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(HANSARD)

Wednesday, June 6, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, June 6, 2012

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

MR. DHONDUP WANGCHEN

TIBETAN POLITICAL PRISONER

Hon. Mobina S.B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, yesterday our colleagues Senator Munson and Senator Di Nino spoke articulately about Tiananmen Square in China. I rise today to speak about the case of Mr. Dhondup Wangchen, a Tibetan political prisoner who was unjustly detained on March 26, 2008.

Mr. Dhondup Wangchen, who is an acclaimed filmmaker, has spent the past four years of his life in detention for simply providing the people of Tibet with an outlet to freely and openly express their views on the upcoming Beijing Olympics. These interviews provided the basis for Mr. Wangchen's world-renowned film entitled *Leaving Fear Behind*, which has been described by the *New York Times* as "an unadorned indictment of the Chinese government."

The footage that Mr. Wangchen captured reveals with stark reality how the Tibetan people are frustrated and embittered by the deterioration and marginalization of the Tibetan language and culture; the lack of religious freedoms; and the broken promises of the Chinese government to improve the conditions in Tibet in the run-up to the Olympic Games. Our own Prime Minister Stephen Harper has also been supportive of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people.

I have met with members of the Tibetan-Canadian communities and listened with a heavy heart as they spoke about the oppression and persecution their brothers and sisters in Tibet continue to face every day.

During this meeting I had the opportunity to hear of Mr. Dhondup Wangchen's wife, Lhamo Tso, who had travelled with members of the Tibetan committee to meet with various parliamentarians to ask for help in demanding justice for her husband. Lhamo Tso's undying dedication as a wife of a political prisoner and as a Tibetan has led her to countries around the world to call on the international community to stand up for her husband and hundreds of prisoners inside Tibet.

Currently Mr. Wangchen is experiencing deteriorating health conditions while serving a six-year sentence imposed on him by the Chinese government without a fair trial. Poor living conditions and torture have led him to contract hepatitis B, which is the biggest concern for his wife, his four children and his supporters around the world. Amnesty International has corroborated reports that Mr. Wangchen is being denied proper medical treatment and that his condition is worsening.

Honourable senators, I urge you all to join me in requesting the release of Dhondup Wangchen and in supporting a global multilateral forum on Tibet in response to the grievances of the Tibetan people in their desire for freedom and the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

I would like to conclude with a statement made in 2010 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which I am confident Mr. Wangcheng's supporters and Tibetans around the world will find great solace in:

Despite the great hardships Tibetans have faced for many decades, they have been able to keep up their courage and determination, preserve their compassionate culture and maintain their unique identity. I salute the courage of those Tibetans still enduring fear and oppression.

Whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, it is the responsibility of all Tibetans to maintain equality, harmony and unity among the various nationalities, while continuing to protect our unique identity and culture.

DR. FRANCIS WILLIAM SCHOFIELD

Hon. Yonah Martin: Honourable senators, I rise today to remember one man who risked his own life to save a nation — a great Canadian by the name of Dr. Francis William Schofield. To this day, he remains the only foreign national to be buried in the National Independent Hero Cemetery in Seoul, Korea.

[*Translation*]

Dr. Schofield was born in 1889, in Rugby, Warwickshire County, England. In 1907, he immigrated to Canada, where he began his university career at the University of Toronto and earned a doctorate in veterinary science. Dr. Schofield married a young pianist named Alice. Shortly after their wedding, they embarked on an extended trip to Korea in 1916.

[*English*]

Being one of the first Presbyterian missionaries in Korea, Dr. Schofield contributed to the medical advancement of Korea in significant ways through his teachings of bacteriology and sanitation at Severance Medical School. Dr. Schofield is equally known for his genuine compassion — he connected with the hearts of Koreans, understanding and feeling their anguish during the hard times of Japanese occupation — and for risking his life by openly opposing the Japanese.

[*Translation*]

Dr. Schofield actively helped the Koreans during the March 1, 1919, Independence Movement and caused so many problems for the Japanese authorities that he was deported to Canada in 1920.

• (1340)

He was not authorized to return to Korea until 1958 at the official invitation of President Syngman Rhee. Upon returning to Korea, Dr. Schofield continued his good work by teaching at Seoul National University and running two Korean orphanages until his death in 1970.

[*English*]

Dr. Schofield's legacy in Korea lives on amidst a solid foundation of medical knowledge and the wonderful works of fine Korean leaders, most notably Dr. Chung Un-Chan, President of Seoul National University and former Prime Minister of Korea, whom Dr. Schofield mentored over the course of his teaching career. I would like to acknowledge and commend the Dr. Schofield Memorial Foundation and its members for their tireless efforts in ensuring this important Canadian and Korean hero is not forgotten. With their vision and persistence, Schofield Memorial Garden, within the Toronto Zoo, successfully opened on June 1, 2012.

Dr. Schofield said love must transcend national and racial boundaries. He deserves to be remembered by all Canadians for embodying, in his life and conduct, the essence of what Canada stands for today.

HON. CATHERINE S. CALLBECK

CONGRATULATIONS ON FAMOUS 5 FOUNDATION HONOUR

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to our colleague, the Honourable Senator Catherine Callbeck. Yesterday, at a luncheon convened by the Famous 5 Foundation, she was honoured in celebration of her leadership on behalf of women and for being the first elected female premier in the history of Canada.

The moderator of this event was Maureen McTeer, and Senator Callbeck's co-honourees were Deborah Grey, the first Reform Party member elected to the House of Commons; and Audrey McLaughlin, the first female leader of a political party, the NDP, in the House of Commons.

