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The Honourable RENÉ CORMIER,
Speaker pro tempore

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

ALWAYS IN VOGUE

Hon. Fabian Manning: Honourable senators, today I am pleased to present Chapter 96 of "Telling Our Story."

The oldest street in North America is located in downtown St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. There on Water Street, you will find a family-owned business known for their remarkable quality, style and attention to detail.

The business Always in Vogue was launched in Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, in 1962 by Bernie Halloran and his wife, Cindy.

In 1983, they moved to their Water Street location in St. John's. Throughout the years, the store has become a staple in the Newfoundland and Labrador business community and has grown to become a world-renowned Canadian-based company specializing in top-quality fur products. All their seal products are made in-house and are then sold throughout the world. The visually appealing layout of the store is combined with friendly and helpful staff, unique product range and a warm and inviting atmosphere that keeps customers returning.

In September 2023, while conducting a study on the sealing industry in Canada, the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans had the opportunity to travel to Newfoundland and Labrador, and we scheduled a visit to Always in Vogue.

We learned of the challenges of operating such a business in the propaganda-filled world we live in today, but, more importantly, we witnessed first-hand the quality of the fur products produced at the store and the passion and dedication of the owner and staff.

Bernie Halloran was an incredible human being and a very close, personal friend. In our many discussions, he educated me on all the aspects of the sealing industry, and while he talked about its challenges, he always emphasized the enormous opportunities that he could visualize. Bernie was known to be extremely kind and compassionate when dealing with others, but fierce and unwavering when it came to promoting, supporting and defending the sealing industry. Sadly, Bernie lost his battle with cancer in January 2023.

Fortunately, the business is now in the hands of his son Darren who, as they say in Newfoundland and Labrador, is "a chip off the old block." Just like his father before him, Darren is a strong and vocal advocate for the sealing industry.

As a community-minded individual, Darren decided a few years ago to give back through his own initiative: the Always in Vogue poppy campaign. Each year, the staff produces 1,000 seal fur poppies, just like the one I am wearing here today. The poppies are then sold for \$20 each, with 100% of the proceeds going to the Royal Canadian Legion's poppy fund. The seal fur poppies sell out extremely fast, and the demand has been — and continues to be — very high.

With this year's sales, Darren and his team at Always in Vogue will have raised and donated \$120,000 to the poppy fund. What an incredible accomplishment.

For Darren's efforts in advocating for the sealing industry and for his initiative in fundraising for the Royal Canadian Legion's poppy fund, it was my honour last year to present Darren with the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

Always in Vogue is a great business success story, and now it is building a legacy in making sure:

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them.

I ask you to join with me today in congratulating Darren and all those at Always in Vogue for an incredible example of giving back to their community and continuing to do their part in keeping the memory alive of those who fought and died for our peace and freedom.

Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY AND REMEMBRANCE DAY

Hon. Jane MacAdam: Honourable senators, I rise today to acknowledge Indigenous Veterans Day on November 8 and Remembrance Day on November 11. I cannot emphasize enough the profound importance of these days of remembrance and the commemorative ceremonies that mark them.

Over the summer, I had the privilege to attend events here in Ottawa hosted by Veterans Affairs Canada and the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association. This included a ceremony at the cenotaph commemorating the eightieth anniversary of victory in the Pacific and the end of the Second World War. I was honoured to lay a wreath on behalf of the Senate of Canada.

Honourable senators, I have spoken in this chamber about my father George Palmer and his service in the Battle of Hong Kong, followed by years spent in prisoner of war camps. Until this summer at the commemorative events, I had not met another relative of a veteran who endured these same atrocities. The bonds formed with those who share a similar story connect us to the past and to lives lost or forever changed. I will not forget seeing my father's name among the nearly 2,000 names etched in stone on the Defence of Hong Kong Memorial Wall and laying a wreath for my family in his honour.

My childhood hometown of St. Peter's Bay, Prince Edward Island, has had a consequential contribution when it comes to the history of Canadian warfare, with one of the highest rates of enlistment and casualties per capita of any place in Canada. That level of sacrifice left a profound impact on this small community. The loss was deeply felt in every household. Those who did come home carried invisible wounds — physical, emotional and psychological — and the support systems in rural Canada at that time were often limited or non-existent. The legacy in communities like mine is not just measured in numbers but also in the quiet resilience of those who carried on.

We must remember the families who stood behind those who served and those who are serving today. The emotional toll on families endures, and their strength deserves our recognition.

As it relates to remembrance, I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the passing last week of Dr. Tim Cook, the Chief Historian and Director of Research at the Canadian War Museum. Dr. Cook was a true ambassador for Canadian military history. In particular, he championed the Canadian War Museum's oral history project *In Their Own Voices*, preserving the stories of veterans and their loved ones. His legacy is their legacy. He will be deeply missed.

Honourable senators, while we dedicate this time in November to remembrance, may we also take the time to honour the service of our veterans all year long.

Lest we forget.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Sandy Mellish, a Silver Cross Mother whose son, Warrant Officer Frank Robert Mellish, was killed alongside three others during an attack in Kandahar on September 3, 2006. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Patterson.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

THE LATE FRANK MELLISH, C.D.

Hon. Rebecca Patterson: Honourable senators, as we enter Remembrance Week, I would like to take a moment to share a deeply personal story as a reminder that peace comes at a cost. I'm very honoured to be the third speaker today because all the speeches are connected.

• (1410)

We have to remember that cost is measured not only in lives lost but also in the quiet sacrifices made by those who serve and the families and communities who bear their absence. That cost is not confined to the pages of history or to grainy black-and-white films of past wars. It is felt in our own time, within our communities and families who continue to live with the consequences of service.

One of the great Canadians I wish to talk about is Warrant Officer Frank Mellish; he was killed in action during the insurgent attack on September 3, 2006, during Operation Medusa in the Panjwai district of Afghanistan. As stated, he was killed alongside three of his comrades: Warrant Officer Richard Nolan, Sergeant Shane Stachnik and Private William Cushley.

As His Honour has noted, in the gallery today is Warrant Officer Mellish's mother, Sandy Mellish. Beside her, in uniform, is Master Warrant Officer Gary Mitchell, who served alongside Warrant Officer Mellish on that fateful day.

