over 25 years. However, their ability to continue expanding their reach, increasing their content and walking further down the road of understanding and reconciliation is undeniably aided by their partnership and collaboration with CBC/Radio-Canada.

• (1700)

As such, colleagues, it is vital that CBC/Radio-Canada enjoys a long, prosperous and successful future. The stability and long-term success of CBC/Radio-Canada will only be of benefit to APTN and Indigenous reporters, content creators and all involved in the broadcasting and dissemination of news that serves to protect and promote Indigenous language and cultures in Canada.

I thank you for your attention, and I thank Senator Cardozo for enabling this platform for me to shine a light on the critically important work of APTN. *Kinanāskomitinawow*. Thank you.

(On motion of Senator White, debate adjourned.)

ALARMING RISE IN SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED AND BLOOD-BORNE INFECTIONS

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Cormier, calling the attention of the Senate to the alarming rise in sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections in Canada, including HIV/AIDS.

Hon. Paula Simons: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Senator Cormier's recent inquiry, which calls the attention of the Senate to the alarming rise in sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections in Canada.

Senator Cormier already did a stellar job of speaking about the rising rates of HIV/AIDS in his speech. So, today, I instead want to tell you a ghost story, the story of a different disease, one that we thought we had vanquished but which has come back from the dead to stalk our streets and claim our children.

Once, it was called “the great pox.” For hundreds of years, it ravaged the world, killing millions — babies and mothers, prostitutes and sailors, kings and dictators, composers and poets. Among those believed to have been killed or driven mad by the great pox were Tsar Ivan the Terrible of Russia and King Henry VIII of England, the painter Paul Gauguin, the writers Guy de Maupassant and Charles Baudelaire, the composer Robert Schumann and the gangster Al Capone. They were all its victims. There's been speculation that Hitler, Lenin, Mussolini, Idi Amin, Oscar Wilde, Howard Hughes and even Abraham Lincoln were sufferers.

The great pox was syphilis, one of the most deadly and devastating diseases in human history. The first recorded syphilis outbreak in Europe ravaged the port of Naples in 1495. For years, historians and scientists believed that the disease had travelled

back to Europe from the New World with the returning crews of Christopher Columbus. However, the latest archaeological evidence suggests that a related form of the disease may have been present in Europe even before the Columbian contact.

Shakespeare dubbed it “. . . the infinite malady . . .” and, for centuries, syphilis, which can be spread through vaginal, anal or oral intercourse, scarred the course of human events, destroying marriages, disrupting royal lines of succession and overturning empires.

But in the 20th century, thanks to the advent of penicillin, aggressive public health campaigns, premarital blood testing and a better understanding of the importance of using condoms, we thought it was a disease consigned to the history books. It all but eradicated in Canada 20 years ago. Like smallpox, it seemed the great pox would plague us no more. That was naive.

Let me give you some Alberta numbers. They are the ones I know best since, as a journalist, I covered the inception of our current syphilis epidemic and because the Edmonton area seems to have been the epicentre of the current Canadian outbreak.

Between 1992 and 2002, there were no recorded cases of syphilis in infants in my affluent province. In fact, in 1996, there was only one known case of infectious syphilis in all of Alberta. And then, suddenly, between 2005 and 2007, five Alberta babies died of syphilis, most of them in the Edmonton area. Another nine babies were born with congenital syphilis, which can cause damage to an infant’s bones, heart or brain.

At the time, the *Edmonton Journal*, for which I worked, reported that there were about 200 known cases of syphilis in the whole province. I wrote column after column calling for action — calling for a public health campaign to alert Albertans, especially expectant mothers. But our then health minister Ron Liepert, now a member in the other place, would have none of it. Mr. Liepert personally cancelled the entire syphilis awareness campaign his department had been planning. At the time, he said:

Those Albertans who are high risk have to take more responsibility for their own personal health and not leave it up to the general population to take responsibility for them.

Back then, I had a bully pulpit on the pages of the paper, and I thundered back with my own message. I wrote:

The return of syphilis to Canada would be a human tragedy, not to mention an international embarrassment. We must act quickly and aggressively, without moral judgment, to stem this outbreak.