I would like to share with you some of Senator Callbeck's trail-blazing achievements. She was the second woman ever elected to the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island. That was in 1974, as a member for the Fourth District of Prince. She served as the first female Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Responsible for the Disabled and Minister Responsible for the Non-Status Indians of Prince Edward Island.

She was the first woman elected as the member of the House of Commons to represent the constituency of Malpeque, in 1988. She was elected Leader of the Liberal Party of Prince Edward Island on January 23, 1993, and was sworn in as premier two years later.

She was elected as the member of the First District of Queens in the P.E.I. general election of March 29, 1993, and was thus the first woman to be elected premier in the history of Canada.

She is the recipient of an honorary Doctorate of Laws degree from her alma mater, Mount Allison University, in Sackville, New Brunswick. She was named sponsor of HMCS *Charlottetown*. In 1996, she left provincial politics and returned to work in her family's business.

On September 23, 1997, the Right Honourable Jean Chrétien called her to the Senate of Canada.

Since being in the Senate, she has poured herself into the work of numerous committees and the causes of her fellow Islanders and Canadians. Perhaps her work of most longevity and encouragement for women has been the report she produced as co-chair of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Women Entrepreneurs, in 2003.

In 1997, in recognition of her unselfish community service, Senator Callbeck was awarded the Rural Beautification Shaw Award, for her contribution to the enhancement of rural life on her beloved island.

On November 21, 2006, she was named one of Canada's "Top 100 Most Powerful Women" by the Women's Executive Network, and, on June 10, 2008, she was an inaugural inductee into the Canadian Women in Politics Hall of Fame.

In March 2011 she was honoured by Equal Voice as a Trailblazer at its National Recognition reception in Ottawa.

In June 2011 she was inducted into the Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame of Prince Edward Island.

Senator Callbeck, yours is an extraordinary record of achievement, and you are an exemplary role model for women in Canada.

We are all very proud of you, and we know that you are not finished your leading work. We congratulate you for the most deserved recognition that you received yesterday from the Famous 5 Foundation.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTRES IN QUEBEC

Hon. Ghislain Maltais: Honourable senators, last winter, the agriculture committee, of which I am a member, had the opportunity to visit leading research centres in Quebec affiliated with the Université de Montréal and the Université Laval. These research centres specialize in agricultural innovation.

The chair of the agriculture committee, Senator Mockler, along with Senators Buth, Mercer, Mahovlich, Plett and me, witnessed the research in agricultural innovation taking place in Quebec.

Yesterday I had the privilege of standing in for the Minister of State for Agriculture, the Honourable Christian Paradis, to announce a \$13 million investment in an organic agriculture centre. Research in agricultural innovation will enable Quebec and all research centres in Canada to work together to address the challenges facing the entire world.

All countries must leverage agriculture. Canada is doing very well in the agricultural sector, but we must not rest on our laurels. We must prepare for the coming decades.

Honourable senators, I would also like to salute all of the researchers working behind the scenes, spending their days with test tubes, repeating experiments over and over. How many of them do we see on the news or on the front page of the newspaper? Hardly any. Progress in the agricultural sector depends on these tenacious researchers, some of whom devote their whole lives to microbiology and other agricultural specialties.

Honourable senators, the Government of Canada was pleased to work with the Government of Quebec and share the cost — on a 60:40 basis — of building this centre, which will develop the whole field of organic agriculture and organic crop production in Canada, likely more quickly than planned.

I also want to note that these investments are part of the economic action plan of the Prime Minister of Canada, which will continue to promote research and technology in the agriculture of tomorrow.

[English]

D-DAY

SIXTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Hugh Segal: Honourable senators, some 68 years ago, earlier this morning, on June 6, 1944, ships of the Royal Canadian Navy, landing craft, and thousands of young Canadians deployed, in defence of freedom and civilization, to begin the liberation of France.

D-Day was not just a focus of Allied cooperation against an enemy whose boot had crushed freedom and civility throughout Europe. It was an act of will, courage and determination by young Canadians from every part of this country.

[Translation]

They were from the Atlantic provinces, the Western provinces, and Ontario. They were volunteers, Canadian Forces professionals, French Canadians, Quebecers, English Canadians and Scots. They came from all over.

[English]

Yet, they all wore the Canada flash on their soldier's uniforms. They were not French Canadian. They were not English Canadian. They were not Polish or Ukrainian Canadians. They were simply Canadian, fighting and dying for freedom on that day.

• (1350)

If one goes now to those beaches to visit some of the towns in that part of France, one sees that every little town has a Boulevard des Canadiens, because they remember how different regiments and organizations engaged to liberate their town, to give them back their freedom, and to chase the Nazis — the worst scourge that civilization ever faced — from la patrie française so that Europe could be free.

[Senator Maltais]

All honourable senators can think of people in their communities who were a part of D-Day — a generation that has begun to die of natural causes. I still have an uncle, who is 87 years young. He was part of the Italian campaign with the 4th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards. We can think of those in our communities who were connected, sitting by their radios to hear the reports. Everyone should reflect on how they owe that generation — those who fought and planned, those who were in the ships of the Royal Canadian Navy and in the Air Force, and those who landed on the beaches — a debt that we can never ever adequately describe.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

THE ESTIMATES, 2012-13

MAIN ESTIMATES—TENTH REPORT OF NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TABLED

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the tenth report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance on the expenditures set out in the 2012-2013 Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

FEDERAL CONTRACTORS PROGRAM

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government.