Warrant Officer Mellish's death occurred during his second tour in Afghanistan and his seventh overseas deployment, which included a tour in Croatia. That Croatian tour overlapped with his father's deployment there with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Service to Canada runs incredibly deep in the Mellish family. Frank has a few cousins who also served. Tragically, his cousin Michael, who also deployed to Afghanistan, later took his own life due to what his family can tell you was survivor's guilt related to his cousin's death. Frank's widow, Kendra, served for 27 years, including her own tours in Afghanistan. That same sense of duty continues in the next generation in their youngest son, Koven; he has joined the Royal Canadian Regiment that Frank once proudly served with. His unit is due to deploy to Poland next year.

His comrades remember Warrant Officer Mellish for his leadership, compassion and unwavering dedication to the soldiers under his care.

His mother, Sandy, is wearing the Silver Cross today, also known as the Memorial Cross. This is granted to mothers, widows and families of Canadian Armed Forces personnel who have died during active duty. It is given to mark personal loss and sacrifice. It is engraved with Frank's name.

Before deploying, members specify whom their Silver Cross recipients will be. That last bit of pre-deployment paperwork leaves no doubt for the member or their family about the risks they are about to assume on behalf of Canada.

Since her son's death, Sandy has dedicated herself to helping grieving members and families of the Canadian Armed Forces as they navigate their own sorrow.

While we must never forget the past, remembrance is not about nostalgia. It is about understanding the cost of peace and democracy today and ensuring those who serve and those who stand behind them are never forgotten or left behind.

As senators, we bear a responsibility to remember that every decision about defence and security has a human cost.

Today, and every day, let us remember, not only because we owe it to those who have fallen, but because forgetting risks repeating the same hard lessons.

[Translation]

We will remember them.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[English]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Andrea Heinz and Kathy King, authors from Edmonton, Alberta. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Miville-Dechéne.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne: I am honoured to introduce two remarkable, courageous women, Kathy King and Andrea Heinz — two survivors who chose to turn their hardship and trauma into action to change perceptions in Canada about the true nature of commercial sexual exploitation.

Cara King was found dead 30 years ago, one month after she disappeared from the streets of Edmonton. According to her mother, Kathy King, Cara was using drugs, suffering from psychosis and being sexually exploited. She was unable to find help.

After her death, Cara was labelled, stigmatized and practically blamed for the exploitation she had experienced, while no one concerned themselves with the abusers.

At the age of 22, Andrea Heinz was deeply in debt and coming out of a toxic relationship. She entered the world of prostitution by responding to an ad in the newspaper. She sold sexual services

4,300 times in seven years before realizing this was not a job like any other, but that she was suffering from dissociation, which had enabled her to endure strangers spitting on her, hitting her, removing their condoms without her consent, choking her and showering her with degrading insults.

Kathy King and Andrea Heinz stood up and took action to say loud and clear that a society like Canada's cannot and must not tolerate the commercial sexual exploitation of women. Hence, their award-winning book, published in 2024, is titled *When Men Buy Sex: Who Really Pays?*

[Translation]

In their book, these authors note that the condition and the so-called choices of women who sell sex get a lot of attention when the focus should really be on the people doing the buying, the clients. Why do some men choose to buy sex from women? Is it an inevitable outcome of gender inequality? Can financial compensation really make up for the harm done to the women being bought? No, of course not.

Rather than engaging in ideological battles with sex workers, King and Heinz decided to join Edmonton's Sex Trade Offender Program as educators, working with first-time offenders convicted of purchasing sexual services. According to the authors, this program works. It reduces recidivism by raising participants' awareness of the harm caused to women and by developing the participants' empathy.

However, this is only a small part of the answer to reducing the demand for sexual services. Prevention, education for boys and girls, enforcement of laws and funding for implementing prostitution exit strategies are also needed.

[English]

Heinz and King want to combat inertia, indifference and the normalization of this exploitation, which in many cases is linked to the sex trafficking of girls and women. I admire these two women, who are in Ottawa to raise awareness. Let us applaud their efforts.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of participants of Take Our Kids to Work Day.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

PROJECTS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Hon. Victor Boudreau: Honourable senators, as we know, the federal government is working to build a more self-sustaining, diversified Canadian economy.

The One Canadian Economy Act is at the heart of those efforts. It seeks to stimulate national economic growth by removing barriers to interprovincial trade and by fast-tracking major projects that are in the national interest.

The Honourable Susan Holt, Premier of New Brunswick, came to Ottawa recently to promote several projects that the province believes should be reviewed by the Major Projects Office.

If these projects are approved, they would make a significant contribution to the Canadian economy. I would like to tell you a little more about them.

[English]

The first project is a Quebec-New Brunswick pipeline that would expand natural gas infrastructure from Quebec to Fredericton and Belledune in northern New Brunswick. This project would have multiple benefits, including stabilizing energy prices, ensuring supply reliability across Atlantic Canada and supporting industrial growth. It would also help transition away from heating oil and coal-fired generation.

By adding new pipe and building a liquefaction facility to connect Western Canadian gas suppliers with the LNG terminal in Saint John, Canada's only LNG facility on the East Coast, the project would unlock Canada's ability to export LNG directly to Europe, providing a secure alternative to Russian gas.

The second project is the Port Saint John corridor. This would be a comprehensive modernization of Atlantic Canada's primary trade and energy gateway. The project would be made up of rail upgrades, port expansions and erosion protection.

The new infrastructure would eliminate bottlenecks, unlock export capacity and position Port Saint John as a world-class hub for containerized goods, energy products and clean fuels.

[Translation]

The third project also has to do with a port. The modernization of the Port of Belledune would increase the port's capacity, strengthen energy security and make northern New Brunswick a clean fuel hub.

• (1420)

The plan includes modernizing fuel and chemical handling facilities, preparing hydrogen and methanol terminals, establishing new rail and road links, expanding freshwater and energy supply networks and, finally, dredging to accommodate Capesize vessels so that Belledune can process containerized goods, bulk products, oil and renewable fuels destined for world markets.

[English]

Last but not least, New Brunswick has 21 of the 34 minerals identified as critical to Canada's economy. The Sisson mine, located north of Fredericton, is one of the largest undeveloped tungsten deposits in the world. With updated feasibility work now under way, the project is poised to become a major source of critical minerals that are essential to Canada's economic security, defence sector and clean energy transition.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, reorienting our economy is a long-term undertaking. It will not happen overnight. That said, some projects, including those I just mentioned, are ready to move forward quickly right now. These projects would significantly strengthen our domestic capacity, not only in Atlantic Canada, but across the country.

Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Badra and Salwa Bennani as well as Gulnar Mousa. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Henkel.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[English]

SPORT IN CANADA

Hon. Marty Deacon: Honourable senators, I would first like to thank my colleague who created the opening for me to speak today.