Empty words, I fear, because between 2018 and 2022, Alberta Health Services reported that 50 babies were stillborn in Alberta because of syphilis contracted from their mothers in utero. They represented just one fifth of all the infants infected by the disease.

By 2023, the news was even grimmer. Last year, according to data from Alberta Health Services, over 17,000 cases of syphilis were reported in Alberta adolescents and adults, with another

340 cases in babies. Those are just the cases that have been identified. Many are probably going undiagnosed, since not all doctors today know how to identify the early signs anymore.

Syphilis has been called “The Great Imitator” because its primary and secondary symptoms — painless ulcers, a rash, fever, swollen glands, headaches, weight loss and muscle and joint pains — can easily be mistaken or misdiagnosed as something else. It’s also hard to track since the disease can lurk, latent and asymptomatic, in the body for years after the initial infection. It may only express its more dangerous consequences 10, 20 or 30 years after the initial infection. Then, syphilis can become fatal, attacking the heart, blood vessels, nervous system and brain.

Alberta hasn’t seen syphilis rates this high since the 1940s. While syphilis infections have been rising sharply there and in other parts of Canada — especially in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Manitoba — Alberta still has the dubious distinction of leading the pack.

In truth, I’ve focused on the child mortality figures because they are the most shocking and perhaps the most likely to provoke your sympathy for those infected. But, of course, infants are only dying because their parents carried the disease. According to 2022 data from Statistics Canada, men are more likely to be infected with syphilis than women. In 2022, 65% of cases in Canada were found in men, but cases among women have been rising sharply. Back in 2018, only 21% of those with syphilis were women. By 2022, that number had risen to 35%.

According to the Canadian Paediatric Society, associated risk factors for syphilis can include injection drug use, crystal methamphetamine or other substance use, the sale or purchase of sex, experiencing homelessness, inconsistent condom use, having multiple partners and having had other sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections.

According to the Native Women’s Association of Canada, rates are 13 times higher in the Indigenous community than in the non-Indigenous community.

There’s another complicating factor: Someone in the primary stages of syphilis, during a time when they have the pox-like ulcers, has a much higher risk of contracting HIV/AIDS because of their open sores. Of course, we’re not living in 1495 or 1895. Syphilis is a bacterial infection, not a virus, and today we have antibiotics that can cure it. You don’t need expensive or complicated drug cocktails to manage it. When caught early, it’s completely treatable. If a mother with syphilis gets proper prenatal screening and testing, it’s possible to prevent babies from dying or being born with congenital syphilis. But we’re not doing enough testing or providing enough treatment.

Of course, the women who are most at risk for carrying syphilis and infecting their babies are precisely the ones least likely to receive good prenatal care, but the problem is larger than that. It’s not just men and women who are socially vulnerable and at high risk because of poverty, homelessness or addiction who aren’t getting consistent primary health care. We have a chronic crisis in this country with respect to access to primary care, which means that all sorts of young people who

have active sex lives and multiple partners — from university students to young professionals — also don't have family doctors. They aren't getting regular check-ups, and that doesn't make syphilis any easier to test, track or treat. Further, we are not doing nearly enough to warn people of the dangers of this revenant ghost.

I was perhaps a bit hard on former Alberta health minister Ron Liepert earlier since it's impossible to know if a more timely and aggressive public health campaign would actually have prevented the explosion of syphilis cases. But I came of age during the AIDS epidemic and remember the admittedly belated but still highly effective public health campaigns that promoted safe sex. I remember the fights to get condom machines into suburban high schools. Those campaigns worked to help reduce the incidence of HIV infection. But with syphilis? Well, we pulled our punches 20 years ago, and we're still not doing enough to raise the alarm perhaps because people still perceive syphilis as an historic artifact or something that isn't really a serious or lethal.

• (1710)

But we have another challenge before us today. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen — all across North America — a backlash against public health campaigns, vaccination campaigns, a backlash against epidemiology, against science itself. Back in 2007, the Alberta government refused to tell people about the risks of syphilis on moral, puritanical grounds. But now we have a slightly different problem — an erosion of public trust in public health, period.

Some of it comes from a kind of warped libertarianism, the kind that equates any kind of public health measure or campaign, from fluoridation to pasteurization to childhood vaccination, with state tyranny. And some of it comes from a fear of “Big Pharma” or “conventional medicine,” a belief, spread in part by disinformation campaigns, that the doctors, public health nurses and medical researchers who have dedicated their lives to keeping us well have somehow become the enemy.