Madam leader, clause 602 of omnibus Bill C-38 deletes a section of the Employment Equity Act that required contractors to comply with employment equity under the Federal Contractors Program. This measure will adversely affect access to employment for women, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities.

The government is abandoning those who face the most discrimination in our society, because businesses are no longer required to be civic-minded. The government no longer feels compelled to deliver social justice. In my opinion, the government's guiding ethic is every man for himself and God for us all.

How can the minister justify such a regressive, archaic and senseless decision that will throw away 25 years of economic and social progress?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the government's objective is to move forward and make the required changes to the Employment Insurance Act and other acts to implement the budget implementation bill. These areas require addressing to be in line with jobs, the economy and the long- and short-term prosperity of the country.

The government's top priority, as I have said in this place many times, is the economy. The government has seen Canadians participate in the job market to the tune of 750,000 net new jobs since July 2009. The government recognizes that some people are having difficulty finding work and we are making changes to the system and providing information to these people to help them find appropriate employment.

Many aspects of many acts are from many years ago and are no longer relevant to the present-day needs of Canadians. This is not a regressive step, but a progressive step, moving the Employment Insurance requirements into the modern age and dealing with the issues that Canadians want us to deal with: jobs, the economy and securing their short- and long-term prosperity.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, clause 602 of the Conservative government's omnibus bill, Bill C-38, removes a section of the Employment Equity Act that requires contractors to comply with employment equity in the Federal Contractors Program — a measure initiated by the Mulroney government. This measure will have a negative impact on the employment access of women, the disabled, Aboriginals and visible minorities. This government is abandoning the most discriminated against members of Canadian society and throwing away 25 years of social and economic progress.

Why does the Conservative government not want to enforce the Employment Equity Act for the Federal Contractors Program, considering it regroups roughly 1,700 contractors who employ more than 1.1 million Canadians? Which group in society will the leader's government target next and not give the chances they deserve under the Charter of Rights?

Senator LeBreton: Fundamentally, I disagree with what the honourable senator says. She is quite wrong in her assertion that measures being taken by the government in any way impede the ability of low-income Canadians, women and Aboriginals to have access to high-quality jobs. Everything the government has done points to the opposite, including significant resources being put into education in Aboriginal communities.

So many policies put in place in the 1970s and 1980s are no longer relevant to the modern age. The government has numerous programs to help many people find employment and retraining, in particular, Aboriginals. There are also many programs for older workers in terms of retraining and ensuring that the labour force suits the modern needs of the labour market.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: I do not think it is obsolete. Each year, 50 new contractors join the Federal Contractor's Program. I want to know from the leader the real reason for clause 602, which abolishes the obligation for contractors to respect employment equity. All these companies with 100 employees or more and contracts of \$200,000 or more should have this contract with the government. It should not be something that the government decides on the spur of the moment.

Senator LeBreton: Again, the honourable senator and I philosophically disagree. The government's aim is to ensure that all Canadians, no matter their walk of life or where they live, be they male, female, Aboriginal, low income or other, have an entitlement. They are entitled to have programs available to them through the Employment Insurance program and the various other programs the government has initiated, including education and training. We have done much work with universities and trade schools to ensure that our workforce — men, women, young, old, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal — have the facilities available to them to learn the skills and find the jobs that they need.

• (1400)

By the way, as we see from many studies, we do have a shortage of skilled labourers in this country. We are aiming to equip all citizens with the skills to enable them to take the jobs that are available here.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

AFGHANISTAN—WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Afghanistan is one of the most difficult places in the world to be a girl, a young woman or a woman. Of 4 million young Afghans attending school, only one quarter are girls. In Kabul, only half of girls under 18 go to school. Outside of Kabul, only 9 per cent of girls under 18 go to school.

I was extremely pleased to see that on May 23, 2012, Minister Baird and Minister Oda released a statement condemning the cowardly and senseless acts of violence against innocent schoolgirls and their teachers. I commend both honourable ministers for standing up for the rights of women and girls living in Afghanistan. Access to education is a basic and fundamental human right, one to which all girls in all parts of the world are entitled.

Investing in the future of Afghan children and youth through development programs in education and health is one of Canada's four priorities in Afghanistan. How much time, money and resources have we invested in achieving this priority? What are our plans for the future?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I believe that the honourable senator asked me a similar question about resources some time ago and I undertook to provide that information by delayed answer. I apologize if we have not done that. I will look into it.

The plight of women in Afghanistan is of great concern to the government, as indicated by the actions and statements of Ministers Baird and Oda. The Afghan code of conduct, which describes women as secondary, is something that no modern society can tolerate. Afghanistan must uphold the provisions of its constitution, which establishes equal rights for men and women, and respect its obligations under international law.

There is a very complicated and changing dynamic in that country, but Afghan women deserve to be treated as equals. Protecting and promoting human rights in Afghanistan, particularly for women and girls, is a core element of our government's ongoing commitment and engagement there. All civilized societies are shocked by incidents such as occurred recently at a school for young Afghan girls.

I will undertake to provide Senator Jaffer with the details of the programs and their costs.

Senator Jaffer: Honourable senators, I appreciate the leader's efforts to provide that information. Will she also provide information on Resolution 1325? As the leader well knows, we led this initiative in the United Nations and our Armed Forces are doing training on Resolution 1325.

Will the leader find out how much training we are doing with the Afghan security forces, what kind of resources we are investing, and whether we are doing training on rape investigations?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I will do my best to provide all the information available on the programs we have in place surrounding Resolution 1325.