Colleagues, you have heard before from different voices here about the role that sport can play in building great individuals, communities and a country. I have also said that it takes a million little things to make this happen, to push and strive for excellence and to ensure a country where physical, mental and spiritual health flourish for all Canadians to experience the joy that comes from being on any field of play, at any level.

Today, I would like to thank Senators McBean and Duncan, as well as those who participated in Bike Day on the Hill. Such events are to remind us to look after ourselves while here.

Ski day is right around the corner and will take place while our Olympians and Paralympians are competing in the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Games.

The goal of the “Canada fitness day bill” was and is to ensure your good health and the health of your communities.

Two weeks ago, Special Olympians adorned the front field, playing soccer at high noon and bocce in the ballroom of the Chateau Laurier. It was such a treat to meet the athletes, coaches and volunteers of “Special O.”

This week was another big week as we welcomed the athletes, leaders and builders to the Order of Sport Class of 2025 across the river at the Museum of History. I also welcomed parliamentarians from a variety of backgrounds and met with sports leaders from a variety of sectors. The focus and collaboration was to ensure we are being crystal clear on what sport needs in Canada, ensuring alignment and speaking with one voice.

Last Wednesday, all of this led to the athletes and builders being inducted into the Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame. The athletes include: Erik Guay, spectacular in alpine skiing; Kevin Martin, whose Olympic success in curling will not be forgotten; Christine Sinclair, I just need to say, a maverick in women’s soccer; Michelle Stilwell, a star on the track in para athletics; and Darren Zack, a softball icon with a wicked underhand pitch. They will be joined by builders: Martha Billes, the founder of Jumpstart; and Ted Nolan, an Indigenous athlete, coach and leader in ice hockey. Read his book, *Life in Two Worlds: A Coach’s Journey from the Reserve to the NHL and Back*.

The event is an awe-inspiring celebration of remarkable athletes, builders and trailblazers who have conquered challenges, shattered records and will continue to inspire generations.

Finally, the Blue Jays take to the diamond. While losing in extra innings, this team demonstrated what it meant to care, lead and take teamwork to a whole new level. They brought Canadians together to celebrate and unite families and communities while they inspired and invigorated a nation. With integrity, they reminded us that culture is not what you say in victory, it is what you do in defeat.

Thank you, *meegwetch*.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Scott Ross, Executive Director of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and his son Axel Ferri Ross. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Robinson.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

BUDGET 2025

DOCUMENTS TABLED

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Budget 2025, entitled *Canada Strong*.

JUSTICE

STATUTES REPEAL ACT—LIST OF ACTS OR PROVISIONS OF ACTS PROPOSED TO NOT BE REPEALED IN 2025—DOCUMENT TABLED

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the list of Acts or provisions of Acts proposed to not be repealed in 2025, pursuant to the *Statutes Repeal Act*.

[Translation]

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

FIRST REPORT OF COMMITTEE TABLED

Hon. Lucie Moncion: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, entitled *Financial Statements of the Senate of Canada for the year ended March 31, 2025*.

[English]

SCRUTINY OF REGULATIONS

FIRST REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Yuen Pau Woo: Honourable senators, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations, which deals with the work of the committee and other matters.

(For text of report, see today’s Journals of the Senate, p. 387.)

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

(On motion of Senator Woo, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AFFECT PROCEEDINGS ON BILL C-3

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

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, previous order or usual practice, in relation to Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2025):

1. if the Senate receives the bill after the adoption of this order, the bill, once read a first time, be placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading later that day, provided that if the Senate has already passed the point on the Orders of the Day where it would deal with the bill at second reading, it be taken into consideration at second reading forthwith, or, if another item is under consideration at the time the bill is received, the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at second reading as the next item of business;
2. if, before this order is adopted, the bill has been placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading at a sitting subsequent to the one at which this order is adopted, second reading be brought forward, upon the adoption of this order, so that the bill be taken into consideration at second reading as the next item of business;
3. if the bill is adopted at second reading, it stand referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, which, for the purposes of its consideration of the bill, be authorized to meet even though the Senate may then be sitting or adjourned;
4. on November 19, 2025:
 - (a) if the committee reports the bill without amendment, the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading later that sitting;
 - (b) if the committee has not reported the bill by the end of Routine Proceedings, it be deemed to have reported the bill without amendment at that time, with proceedings on the bill then subject to the above provision;
 - (c) if the committee reports the bill with amendment or with a recommendation that the Senate not proceed further with the bill:
 - (i) the report be placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration later that sitting; and
 - (ii) once the Senate decides on the report, the bill, if still before the Senate, be taken into consideration at third reading forthwith;
 - (d) proceedings on any item related to the bill not be adjourned and no vote requested in relation thereto be deferred;
 - (e) if the Senate has not concluded proceedings on the bill by 7 p.m., the Speaker interrupt any proceedings then before the Senate in order to put all questions necessary to dispose of the bill at third reading without further debate, provided that:
 - (i) if a report on the bill is on the Orders of the Day at that time, but has not yet been moved for adoption, it be deemed to have been moved for adoption at that time; and
 - (ii) if the bill has not yet been moved for third reading at that time, the sponsor, or a designate, be recognized solely to move third reading either at that time, or once the Senate has made a decision on the committee's report, if the bill is still then before the Senate;
 - (f) if the Speaker interrupts proceedings at 7 p.m. pursuant to the provisions of this order, no further debate or amendment be permitted at any stage, and, if a standing vote is requested thereafter, the vote not be deferred, and the bells ring once, and for only 15 minutes, without being rung again for any subsequent votes necessary to dispose of the bill;
 - (g) the Senate not adjourn until all proceedings on the bill have concluded, with the rules and any orders respecting the time of adjournment being suspended until all business required to take place on that day pursuant to this order has been completed;
 - (h) the provisions of rule 3-3(1) be suspended; and
 - (i) committees scheduled to meet after 4 p.m. be authorized to do so even though the Senate may then be sitting;

5. if the Senate does not sit on November 19, 2025, any provision in this order referring to that date be read as if it referred to the next day thereafter that the Senate does sit;
6. once the bill has been reported by the committee, or is deemed to have been reported, no motion to refer the report or the bill back to that committee or to another committee be received; and
7. if a vote on any item relating to the bill had, before November 19, 2025, been deferred to that date, proceedings relating to the bill continue after the deferred vote, subject to the terms of paragraph 4 of this order, as applicable.