It's not just that syphilis has returned to us from the late Middle Ages. It's as if some of our leaders, too, want to go back in time to a medieval mindset that rejects all the scientific progress of the last century, as the nomination of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to head the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services last week makes all too clear.

Homophobia and transphobia, sadly, are also part of the equation. In Alberta, for example, the government of Premier Smith has announced that sex education in public schools will now be optional and opt-in only. Before, parents who wished to withdraw their children from sex ed classes had the right to do so, but they had to sign a form proactively withdrawing their children. Now, the province is flipping that protocol on its head, and children will only be allowed to attend such health classes if their parents give explicit permission for them to take part.

This is being done under the impetus of protecting children and their families from being “forced” to learn about homosexuality and transsexuality. But the upshot will mean that many children and teens will miss out on the chance to learn about good old

heterosexual reproduction and sexual health. And the result, one might logically assume, could well be an increase in teen pregnancies and in sexually transmitted diseases.

Because, while I've focused on syphilis today, rates of all kinds of sexually transmitted infections are on the rise. We are losing battles we thought we had already won, and now we're fighting not just social stigma and inertia but a veritable campaign on behalf of ignorance.

[*Translation*]

I would like to thank my courageous and wise colleague, Senator René Cormier, for launching this inquiry at this crucial time. Today, more than ever, we need a vision like his to spur us into action. Thank you, my friend.

Thank you, colleagues. *Hiy hiy.*

(On motion of Senator Clement, debate adjourned.)

[*English*]

THE HONOURABLE RATNA OMIIDVAR, O.C., O.ONT.

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Clement, calling the attention of the Senate to the career of the Honourable Ratna Omidvar.

Hon. Paula Simons: Honourable senators, I rise now on a happier topic, although a bittersweet one, to speak to this inquiry into the outsized contributions made by Senator Ratna Omidvar to the Senate of Canada and to our entire nation.

As I sat down to prepare these remarks, a line from Shakespeare's comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream* kept popping into my head, “And though she be but little, she is fierce.”

I don't think you can blame my brain. Because I can't think of a better epithet for Senator Omidvar unless it's perhaps “float like a butterfly, sting like a bee,” which I've borrowed not from Shakespeare but, well, from Muhammad Ali.

Because Ratna Omidvar is a champion. A champion of human rights within Canada and around the world, a champion of immigration reform, a champion of tax reform, a champion of health care reform and a champion of Senate reform.

The independent Senate as we know it today simply would not exist without her early efforts — many of them behind the scenes — to restructure and reinvigorate the work of independent senators and of the original Independent Senators Group. As one of the original seven independents appointed by the Prime Minister in 2016, she did groundbreaking work to create the infrastructure for the Senate we know today.

She was a remarkable mentor for the senators who followed in her footsteps. From my earliest days when I arrived in Ottawa not a little dazed and confused, she offered her guidance on how to behave in the chamber. She ran a “rules school” for new senators. And later, she offered me guidance on how to do things such as launch an inquiry, table a motion or find a really good dosa in this town.

But as much as Ratna was a direct mentor, she was even more important to me as a role model, as an example of what a senator can and should be. I marvelled at her ability to channel her passion and her ideals into practical action. Lots of senators have causes they embrace. Few among us, though, have had as much tangible success in advancing their agendas and seeing them adopted as legislation. Her ability to fight for her principles and stand fast for her ideals while at the same time taking a pragmatic, commonsense approach to building consensus and getting things done has served as an inspiration for me, as I know it has for others.

Ratna once told me that she thought her real strengths were her abilities to convene and to curate. And while I think she has many other gifts, her capacity to bring diverse people together across partisan lines to work on issues that transcend ideology is one of her more magical powers. She knows how to start important conversations. And she doesn’t just know how to talk. She knows, equally importantly, how to listen.

I have also been inspired by her boundless energy, her unflagging enthusiasm, her sharp wit and intellect and her insatiable curiosity about so many issues, from the plight of Canada’s municipalities to the challenges facing international students to building relations between immigrant and Indigenous Canadians.