Senator Jaffer: Finally, honourable senators, what steps are we taking to ensure that the small advances we have made in the education of girls are not destroyed when we leave Afghanistan?

Senator LeBreton: That is a dilemma for anyone in Afghanistan, considering some of the things that we witnessed while there. I am sure that guarantees will be sought. Having said that, we are sometimes within our rights to be very concerned about commitments being followed through on. I will definitely get that information.

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY AT SUN NEWS NETWORK

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In February I asked her about the fake citizenship ceremony that her government staged for Sun News Network last fall. To remind honourable senators, this was the event that purportedly featured 10 new Canadians reciting the citizenship oath. Six of those individuals, as we know now, were in fact employees of Citizenship and Immigration Canada and not new Canadians. The event was arranged by civil servants in Toronto in response to a request from the minister's office. Departmental officials, who love television, stepped in when they were unable to find 10 new Canadians who were willing or able to participate.

There are now new details around this unusual event. At the time, both the immigration minister's office and Sun News denied any knowledge of the bureaucrats' participation. We learned this week, however, that the network was indeed informed prior to the ceremony. Documents released to the Canadian Press show that talking points approved by the deputy minister state that:

Sun Media was informed that only three new citizens showed up for the reaffirmation ceremony. As anyone can reaffirm their citizenship, Sun Media was given the choice of also having CIC staff in the shot to reaffirm their citizenship.

That is good, because if you are a Canadian, you are a Canadian, I guess.

In the talking points they say:

They chose to have more people in the shot than less. It was our honest understanding that Sun TV recognized that these additional people were CIC employees.

When asked by the Canadian Press, Minister Kenney's spokeswoman clarified that their office became aware of the department's position after the apology was made to Sun News, adding:

. . . we did not feel we could say at the time that Sun was aware of the arrangement. . . . Like most journalists, we try to have more than one source for any fact we rely on.

Why is the leader's government choosing to dismiss its own officials? Does the minister ever talk to his deputy minister about anything?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I noticed that in the news yesterday — and now I am putting Senator Munson in the same league as Jennifer Ditchburn at the Canadian Press — and I commented to my colleagues here that on a day when the world, the Commonwealth and Canada were celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, when a major arrest had taken place in Berlin, when another major arrest had taken place in Toronto with regard to a very serious incident at the Eaton Centre, those stories came nowhere near a lead story by Jennifer Ditchburn and the Canadian Press on an old story about a citizenship ceremony.

I find that interesting. It shows what is important to some people.

This story simply confirmed that neither the minister nor his office had any idea that public servants were taking part in the ceremony. The minister's office often speaks to his officials. They have spoken to departmental officials to ensure that this type of incident does not happen again.

• (1410)

Senator Munson: Honourable senators, first, Jennifer Ditchburn is a respected journalist for the Canadian Press and she is doing her job. Yes, there are serious issues like Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, serious issues dealing with the arrest of that strange person from Montreal who did awful things

and, yes, news stories about Toronto. There are news stories every day, but there is more than just one story on the front page or inside a newspaper.

With this particular story dealing with this fake ceremony, the question is why would government bureaucrats, particularly these bureaucrats today living under King Tut or the heavy-handed regime of this government, not do things on their own? They are being thrown out, tossed away as anonymous bureaucrats doing something wrong. The bottom line is that something wrong was done in terms of a fake ceremony and throwing in Canadian citizens to be part of it. Can the leader reassure us that this sort of fake thing will never happen again?

Senator LeBreton: I was simply making a reference to Jennifer Ditchburn and the placement of the story in relation to other important events.

The story simply proves that the minister was not aware of the incident when it occurred. That is the story. The honourable senator falls into this trap of ascribing all kinds of motives to our government.

We have a Prime Minister, honourable senators, who did not go out into a crowd and strangle someone who disagreed with him. We do not have a Prime Minister who, because a public official refused his orders, set about to destroy his life. I think the honourable senator better get things in perspective before he starts throwing around charges.

Senator Munson: I will get things into perspective. Does the leader feel that Sun Media, this news organization or alleged news organization — that propaganda arm of this Conservative Government of Canada, which it is not progressive by any means — operating with bureaucrats, owes an apology to all Canadians, especially immigrants, new Canadians in this country for what they did in misrepresenting? Does she think that Sun Media is being a responsible news organization?

Forget the CBC stuff. You guys are very good at character assassination, for example, taking up Jennifer Ditchburn's name. Here we have an accomplished journalist doing her job under access to information, doing what she must as a journalist. She has to dig deep into personal stories. Does the leader believe that Sun Media, that alleged news organization, owes an apology to the country?

Senator LeBreton: I can see that I really did touch a sore spot there.

I was commenting on the profile this non-story was given by an individual with a major news organization, Canadian Press, when there were so many things going on during that particular news day. That was my comment on Jennifer Ditchburn.

With regard to Sun Media, again the honourable senator chose to attack it as having motives that none of us are aware of here. I can only respond that I am here as the Leader of the Government in the Senate to answer for the government, not for Sun Media or any other media organization.

Senator Munson: Does the leader condone this kind of behaviour in the journalistic world by Sun Media — if they are working with senior bureaucrats — of faking something like this? It is fraudulent.

By the way, CP has more than one reporter covering other news events, and they are probably covering the events the leader mentioned. Does she condone this kind of thing?

Senator LeBreton: Try as Senator Munson might, I know this particular story is of great interest to him. All I can say is that the story simply confirmed something that I said, and we all said, in this place when it happened: The minister nor his office was aware of this incident. It is not for me to offer any comment beyond that. I am here to answer for the government.