• (1430)

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

STATUTES REPEAL ACT—NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY 2025 REPORT AND LIST OF ACTS OR PROVISIONS OF ACTS PROPOSED TO NOT BE REPEALED IN 2025

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

That the report on the *Statutes Repeal Act* for the year 2025, whose tabling was recorded in the *Journals of the Senate* of May 29, 2025, together with the list of Acts or provisions of Acts proposed to not be repealed pursuant to the same Act, tabled in the Senate on November 5, 2025, be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs for examination and report; and

That the committee submit its report to the Senate no later than December 4, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION

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

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 2 p.m.

[Senator LaBoucane-Benson]

BUDGET 2025

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the budget entitled *Canada Strong*, tabled in the House of Commons on November 4, 2025, by the Minister of Finance and National Revenue, the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, P.C., M.P., and in the Senate on November 5, 2025.

[Translation]

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition) introduced Bill S-240, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (declaration of exception pursuant to subsection 33(1) of the Charter for mandatory minimum sentences for child sexual abuse and exploitation material offences).

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

THE HONOURABLE PAUL J. MASSICOTTE

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain: Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the career of former senator the Honourable Paul Massicotte.

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

FINANCE

INTEREST COSTS ON FEDERAL DEBT

Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the government leader. Government leader, we have now seen a government under Mark Carney that has not

delivered a financial statement in over a year, and it took seven months to deliver a budget through which he'd promised to invest more and spend less. All we've seen from the government is the indebting of future generations of Canadians to a degree where they see no hope.

We're going to have ample opportunity to dissect the budget over the next few weeks and, obviously, get to the details of it, but there's something that struck me. The federal government is spending \$54.7 billion on health care across the country, but the interest alone on the debt is \$55.6 billion.

Government leader, Senator Moreau, don't you see a discrepancy there? Doesn't it concern you to the degree it concerns the official opposition?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. The new Government of Canada was elected with a clear mandate, as you said, to spend less so it can invest more. I don't think you disagree with that, but that's exactly what the government has delivered with Budget 2025.

This is an investment budget, senator. The government is making generational investments in the future to build major infrastructure, homes and industries that grow the economy and create lasting prosperity. That's the future of Canada. Protecting our communities, our borders and our way of life; empowering Canadians with better careers, strong public services and more affordable lives; investing in housing affordability — that's what the government has delivered with Budget 2025. I understand that we will study that more over the next few weeks.

Senator Housakos: Spend less? A \$78-billion deficit is a historic budget coupled with a historic debt, so you're spending more than ever. That's the reality.

Now, Canadians are spending more on interest on the debt — that's for sure — while they're getting a lot less in return. That's why we have 6.5 million Canadians without doctors in this country. We have a government that is spending so much but in all the wrong places, as we see when we compare paying interest on the debt to helping with health care and helping the elderly and young people in this country.

• (1440)

Senator Moreau: Let's talk about debt management, Senator Housakos. You know, facts are hard-headed. Canada has the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7 at 13.3%, with Germany the second lowest at 48.7%. It's not the government that said that. It's the International Monetary Fund, or IMF, in their October 2025 *Fiscal Monitor*.

Canada also has one of the lowest deficit-to-GDP ratios in the G7, second only to Japan.

[Translation]

BUDGET 2025

Hon. Claude Carignan: Leader, yesterday, your government presented its budget, a voluminous 493-page document. Minister Champagne referred to it as a generational budget. Personally, I would call it a naive and cynical budget. The only real generational impact of this budget is the immense debt burden that the Liberal government is imposing on future generations. The federal debt will rise from \$1.266 trillion to \$1.590 trillion in 2029-30. That is an additional \$324 billion on the backs of young people. The cost of the public debt is currently \$55 billion, as my colleague said, and in 2029-30 it will be \$76 billion. Leader, the GST revenue is \$51 billion. The entire GST revenue is not enough to even pay the interest.

Leader, is this a legacy for future generations that the government can be proud of? Do you have the answer on your cue cards?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Senator Carignan, I don't need cue cards to explain that when the government invests in infrastructure — and to be clear, there is a difference between spending and investing — when the government invests in housing, when the government makes it easier for Canadians to access housing, the government is investing in and strengthening the Canadian economy.

The government has tabled a generational budget because this budget focuses on the future.

Allow me to round out the numbers I gave your colleague. Canada's deficit-to-debt ratio is one of the lowest. Japan is the only country with a better ratio. Our ratio is currently 2.5% and it will come down to 1.5% by 2029-30. This did not just magically come about. It happened because the government made thoughtful decisions that help give Canada a strong economy, and that strong economy means that we can invest in future generations.

Senator Carignan: Be careful not to stray too far from your cue cards lest you say anything inaccurate.

Canadians are concerned about the cost of living, particularly the cost of housing, food and transportation. This budget doesn't really address those concerns. There's nothing in the budget to reduce inflation; quite the contrary, in fact.

Leader, isn't this blatantly insensitive towards the public and a betrayal of the voters who believed in this government?

Senator Moreau: You don't want me looking at my notes, but you look at yours when you ask your questions, Senator Carignan. There should be a certain fairness on both sides of the chamber.

The reality is that the level of inflation is controlled by the Bank of Canada. That's the first thing. The second thing is that yesterday's budget is aimed at giving future generations access to homes, for example, by eliminating the federal tax on the purchase of a first home and making major investments that will

in turn spur investment from the private sector, the provinces and municipalities. That's what it means to look to the future, Senator Carignan.

[English]

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

OIL AND GAS POLLUTION CAP

Hon. Rosa Galvez: Senator Moreau, yesterday your government presented *Canada Strong: Budget 2025*. We read that as the global demand for low-carbon goods and processes rises, Canada's new government assists in this opportunity to mobilize public and private capital that promotes investment in sustainability.

However, while new funds were found to add to the already world-record subsidies given to the oil and gas sector, some environmental protection initiatives were renewed or extended, but too many were cut.

Which of these few remaining environmental initiatives in Budget 2025 will see Canada move forward in the direction presented by your government?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Galvez.

Canada remains committed to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 through ambitious climate action while shaping the government's plan to meet the moment and build the economy of the future. With clean economy investment tax credits, the government will supercharge affordable net-zero energy projects that turn our natural wealth into lasting prosperity while protecting the planet.

This strategy is a central pillar of the government's plan for Canada to become the strongest economy in the G7.

Senator Galvez: Can you point to a written section in the budget that explains the criteria your government used to decide which initiatives to renew and which initiatives to cut?