Of course, she has spoken out about human rights abuses in Canada, in Iran, in Afghanistan, in Burma and in Hong Kong, but she was particularly fierce in confronting the tyranny of the Russian government and of Russian oligarchs and in finding creative ways to stand up for the people of Ukraine.

But just when I thought I knew Ratna Omidvar, she would surprise me. Who knew, for example, that she spoke fluent German and that she was deeply conversant with the issues facing the modern, united Germany. *Na ja, sie ist eine bemerkenswerte Frau*. Truly, she is a remarkable woman. And who knew how fantastic she would look in blue jeans and a cowboy hat at the Calgary Stampede, like a real Prairie girl ready to ride the range.

After Stampede, I had the pleasure of welcoming Ratna to Edmonton, a city she had never visited. I was determined to convince her of the beauty, cultural diversity and ingenuity of our city. So I crammed her schedule with meetings and events. But I will never forget one moment we shared while we toured the Indigenous Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton Historic Park. The IPE, as it’s called, opened in 2021, and it is — if I may say so — a remarkable, immersive museum, and one of the best explications of First Nations and Métis history and culture that I have ever seen anywhere. It uses audio and video so creatively. Every time I visit, I am moved by its profound and luminous

enchantment and its thoughtful, powerful treatment of Indigenous culture and the impact of residential schools and of Indigenous resilience. I was so pleased to show it off to her.

Thus, I was puzzled when I walked over to where Ratna was standing and found her almost shaking with outrage. I wondered what on earth was wrong. She looked up at me with indignation, “Why has no one ever told me about this place?” she asked. “Every Canadian should know about this. Every Canadian should see it.”

I thought this perfectly encapsulated her boundless curiosity, her passion for knowledge, for people and for justice, her unending quest to better understand the complexities of the country she so loves.

Ratna is headed off for many other adventures, in Berlin and at Toronto Metropolitan University. But I can’t wait until she makes good on her promise and brings her whole family back to Edmonton to stay at Fort Edmonton Park. Because I already miss her.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

(On motion of Senator Clement, debate adjourned.)

THE HONOURABLE JANE CORDY

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator White, calling the attention of the Senate to the career of the Honourable Jane Cordy.

Hon. Brian Francis: Honourable senators, today I rise to pay tribute to an extraordinary friend and colleague, Senator Jane Cordy. After a remarkable career as a dedicated teacher and being the longest-serving member of our institution, she has left a profound impact on the lives of countless individuals in her province and country.

Jane, you’ve been a role model in every sense. You have shown us what it means to serve with purpose and integrity. Your commitment to your province and your country has guided us and reminded us to never lose sight of our shared responsibilities.

• (1720)

I joined the Progressive Senate Group in large part because of you. You brought our team together, always with such grace and by showing genuine respect, care and support to everyone around you.

In an environment that is often fast and loud, you have shown us that real leadership is not about standing above others, but rather about walking beside them. Your mentorship has been a gift that so many of us treasure. You were always there, whether to share advice, lend a hand or simply be a friend.

Thank you for the countless ways you've supported and guided me and for the warmth and wisdom you shared so freely.

As you start your retirement, I wish you nothing but joy and fulfillment. Enjoy every moment spent with your wonderful husband, Bob, and your daughters and their husbands and children — Michelle, William, Luke and Caleb Brown; and Alison, Matt, Liam and Cohen Ripley — as well as all of your extended family and friends.

I know you'll be savouring each day, exploring new passions and probably setting some new records on the golf course, pickleball court or bridge table.

And don't think for a second that this goodbye will keep us apart. I have every intention of staying in touch.

Congratulations, dear friend. Your absence from this chamber is already deeply felt, but your legacy will live on for generations to come.

Wela'lin. Thank you.

(On motion of Senator White, debate adjourned.)