PUBLIC SAFETY

CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, aside from the leader's answer, I am amazed that her personal values would not drive her to answer "yes" to Senator Munson's question. If she cannot answer that, it is pretty poor.

Yesterday, in response to questions by Senator Mitchell with regard to the RCMP, the leader said:

The honourable senator would understand that the RCMP operates independent of government.

Can we understand that the Canada Border Services Agency also operates independent of government?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): First, honourable senators, I need no lessons from Senator Moore on personal values.

The fact is that the RCMP does operate independently. I am not sure what the honourable senator's line of questioning is in regard to Canada Border Services Agency. Perhaps he could ask the question and then maybe I will attempt to provide an answer.

Senator Moore: Does it operate independent of government as does the RCMP?

Senator LeBreton: I believe that the Canada Border Services Agency is part of the Department of Public Safety. I am not up to date on the specific mandate of the CBSA. It is much more complicated and there are many other areas that fall under the Canada Border Services Agency. I will be happy to get Senator Moore the mandate of the CBSA and provide it by written response.

Senator Moore: The leader mentions that they operate under the Department of Public Safety. Does the RCMP operate under that umbrella as well?

Senator LeBreton: Obviously, the RCMP is a standalone agency, but the minister ultimately responsible for answering in Parliament is the Minister of Public Safety.

[Translation]

Senator Moore: The reason I ask the question, honourable senators, is that I heard what the leader said yesterday. I would like to think it is correct that the RCMP does operate independently of government and I would like to believe that the Canada Border Services Agency does the same. In response to a question in the Banking Committee that I put to an officer within the Canada Border Services Agency with regard to its relationship to the RCMP, I did not understand why the answer came back from the minister. I do not know why the appropriate officer or his or her supervisor in that agency would not have answered the question, as happens with other officials who appear before committees as witnesses.

Senator LeBreton: My honourable friend finally gets around to the convoluted reason for asking the question.

I was not part of the committee, but obviously when ministers appear before committees, they often appear with their officials. I have participated in many committees over the years where questions are asked of the ministers and officials, and often questions are answered. The minister ultimately responsible for answering for the department will answer the question or will engage one of the officials with regard to an answer.

Honourable senators, what does this have to do with what we are dealing with here? If the honourable senator is asking for the specific mandate of responsibilities of CBSA, as I indicated, I would be happy to provide them. However, I cannot — and I hope the honourable senator would not expect me to — answer for every question that every senator puts to witnesses in every committee in the Senate of Canada.

• (1420)

Senator Moore: I am not asking the leader to do things she cannot do. This was not a situation where the minister was present and therefore would be answering the questions that were put to an officer of that given agency.

Is it a policy of the leader's government that the minister only sends replies to committees of the Senate when questions are asked of officials within the departments?

Senator LeBreton: It has been a policy of governments going back many, many years, Liberal and Conservative, that ultimately ministers answer for the departments.

Senator Moore: I know, honourable senators, that ultimately they do, but that does not answer my question.

Is it a policy of the leader's government that ministers only vet answers and submit answers to questions put by committees of the Senate?

Senator LeBreton: As far as I know, the policy of this government is the same as the policy of all governments, including Liberal governments, that ministers ultimately answer for their departments.

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Hervieux-Payette on February 7, 2012, concerning support for Canadian companies; the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Lovelace Nicholas on April 26, 2012, concerning the Community Access Program; and the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Cordy on April 26, 2012, concerning the Community Access Program.

INDUSTRY

SUPPORT FOR CANADIAN COMPANIES

(Response to question raised by Hon. Celine Hervieux-Payette on February 7, 2012)

The Government of Canada recognizes that the information and communications technologies (ICT) sector is very important to the Canadian economy, it is the country's largest research and development performing sector. Additionally, we recognize the significant contribution of Research in Motion (RIM) to the ICT industry in Canada.

To sustain a competitive business environment, the government has put a number of measures in place, such as low corporate tax rates, reductions of administrative red tape and unnecessary regulations, and supports the development of a skilled workforce. The Government of Canada also supports an innovative economy and the creation of high quality jobs through investments in research, development and risk capital.

The *Jobs, Growth and Long-term Prosperity Act* announced significant new funding for direct support of research and development in response to the Expert Panel's Report that reviewed federal support of research and development that will directly support Canada's ICT sector. This included: 1) adding \$110 million to double the base funding for the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program; 2) scaling up to \$40 million a year the Public Works and Government Services Canada's Canadian Innovation Commercialization Program; 3) adding \$7 million a year to the Industrial Research & Development Internship Program; and, 4) investing \$400 million to help increase private sector investments in early-stage risk capital, and to support the creation of large-scale venture capital funds led by the private sector.

Together, these measures will attract further foreign investment, strengthen Canada's economy and create more high-paying jobs.

COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM

(Response to question raised by Hon. Sandra Lovelace Nicholas on April 26, 2012)

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) is working with other federal departments, provinces and the private sector to improve broadband access within First Nation communities. The First Nation Infrastructure Fund supports First Nation proposals to enhance communities' access to the Internet. AANDC also supports a number of First Nation Regional Management Organizations which provide comparable activities that enhance the effectiveness of classroom instruction through the development and enhancement of technological knowledge in the school.

For Canadians who have been using a Community Access Program (CAP) site to access federal government services and are seeking alternatives to these sites, Service Canada offers single window access to a wide range of federal programs and services for citizens through more than 600 points of service located across the country.