Senator Moreau: The budget that was introduced and tabled yesterday represents, in the opinion of Canada's new government, a responsible economic plan that leverages world-class industries, skilled and talented workers, diverse trade partnerships and strong domestic markets where Canadians can be our own best customers.

In that regard, there are a number of points that need to be underlined. I'm not going to run through the budget, obviously, but I look forward to working with you in the coming weeks in committee.

[Senator Moreau]

FINANCE

BUDGET 2025

Hon. Kim Pate: Welcome back, Senator Moreau. I wish you continued good health.

Reading coverage of the budget, I was struck by the words of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives when they said that:

The government could have provided more support for unemployed workers . . . or beefed up one of the various low-income transfers.

Or it could have:

. . . raised taxes on the rich in order to protect and improve public services.

That didn't happen in this budget. Instead, this budget is like an iceberg: The ice you see floating on top looks like the government is betting big on major physical infrastructure and defence spending but it's what's hidden below that cuts deep . . .

. . . a \$27 billion tax cut for middle- and upper- income earners.

And they said that there are:

. . . large, foreign-owned companies benefitting from defence spending . . .

Why have those most in need, once again, been left out?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Pate, for your kind words.

The world is undergoing a series of fundamental shifts at a speed, scale and scope not seen since the fall of the Berlin Wall. This is not a transition; it is a rupture. In moments like these, the government must be bold and focused on what we can control.

I thank you for your question, but these are difficult times for all Canadians. The government has made a number of proposals in its 2025 budget to make the lives of Canadians more affordable.

One example is that the government is introducing a new automatic federal benefit system that will enable individuals to review and confirm pre-file income tax returns to ensure they receive the government benefits for which they qualify.

The Government of Canada will continue to be there to support all Canadians in its work to build a strong and resilient Canada, and focusing on getting the economy stronger will help the government help those who need it the most.

Senator Pate: Thank you for that, Senator Moreau. The automatic tax filing is a step in the right direction.

Poverty is rising in Canada, so I'm curious what other concrete measures the government will be taking to evaluate this week's urgent call from the National Advisory Council on Poverty for guaranteed livable income-type measures so that all Canadians are included and empowered to live and contribute to communities and economies.

Senator Moreau: Canada's new government was elected with a clear mandate — as I said to Senator Housakos — to spend less so it can invest more. The government has a plan to build the strongest economy in the G7.

This is a budget that opens the door to opportunity for Canadians and young Canadians across the country, for tradespeople and for Canadian softwood lumber, steel and aluminum.

When the economy is going well and when the economy grows, the government has the opportunity to help those who need it the most.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

Hon. Scott Tannas: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Moreau, there is a major bovine tuberculosis outbreak unfolding in the Prairies. To protect the herd and their neighbours, producers are incurring additional veterinary costs, additional cleaning and disinfection expenses and increased labour costs on top of their regular expenses. There are holes in the financial supports for ranchers who are incurring extraordinary costs in the name of protecting Canada's herd health and trade status. What is the government doing to fill these holes?

• (1450)

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, Senator Tannas. You raise a very important issue.

I understand that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, or CFIA, is currently investigating three separate herds infected with bovine tuberculosis in the Prairie provinces. The CFIA is testing herds linked to the infected ones to prevent disease spread and to identify the source.

I have been informed that the CFIA may compensate animal owners for animals ordered destroyed; costs related to the disposal of animals ordered destroyed; other things ordered destroyed, such as contaminated feed or animal products; costs related to the following list of things ordered destroyed: animal food, non-commercial freezers and refrigerators, cages, crates, nesting boxes and feedlots, as well as personal labour undertaken in carrying out destruction orders; vaccination costs for animals —

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Thank you, senator.

Senator Tannas: Thanks. This is a good-news, bad-news story, senator. The Prairie landscape is teeming with wildlife — foxes, deer in numbers I've never before seen, elk and moose — all of which carry tuberculosis. Much of that credit should go to ranchers and farmers for their conservation practices.

They are not being covered for anything other than the destruction of animals, but most animals aren't destroyed. They're given veterinary costs. They're quarantined in a special way —

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Thank you, senator.

Senator Moreau: I understand this is an important and serious issue for farmers, but after I finished my previous answer, I wanted to underline that their own personal labour undertaken in carrying out destruction orders can be compensated by the agency, as well as vaccination costs for not only destroyed animals but also those that need treatment.

I'm not aware of any government plans to extend compensation beyond that. I can provide you with the list of what should be compensated.

[Translation]

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

CANADA-AFRICA RELATIONS

Hon. Amina Gerba: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Moreau, in his economic address on October 22, Prime Minister Mark Carney didn't mention Africa as one of the priority markets for our non-U.S. exports. The African continent wasn't named as a strategic market in the government's budget, either. According to the Observatoire de la Francophonie économique, however, Canada is letting \$381 billion U.S. in potential exports to Africa slip through its fingers every year. Africa has four times more consumers than the U.S. market.

Is Africa being given serious consideration under the Prime Minister's strategy to double our exports to non-U.S. markets?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question, Senator Gerba. You raise an important point. Yes, the government is certainly considering Africa. The government has set itself a very ambitious goal when it comes to diversifying Canadian trade, and that is to double Canada's exports to non-U.S. markets over the next decade. Obviously, that includes Africa. To meet that goal, Budget 2025 sets out several measures to encourage Canadian businesses to explore new markets, including Africa.

For example, I am thinking of the creation of the \$5-billion Strategic Response Fund, which seeks to offset the costs associated with accessing new markets, including the African market. In 2024, Canada's merchandise trade with African countries was valued at \$15.1 billion, an increase of 30% over

the past five years. That is an impressive figure. The government is confident that those figures will grow with the measures put forward in Budget 2025.

Senator Gerba: Thank you, Senator Moreau. Will the Prime Minister be attending the G20 summit, which is being held in Africa for the first time? If so, will he be going there to lay out an ambitious vision for the partnership between Canada and Africa, or will he arrive empty-handed?

Senator Moreau: The Prime Minister has an extremely busy schedule, but I'm told that when Mr. Carney met with the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, at the G7 summit in Kananaskis, he indicated that he plans to attend the G20 summit in Johannesburg. The partnership between Canada and South Africa is growing, particularly in the areas of forest fire management, trade, participation in the Canadian delegation to —

[English]

FINANCE

ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, according to the C.D. Howe Institute, Ottawa's new Capital Budgeting Framework is a major deviation from public sector accounting standards. The institute also notes that most of the spending now labelled "capital investment," including infrastructure transfers and tax credits, has no corresponding capital asset on the government's books. This directly contradicts the established accounting rules that ensure fiscal accuracy and comparability over time.