(At 5:22 p.m., the Senate was continued until Tuesday, November 26, 2024, at 2 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Thursday, November 21, 2024

	PAGE		PAGE
SENATORS' STATEMENTS		Innovation, Science and Economic Development	
National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians		Transfer Payments	
Hon. Percy E. Downe	7597	Hon. Claude Carignan	7603
Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Elections		Hon. Marc Gold	7604
Hon. Fabian Manning	7597	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship	
National Child Day		Temporary Foreign Workers	
Hon. Rosemary Moodie	7598	Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne	7604
The Late Raymond Ahenakew		Hon. Marc Gold	7604
Hon. Marty Klyne	7598	Immigration Levels	
Institute for Canadian Citizenship		Hon. Krista Ross	7604
Hon. Tony Loffreda	7599	Hon. Marc Gold	7604
Menopause Foundation of Canada		Environment and Climate Change	
Hon. Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia	7599	Carbon Emissions	
		Hon. Leo Housakos	7605
		Hon. Marc Gold	7605
		<hr/>	
QUESTION PERIOD		ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Infrastructure and Communities		Citizenship Act	
Canada Infrastructure Bank		Bill to Amend—Motion to Authorize Social Affairs, Science and Technology Committee to Study Subject Matter—	
Hon. Donald Neil Plett	7600	Debate Adjourned	
Hon. Marc Gold	7600	Hon. Marc Gold	7605
Finance		Hon. Donald Neil Plett	7606
Cost of Living		Hon. Scott Tannas	7607
Hon. Leo Housakos	7600	Adjournment	
Hon. Marc Gold	7600	Motion Adopted	
Infrastructure and Communities		Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson	7607
Affordable Housing		Business and Economic Contributions Made by Indigenous Businesses to Canada's Economy	
Hon. Tony Loffreda	7601	Inquiry—Debate Continued	
Hon. Marc Gold	7601	Hon. Mary Jane McCallum	7607
Finance		Corrections and Conditional Release Act (Bill S-230)	
Canada Pension Plan Fund		Bill to Amend—Third Reading—Debate Continued	
Hon. Rosa Galvez	7601	Hon. Colin Deacon	7610
Hon. Marc Gold	7602	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (Bill C-282)	
Public Safety		Bill to Amend—Fifteenth Report of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Committee—Debate Continued	
Foreign Interference		Hon. Andrew Cardozo	7611
Hon. Percy E. Downe	7602	Hon. Donald Neil Plett	7611
Hon. Marc Gold	7602	Hon. Peter M. Boehm	7612
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation		Hon. Mary Coyle	7612
Housing Accelerator Fund		Governor General's Act (Bill S-221)	
Hon. Rodger Cuzner	7602	Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Continued	
Hon. Marc Gold	7603	Hon. Leo Housakos	7613
Finance		Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act (Bill S-271)	
Cost of Living		Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Continued	
Hon. Donald Neil Plett	7603	Hon. Marilou McPhedran	7613
Hon. Marc Gold	7603		

CONTENTS

Thursday, November 21, 2024

	PAGE		PAGE
Director of Public Prosecutions Act (Bill S-272)		Motion in Amendment	
Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Continued		Hon. Leo Housakos	7621
Hon. Marilou McPhedran	7614	Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson	7621
National Framework on Heart Failure Bill (Bill S-284)		Net-zero Emissions Future	
Second Reading—Debate Adjourned		Inquiry—Debate Continued	
Hon. Leo Housakos	7614	Hon. Bernadette Clement	7622
Canada Business Corporations Act (Bill S-285)		Ongoing Concerns with Respect to Canadian Agricultural, Wetland, and Forest Land Reallotments	
Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Adjourned		Inquiry—Debate Continued	
Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne	7614	Hon. Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia	7622
Criminal Code (Bill C-332)		Future of CBC/Radio-Canada	
Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Continued		Inquiry—Debate Continued	
Hon. Nancy J. Hartling	7614	Hon. Mary Jane McCallum	7623
Prohibition of the Export of Horses by Air for Slaughter Bill (Bill C-355)		Alarming Rise in Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections	
Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Continued		Inquiry—Debate Continued	
Hon. Brent Cotter	7617	Hon. Paula Simons	7624
Hon. Robert Black	7618	The Honourable Ratna Omidvar, O.C., O.Ont.	
Hon. Donald Neil Plett	7618	Inquiry—Debate Continued	
Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond	7618	Hon. Paula Simons	7626
Hon. Percy E. Downe	7619	The Honourable Jane Cordy	
Indigenous Peoples		Inquiry—Debate Continued	
Motion to Authorize Committee to Study the Effects of Identity Fraud on Further Marginalizing Indigenous People —Debate Continued		Hon. Brian Francis	7627
Hon. Leo Housakos	7619		