Schools, libraries and not-for-profit learning organizations will continue to benefit from other federal initiatives such as the Computers for Schools (CFS) Program. Free computers will still be available through the federal government's CFS program which collects, repairs and refurbishes donated surplus computers from government and private sector sources, and distributes them to schools, public libraries and not-for-profit learning organizations throughout Canada.

Most CAP sites are not dependent exclusively on federal funding, so it is likely that a certain proportion of former CAP sites will continue to stay open. Furthermore, equipment which was obtained by a site or CAP recipient through CAP funding, such as computers, will remain the property of each CAP site.

Most public libraries across the country now provide Internet access, and often some related services, as part of their regular business. Certain colleges, schools, and community centres also provide public Internet access.

The Government of Canada will also continue to support the funding of youth internships at community Internet sites. This will provide young Canadians with vital skills and work experience needed to make a successful transition to the workplace and provide assistance and coaching to community organizations and individuals to improve their ICT-related skills. Former CAP-supported sites will continue to be eligible for this funding.

(Response to question raised by Hon. Jane Cordy on April 26, 2012)

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[English]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, just before calling for Orders of the Day, might I draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of a distinguished delegation from the United Republic of Tanzania. The delegation is led by the Honourable Christopher Ole Sendeka, Vice Chair of the Tanzanian Parliamentary Committee on Privileges, Ethics and Powers. He is accompanied by His Excellency Alex Crescent Massinda, High Commissioner for the United Republic of Tanzania to Canada; the Honourable Riziki Omar Juma; the Honourable Said Amour Arfi; the Honourable Dr. Christine Ishengoma; the Honourable Captain John Chiligati; the Honourable Augustino M. Masele; and the Honourable Augustino Lyatonga Mrema.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 27(1), I would like to inform the Senate that as we proceed with government business, the Senate will address the items in the following order: one, motion No. 38; two, the other items of government business as they appear on the Order Paper.

CONGRATULATORY ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II ON ANNIVERSARY OF SIXTY YEARS OF REIGN

MESSAGE FROM COMMONS CONCURRED IN

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the Message from the House of Commons in the following words:

Monday, June 4, 2012

RESOLVED,—That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty the Queen in the following words:

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY:
MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN:

We, Your Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the House of Commons of Canada in Parliament assembled, beg to offer our sincere congratulations on the happy completion of the sixtieth year of Your reign.

The People of Canada have often been honoured to welcome Your Majesty and other members of the Royal Family to our land during Your reign, and have witnessed directly Your inspiring example of devotion to duty and unselfish labour on behalf of the welfare of Your People in this country and in the other nations of the Commonwealth.

In this, the Diamond Jubilee year of your reign as Queen of Canada, we trust that Your gracious and peaceful reign may continue for many years and that Divine Providence will preserve Your Majesty in health, in happiness and in the affectionate loyalty of Your people.

ORDERED,—That the said Address be engrossed; and

That a Message be sent to the Senate informing their Honours that this House has adopted the said Address and requesting their Honours to unite in the said Address by filling up the blanks with the words "the Senate and".

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I move:

That the Senate do agree with the House of Commons in the said Address by filling up the blank spaces left therein with the words "the Senate and"; and

That a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that House accordingly.

Honourable senators, it is a special honour for me to rise today to pay tribute to Her Majesty the Queen of Canada on the sixtieth anniversary of her accession to the throne and reign as head of the Commonwealth.

Over 60 years ago, in February 1952, a few months before her twenty-sixth birthday, while travelling in Kenya, Princess Elizabeth learned of the death of her beloved father, King George VI, which caused her accession to the throne. Her official coronation took place over a year later, on June 2, 1953.

On a personal note, I have two vivid and distinct memories of these two occasions. I remember the day King George VI died; my mother was rolling crusts for pies she was making, with tears streaming down her face, as somber music and hymns played on CBC Radio.

In June of 1953, I gathered at a local school and watched the coronation, and of course it was the first time in my life that I had ever watched television, the result of which is that my sisters, brother and I bugged our father until he bought us a TV and then we sat and watched one channel, English and French on both channels, but mostly the test pattern. It was quite fascinating.

It is important to remember, honourable senators, when we look at the Queen and her long reign and the fact that she is 86 years old, that her father, King George VI, passed away when he was only 56 years old. It is really very sad when you realize that was the reality.

Honourable senators, the monarchy is an integral part of our Canadian culture, past, present and future, and is an important anchor to a tradition that has helped to shape us and lead us to our present-day successes. In fact, the monarchy is a critical part of our country's *raison d'être*. The monarchy is an enduring institution that is woven intricately into the very fabric of our national identity. It upholds our traditions and our heritage. It safeguards our rights and freedoms. It provides the necessary continuity during ever-evolving times.

Indeed, during one of her tours of Canada, Her Majesty reflected that "the Crown represents everything that is best and most admired in the Canadian ideal," and early on she committed herself to continue upholding these ideals throughout her reign.

Honourable senators, we can all agree: She has most certainly delivered on that commitment.

Over the course of Canada's history, we have sometimes taken for granted the stable symbol of our constitutional monarchy and our sovereign. The monarchy has always emphasized the primary importance of people in the community, providing the balance needed in a parliamentary democracy where individual rights and collective responsibilities have fostered a society that is tolerant and flexible.

In more recent times, over the course of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, there have been significant changes to our modern history.

The Queen of Canada, as our head of state, with her deep sense of civic duty, has overseen the final stages of the maturing of our nation, providing guidance and stability in our growth and development as a significant player on the world stage, which culminated with the proclamation of Canada's repatriated Constitution.