Leader, why is the government abandoning recognized accounting standards and substituting its own definitions, which conveniently make deficits appear smaller while its spending is no less costly?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): There's no trick in that. Budget 2025 introduced a new approach to budgeting. We are spending less on the day-to-day operations of government so we can invest more in Canadian industry and workers. This plan rests on two fiscal anchors that are very well explained in the budget. I can point these out in section 5, entitled "Economic Strength Through Fiscal Discipline." The anchors are "Balancing day-to-day operating spending with revenues by 2028-29 . . ." and "Maintaining a declining deficit-to-GDP ratio . . ." which I explained to your colleague Senator Housakos earlier during Question Period.

Senator Martin: Yes, I note that there's a prop that the leader has used.

However, leader, creative accounting doesn't make reckless spending more responsible; it just makes it harder for Canadians to see the truth. Will your government restore transparency by returning to proper public sector accounting standards so that Parliament and taxpayers can trust the numbers again?

[Senator Moreau]

Senator Moreau: I think that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance have an open approach: They are explaining how they want to change the way the government approaches balancing the operating spending with revenue as soon as the 2028-29 fiscal year and maintaining a declining deficit-to-GDP ratio to ensure disciplined fiscal management for future generations.

You're wondering about future generations; that's exactly what the government is doing.

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

SENATE ETHICS OFFICER

Hon. Denise Batters: Senator Moreau, your late-September Senate ethics disclosure states that you were a managing partner of your law firm, Bélanger Sauv . This law firm's website continues to feature you in this position.

Prime Minister Carney named you as Senate government leader in mid-July, yet there have been no updates on the Senate Ethics Officer's website stating that you have stepped back from your significant role managing your law firm to devote yourself full-time to your new Senate role. In fact, a recent announcement on Bélanger Sauv 's website proudly proclaims, "Pierre Moreau, Managing Partner and member of Bélanger Sauv 's Executive Committee is pleased to announce the appointment of . . ." — an employee who joined the firm — ". . . on September 8, 2025."

Senator Moreau, you have been the Leader of the Government in the Senate for months now. When will you step back from your law firm position and commit to your Senate leader role as a full-time priority?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): As soon as November 15.

Senator Batters: Senators can have other income while sitting as senators, but the Senate government leader position is a special role with major influence. You're sworn into Privy Council and attend cabinet committee meetings, and could have done so since July, yet your Senate ethics disclosure hasn't been posted yet and the information you provided hasn't been put on the Senate Ethics Officer's website. As far as we knew, you continued to manage and derive income from a 27-member law firm.

When will you adhere to the Senate Rules — our ethics code — and prioritize parliamentary functions over any other duty?

Senator Moreau: I think that your supplementary question was written before I answered the main question.

• (1500)

I will be stepping down as managing partner of Bélanger Sauv , which is a very good law firm, as soon as November 15.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

NATURE PROGRAMMING

Hon. Mary Coyle: Senator Moreau, yesterday Budget 2025 was released, and it promised to supercharge our economic growth. To quote the Minister of Finance and National Revenue, “Let us build a Canada that is confident, secure, and resilient—for today, and for generations to come.” This is important.

I recently met with Nature Canada. They emphasized the importance of funding Canada’s 2030 Nature Strategy, which is core to Canada’s economic resilience and for healthy future generations to come. Yesterday, Nature Canada put out a statement that said the 2025 Liberal platform reflected Canadians’ calls for adequate resources for nature protection and restoration. However, yesterday’s budget—or today’s budget, as they were saying—does not yet provide the funds required to implement Canada’s 2030 Nature Strategy.

Senator Moreau, since investments in nature were not highlighted in the budget, can you confirm how the Prime Minister plans to keep his promises to allocate resources to nature protection to ensure a resilient future for generations to come?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): I have every confidence that the Prime Minister will implement the Liberal Party’s election platform. Having said that, the world, as I said, is undergoing a fundamental shift at a speed, scale and scope not seen since the fall of the Berlin Wall. This is not a transition; it is a rupture. In moments like this, the government must be bold and focused on what they can change.

The government’s plan is to do exactly that: Build the economy, lower costs and make smart investments that will grow the economy for the long term. That will be the investment in the future generation, not only in terms of nature and the environment, but also for Canadians who need it the most. When the economy grows, the government has the opportunity to invest in the right place.

Senator Coyle: We all want the economy to grow, and we also want a planet that will be here when we have a strong economy.

The only real mention of nature in the budget states:

To meet up to 15 per cent in savings targets over three years and streamline program delivery, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) will prioritize activities within its core mandate. . . . ECCC will also streamline its nature programming to simplify engagement with stakeholders and reduce administrative burden.

Based on this statement, is nature programming being cut, sustained or expanded by Environment and Climate Change Canada? It’s hard to know.

Senator Moreau: At this time, senator, I can’t tell you what it will look like, but the government is rigorously reviewing all government spending and making responsible choices so that it can deliver smarter, faster and more effectively for all Canadians.

This work is ongoing, and in the coming weeks, we will have the opportunity to ask questions specifically within the Senate committees when we examine the bill to implement the budget.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Hon. Bernadette Clement: Senator Moreau, it is good to see you looking well and in the Senate Chamber.

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you.

Senator Clement: Today is Take Our Kids to Work Day, and I received a visit from the wonderful Beatrice from the École secondaire catholique La Citadelle in Cornwall, Ontario. She is with us here in the gallery. She’s a Grade 9 student who is worried about the climate that she will grow up in. Beatrice wanted me to ask you what the government has committed to in this budget that would give her hope that she will grow up on a healthy planet.

Senator Moreau: I share this concern not only for my children but also for my grandchildren as well. Beatrice, can you rise? I wish you a very warm welcome to the Senate of Canada. You have picked a very good senator to shadow for the day and to ask your important question.

The government cares deeply about addressing the climate crisis and remains committed to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 through ambitious climate action. The government’s new climate competitiveness strategy will accelerate investment to drive down emissions in key sectors, boost market access for Canadian exports and grow jobs and the economy.

Additionally, the Clean Economy investment tax credits will supercharge affordable net-zero energy projects that turn our natural wealth into lasting prosperity while protecting the planet.

I hope that I have been able to answer your very good question, Beatrice. And, once again, welcome.

Senator Clement: I’m sure you—as we all do—often speak to young people. It’s not just our families, but we also go into classrooms. How do you reassure them that this government is committed to their future?

Senator Moreau: Thank you for that supplementary question. I speak with young people every day, and I speak with my grandchildren, and they are open-minded and concerned about what we’re doing to improve our environmental situation. The government promises a clean future for the next generation.

We all have to work together in order to achieve that goal. It’s not only a government matter; it is a personal, individual and collective matter. We are all committed to that.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

• (1510)

USE OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Hon. Robert Black: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Moreau, in recent weeks, my office has received numerous emails and other communications about land to be expropriated by the Department of National Defence in Clearview Township, Simcoe County in Ontario for the Arctic Over-the-Horizon Radar project. This will destroy 4,000 acres of prime agricultural farmland. Further, it is within 20 kilometres of Canadian Forces Base Borden which already occupies 21,000 acres of land.

Senator Moreau, what do I tell farmers across this country when they ask whether the federal government is committed to saving prime agricultural land in this country — land that ensures not only food security but which is also needed to feed the world?

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): I appreciate the question. I was born and raised on a dairy farm.

The government highlighted in Budget 2025, which was tabled yesterday, the important contribution that the agriculture, fishing and seafood sectors bring to Canada's competitiveness, sustainability and food security.

The budget includes many measures to support the agricultural sector, such as a new investment of \$109 million in AgriStability. Having said that, there is a question of national security related to your question, and the Government of Canada also recognizes the need to be ready to defend our people and values and to secure our sovereignty with a modern, ready and well-equipped Armed Forces, and those investments and infrastructure will support that.

Senator Black: In addition to the 4,000 acres in Clearview Township, there are 3,000 acres south of London in Middlesex County currently being developed for an EV battery plant being supported by millions of federal dollars. When will your government realize that losing another 7,000 acres of prime agricultural land is putting our food security and food sovereignty at risk, and when will your government realize that food security is national security?

Senator Moreau: The government recognizes the importance and role that agricultural producers play in ensuring our food security as well as their significant contribution to our national security and sovereignty.

It is important to note that land use planning falls under provincial jurisdiction. In the case of the EV battery plant, that falls outside the scope of the federal government's jurisdiction.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR A GUARANTEED LIVABLE BASIC INCOME BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Pate, seconded by the Honourable Senator Duncan, for the second reading of Bill S-206, An Act to develop a national framework for a guaranteed livable basic income.

Hon. Pat Duncan: Honourable senators, I rise today as the senator for the Yukon to provide Yukon's perspective on this matter.

In 2019, the Government of Yukon commissioned a review of our health and social programs and services. The independent expert panel tasked with the review included the former Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, who also served as the Deputy Minister of Finance.

Many Yukoners contributed to this report, including health care professionals, social services professionals, community organizations, Yukon government staff, non-governmental organizations and First Nations governments. More than 300 Yukoners participated in public meetings with members of the expert panel, and over 700 Yukoners completed an online survey. Based on their input, the panel's final report, entitled *Putting People First*, made 76 recommendations.

One of the recommendations in the report was to develop a guaranteed annual income pilot program. The Yukon government subsequently asked the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition, a non-profit organization, to examine this matter, and they released their final report this fall.

A review of the *Putting People First* report references federal Bill C-233, An Act to eliminate poverty in Canada, and Bill S-233, an earlier version of the bill currently before us. The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition's report also references the policy and program engagement in other provinces and territories.

The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition's report clearly identifies the challenges that — quite honestly, drawing upon my experience as a former Finance Minister — I had suspected would be encountered if a program were to be put in place in the Yukon. Not surprisingly, it is more complicated than one might envision.

Honourable senators, between 2015 and 2025, the Yukon population increased by 9,748 people. That is a staggering 26% increase in the territory, and in Whitehorse, the increase is nearly 30%. As of March 31, 2025, the population was 47,170, a new record high for the Yukon.

Of this number, an estimated 22% are First Nations. As you have heard me say many times before, 11 of the 14 Yukon First Nations are self-governing. Regarding the self-governing First Nations, there are significant differences in the delivery of assistance to their citizens, an issue also identified in the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition's report. On Tuesday morning, our Indigenous Peoples Committee heard from the Council of Yukon First Nations Grand Chief Math'ieya Alatini, who said that self-governing First Nations do not receive adequate funding for delivery of services to citizens whom they consider members, but whom Canada may not consider as "status Indians" — to use the language of the Indian Act.

There are no reserves in the Yukon. Status Indians who are members of non-self-governing First Nations receive income assistance funding through the Government of Canada. As I noted, it's complicated.

One of my first responsibilities in the Senate was to serve on the National Finance Committee. I repeatedly asked officials from the Department of Indigenous Services about the many line items in the Main Estimates. There are two lines that are germane to this discussion.

In the 2023-24 Main Estimates listing of transfer payments, we find grants to provide income support to on-reserve residents and status Indians in the Yukon Territory at \$20 million. Although the Yukon is referenced, that estimate amount is for income support to on-reserve residents and status Indians throughout Canada. In the 2025-26 Main Estimates, it is again \$20 million, although the actual expenditures for 2023-24 were \$10,206,192.

The second line item, contributions to provide income support to on-reserve residents and status Indians in the Yukon Territory — again this is for all of Canada — in the 2023-24 Main Estimates was \$1.3 billion. In the 2025-26 Main Estimates, it was \$1.227 billion, and the 2023-24 actual expenditures were \$1,398,611,442.

Honourable senators will recall the Auditor General's recent report regarding the delivery of programs and services by the Department of Indigenous Services Canada, the minister's commitment to do better and the values we hear about regarding this government of inclusion, empathy and compassion.

A key point from the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition's report is this:

While Basic Income Guarantee has the potential to provide opportunities for reconciliation and cultural preservation, our work within this report focuses on the possible benefits of BIG (Basic Income Guarantee) from a health and social perspective.

More consultation is needed to know if or how BIG administration would align with self-governing principles and practices of Yukon First Nations.

The balance of Yukon citizens receive income assistance from the Yukon government. Several issues with the current social assistance system in the territory were also clearly stated in this report. One of these, voiced by participants in focus groups, is as follows:

... the reliance on online information and processes in the social assistance system was identified as a barrier to transparency and communication, as some participants do not know how to use a phone or cannot afford a phone or internet access.

The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition's report and the recommendations in *Putting People First* are now in the hands of the newly elected Yukon government for them to decide the next steps.

Honourable senators, I would like to take a moment to offer my congratulations to Premier-elect Currie Dixon, Leader of the Official Opposition Kate White and, especially, all those who put their names forward to run in the recent territorial election, which, as you are aware, was held on November 3. I would also like to extend my thanks to the members of the Yukon legislature who did not re-offer their services to the people of the Yukon for their work over the past many years.

I offer this information about the Yukon for consideration by my colleagues today in relation to Bill S-206.

If I had a nickel for every time I have said, in this place and elsewhere, that one size does not fit all in this country, I could have made a sizeable contribution to the transfer payments to the provinces. Discussions of a framework for a guaranteed livable income must take into consideration the regional differences throughout Canada and the regional support throughout Canada. I understand that Prince Edward Island has different circumstances in consideration of a guaranteed livable income. I am also of the understanding that there is significant interest, including a unanimously passed motion in their legislative assembly, for that province to put a program in place.

Honourable senators do not need to be reminded that the elected folks are those who are most in touch with Canadians, knocking on their doors and being held directly accountable to them through the votes they receive. So why should Canada put a framework in place? This is a provincial and territorial responsibility. Well, yes and no.

Canada collects the taxes and provides the money, and in some situations, such as with First Nations, directly provides the services. I believe the National Finance Committee — a very busy committee, granted — should give consideration to the work being done in provinces, in territories and by First Nations governments.

When the National Finance Committee studies Bill S-206, I ask you to recognize and give full and fair consideration to the work of our predecessors in this place, the honourable senators Hugh Segal and Art Eggleton. I also hope that the committee will take into account the work done in my territory, most especially,

the values statement and understanding of the challenges outlined in the recommendations of *Putting People First*. I also encourage the committee to hear from and recognize the significant support and work done in discussions with Canada for a program in P.E.I., and that such a program recognize that differences exist throughout Canada and that the framework be guided by one of the values often repeated by our Prime Minister — that of inclusion.

Honourable senators, as I near the end, I want to share a personal story. This spring, I presented a King Charles III Coronation Medal to a woman who has been instrumental in founding, working in and supporting the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon.

When she was a nurse in the Yukon many years ago, she adopted a baby with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, or FASD. While this woman, now elderly, continues to exhaust her personal financial resources supporting her adoptee, who is now an adult, they are also able to receive the additional resources they need to live independently and safely elsewhere in Canada.

• (1520)

In discussing the current Senate work on FASD and Senator Ravalia's Bill S-234 calling for a national framework on FASD with this woman — again, she was a lifelong advocate for FASD awareness and support for the individuals affected — she said to me, “Pat, we don't need a framework on FASD. We need a guaranteed livable income to truly support people like the individual I adopted.”

Honourable senators, having served as the Yukon's finance minister, I had the distinct honour and privilege of discussing with Canada's finance minister at the time, Paul Martin, to please restore the funds that have been cut from the Canada Health and Social Transfer.

Having finalized land claim agreements, I appreciate the challenge of First Nations governments in managing their finances with Canada and meeting the needs and desires of their citizens to truly create a world of opportunity that is “Together Today for our Children Tomorrow.” Some 25 years later, the premiers are still talking about the fiscal shortfalls in health care and delivery of services to citizens and shortfalls in fiscal transfers from Ottawa.

Talking about a guaranteed livable income for Canadians is not an easy task. I believe Senator Gignac said that if we consulted three economists on the subject, we would get four opinions. Many have quoted the excellent work of our colleague Senator Bellemare.

I am grateful for this discussion and Senator Klyne's intervention yesterday. All of this emphasizes that this discussion is not complete. This discussion is not easy, colleagues. We are summoned to Ottawa for weighty and arduous affairs. Senators have been well recognized over the years for our ability to investigate and to study.

My request today is that the study of Bill S-206 by the Finance Committee consider that Canada is more than the sum of all its parts, and when a duly elected government of a province or territory or a First Nations government desires a transformative approach to delivery of income support consistent with Canadian values, the request be given full and fair consideration by Canada.

Thank you, colleagues. *Shāw nithān. Mahsi'cho. Gūnálchish.*

Hon. Denise Batters: Would Senator Duncan take a question?

Senator Duncan: Certainly.

Senator Batters: Senator Duncan, I think I understood from your speech that you are supporting —

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Senator Duncan, the time allocated for your speech has expired. Are you asking for five more minutes?

Senator Duncan: If the chamber permits, yes.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Is it agreed?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Batters: I think I understood from your speech that you are supportive and plan to vote “yes” to send this bill to committee, which means “yes” at second-reading vote, but I just wanted a confirmation about that.

Also, when you appear on the screen, it says “Deputy Government Liaison in the Senate” from the Government Representative's Office. Is your “yes” vote, potentially, at second reading a representation as to what the government thinks about this bill?

Senator Duncan: I am delighted to have an opportunity to answer that question, Senator Batters.

It is my understanding — and granted, I haven't been in the Senate as long as you have — that we can vote at second reading on a bill because we're voting on the principles of the bill. That does not necessarily mean that we are voting in support of the bill itself.

In terms of the principles of a guaranteed livable income, as reflected by the people of Yukon, they are interested. They would like to do it. They recognize the complications. In terms of my speaking today, I'm speaking as a Yukon senator.

Senator Batters: So, yes, a second-reading vote means you support the principles of the bill, so you're saying that you're voting "yes" as a matter of supporting a guaranteed livable income. I just want to obtain your confirmation that this is an individual vote. Despite the fact that your title appears on the screen when you speak, that is not necessarily representative of what the government is going to do on this bill, whether it is to support or oppose, correct?

Senator Duncan: Again, Senator Batters, I've indicated that I'm speaking as a senator for the Yukon. I'm interested, as the people of the Yukon are, in the principle of a guaranteed livable income. I'm interested in that principle.

In terms of the details of the bill, my vote will be cast at third reading. Should it come back from the Senate Finance Committee in its existing form, we don't know. The point I was trying to make today, very clearly, is I'm speaking for the Yukon and representing their views.

I'm also speaking as a senator, having been in this place for some seven plus years, of the importance of listening to all of Canada, all of the regions and the wishes of the people of Canada. I'm asking Canada to do that. In terms of the bill itself, we'll see when it gets here.

(On motion of Senator Patterson, 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 Martin, for the second reading of Bill S-223, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act.

(On motion of Senator Prosper, 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 Martin, for the second reading of Bill S-224, An Act to amend the Director of Public Prosecutions Act.

(On motion of Senator Prosper, debate adjourned.)

(At 3:29 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.)

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