Canada's connection to the British monarchy is clearly evident in many facets of Canadian society, in fact in our everyday lives. From coins, to postage stamps, to Her Majesty's coat of arms, and symbols here in this august Senate Chamber, the presence of the sovereign in Canada is everywhere and is a cause for celebration.

The most common, of course, is on our currency. Whether it is a \$20 bill or a nickel, the Queen's portrait is prominent, reminding us of our country's link to the Crown, a symbol of national sovereignty belonging to everyone.

The Canadian Forces represents another important element of Canada's link to the monarchy, along with its three branches.

In August 2011, my colleague Defence Minister Peter MacKay announced the restoration of the "Royal" designation for Canada's Air Force and Navy, and the renaming of the Canadian Army, which was previously Land Forces Command.

The restoring of these valuable historical distinctions reversed a move in 1968 that resulted in our navy, air force and army being consolidated under a single command called the Canadian Forces.

I vividly recall those days when I was working here on Parliament Hill when this very controversial move was met with much criticism. There were severe morale problems, which resulted in resignations in many ranks. The move was never fully accepted.

• (1430)

Honourable senators, our history is our history. It is part of our future, as well as our past. Our history is something we can all be proud of and something we must ensure is passed along to the generations that follow. Embracing and celebrating Canada's national identity means embracing our status as a constitutional monarchy, honouring the time-tested traditions so many Canadians hold dear to their hearts.

As the second-longest-serving monarch in history, Her Majesty has endeared herself to Canadians from coast to coast through her many visits to our home and native land over the last 60 years. From Halifax to Iqaluit to Vancouver, she has met Canadians young and old, English and French, new Canadians who moved here from every corner of the world — indeed, Canadians from all walks of life. Prime Ministers St. Laurent, Diefenbaker, Pearson, Trudeau, Clark, Turner, Mulroney, Campbell, Chrétien, Martin and Stephen Harper span her 60-year reign and each has undoubtedly benefited greatly from their personal audiences with her.

The Queen Mother once stated that Canada was like a home away from home for her, and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II recently echoed the same sentiments as her late mother about Canada's hospitality and warmth.

From Her Majesty's first trip as Princess Elizabeth in 1951 when she toured Canada on behalf of her father King George VI, to her most recent tour in the summer of 2010, the Queen has visited nearly every corner of our country, met thousands of Canadians and experienced firsthand our characteristic hospitality and warmth that so impressed her mother many years ago.

It is interesting to note that during a refuelling stop in Gander, Newfoundland, in 1953, while en route to her first tour of the Commonwealth, Her Majesty delivered an impromptu address to a crowd that gathered there in Gander at 3:30 in the morning.

In 1957, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth became the first monarch to open a session of the Canadian Parliament, sitting right in this chamber. The Right Honourable John George Diefenbaker was the prime minister, and a large photo of this historic occasion adorned the walls of his office here in the Centre Block until his death in 1979.

Her Majesty has attended hockey games, barbeques and garden parties. She has dined with prime ministers, popes and presidents. She has greeted and shaken hands with thousands and thousands of people in over 100 countries around the world.

Queen Elizabeth II served as Colonel-in-Chief, Captain-General and doyenne of the captains of various regiments, including the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Royal 22nd Regiment — the famous "Van Doos," which was one of my iconic hero groups when I was growing up — and, of course, the Governor General's Foot Guards, to name a few.

Her Majesty is also patron of over 33 Canadian charities, including the Canadian Red Cross, the Canadian Cancer Society and Save the Children, to name but a few.

In 1959, the Queen toured Canada while, unbeknownst to everyone else, she was pregnant with her third child, Prince Andrew the Duke of York, who was born in February 1960. Prince Edward, her fourth and last child, followed four years later in March 1964.

In 1973, Her Majesty toured Alberta and Saskatchewan to celebrate the centennial of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. She celebrated the bicentennial of New Brunswick in 1984, visiting places like Shediac and Riverview. The people who were there still talk about what a wonderful occasion it was for New Brunswick and its bicentennial.

In celebration of the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002, she once again toured Canada, this time touching down in Canada's newest territory, Nunavut, where she opened its new Legislative Assembly. In 2005, she became the first reigning monarch to address the Alberta Legislative Assembly, marking the province's 100th anniversary of its entry into Confederation.

Finally, in 2010, Her Majesty's visit included events in Halifax, here in the nation's capital, Winnipeg, Toronto and Kitchener-Waterloo. On Canada Day, she was on Parliament Hill with her husband Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh, Prime Minister Harper, Laureen Harper, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, many honourable senators and members of the House of Commons, and thousands and thousands of Canadians — uniting the Sovereign, Parliament and the people.

There are few places the Queen has not seen in her 22 trips to Canada. Her tours have always successfully showcased Canada's diverse and distinctly unique culture, while respecting the traditions we, as Canadians, revere. This is testament to the fact that, while Canada is a constitutional monarchy with allegiance to the Queen, we balance this in modern times by retaining our uniqueness, our individuality and our sovereignty.

The monarchy is an enduring symbol in Canada — one that has seen us through good times and bad. During her reign, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has demonstrated her pride in being part of the Canadian family. She holds a place dear in her heart for Canada, which is, in her words, a “vast, rich and varied country that has inspired its own and attracted many others by its adherence to certain values.”

On this, her Diamond Jubilee, marking 60 years of her reign, I wish to pay tribute to Her Majesty and sincerely thank her, not only for her faithful loyalty to our country, but for her unmatched commitment to public service. Indeed, the Queen embodies the spirit in which the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medals are awarded to 60,000 deserving Canadians to recognize their excellence and achievement, and to celebrate their admirable contributions to their communities.

Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise to join Senator LeBreton in paying tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the very special occasion of her Diamond Jubilee.

All of us here in this Chamber know what it is to be a political figure, to commit ourselves to public service. Some of us have spent our lives in politics; others of us have pursued very different professions and activities before coming here. However, all of us, without exception, were asked and we agreed to serve. We are here by choice.

How very different is the position of Her Majesty.

Unlike every one of us, her life has been dictated by her birth. She was born to a role lived under the close scrutiny of the public eye throughout her entire life, to a degree that I suspect none of us here could ever fully comprehend. It is a role that reflects the traditions, as well as the hopes and aspirations, of millions of people around the world.

Her choice was never what she would do with the gift of life, but rather how she would fulfill the role to which she was born and how she would meet those expectations. Honourable senators, from a very young age, Queen Elizabeth made the choice to serve the people of Britain and the Commonwealth, first, foremost and always.

On her twenty-first birthday, on April 21, 1947, five years before she would ascend to the throne, then-Princess Elizabeth delivered an extraordinary radio broadcast to the Commonwealth. She spoke of the experiences of her generation, which had grown up, in her words, “in the days of danger and glory” of the Second World War.

[Senator LeBreton]

She spoke of her hope for the Commonwealth: to move forward together, to become even “more free, more prosperous, more happy and a more powerful influence for good in the world, than it has been in the greatest days of our forefathers.” She said that this could be accomplished only by dedicating the whole of ourselves, following the example of many of her ancestors who lived their lives by what she aptly described as the noble motto: “I serve.”

She continued in that speech to make her own solemn act of dedication, promising to devote her whole life, whether long or short, to the service of the people of Britain and, as she put it, the Empire.

• (1440)

A few short years later, Princess Elizabeth became Queen Elizabeth II. Today, 60 years later, the world has been celebrating this exceptional woman who held true to her commitment. With grace, intelligence, wit and wisdom, through times of great joy and also deep grief, she has remained dedicated first and foremost to the service of the British people, the peoples of the Commonwealth and, indeed, the world as a whole.

The role of the British monarch has been transformed, of course, over the decades and indeed centuries. The power that once resided in the monarch's hands now rests in Parliament and in a democratically elected government. The idea of the divine right of kings has long since fallen away; and the British Empire itself is no more, replaced by a Commonwealth of sovereign nations bound together by a common inheritance of democratic values and democratic institutions.

One can legitimately ask whether Canada should continue to have a head of state who is a monarch born and living in another, distant country. That is a debate for another day. Whatever one's views on that controversial topic, I think everyone would agree that Queen Elizabeth has demonstrated great wisdom as a monarch reigning in a time of great change for the monarchy and for the world. Throughout the 60 years of her reign, as the world has changed and evolved, she has quietly, and always with extraordinary grace, maintained a role as monarch without ever impeding states or peoples from developing their own, sometimes different institutions of state — indeed, in some cases abandoning the monarchy altogether.

What is that role? Why do so many millions across Canada and the globe look to Queen Elizabeth with so much respect and admiration? A large part has to do with her person — that grace, wisdom, strength and determination that have allowed her to face difficulties, personal and of her nation, without ever being defeated by them. It has to do with her deep love and absolute devotion to her people of all religions and all ethnic backgrounds. However, I think there is also something else: She is a living connection to our history as a nation and a reminder that a nation is greater than the leaders or the issues of the day. Through her, through the monarch, we trace our political evolution through the centuries.

Finally, she represents the nation as a whole — strong and enduring, beyond partisan politics or ideology.

Since Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, there have been no fewer than 12 British prime ministers and nearly as many, 11, Canadian prime ministers. Both Prime Minister David Cameron

and Prime Minister Stephen Harper were born after the Queen ascended to the throne. Sixty years ago, Winston Churchill was Prime Minister of Great Britain and Louis St. Laurent was Prime Minister of Canada.

Liberal, Conservative, or Labour in Britain, the political swings of a nation at a particular time in history have had no impact on the role and position of the Queen. That is how it should be.

Many federal public servants will tell you they work for the Queen. This is not just a technical fact, honourable senators. It reflects the critically important fact that our public servants are non-partisan and professional, characteristics upon which all Canadians rely. I have sensed a deep pride in the public servants who have noted this relationship. It means, of course, that they work for Canada, for the Canadian people — and not for the political party that happens to be in power at any particular time.

Queen Elizabeth is a shining example of how a person — for she is human, after all — can stand firmly rooted and yet bend and adapt to a rapidly changing world and situation.

In a speech she delivered last March, the Queen reminded us that our nation possesses the virtues of resilience, ingenuity and tolerance. Honourable senators, that may indeed be true of her subjects, but they are unquestionably defining marks of Queen Elizabeth herself.

She is that rarity in the world these days — of politics but above politics — a gentle path to the future and an anchor to the past — a human symbol of the best we can be, joined together in quiet, firm dedication to building a “more free, more prosperous, more happy and a more powerful influence for good in the world.”

Of course, we should at this time recognize the contribution of her consort on that long journey, his Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, and wish him a speedy and complete return to good health.

Please join me in recognizing the accomplishments and, above all, the dedication to service of the Queen of Canada, Queen Elizabeth II. *Vive la Reine du Canada!*

Hon. Hugh Segal: Honourable senators, I will contribute briefly in underlining my total support for what the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition have said on this important day.

We all know that symbols are important. Her Majesty's service to us as head of state, and in the other 16 realms where she is head of state, and to the Commonwealth of nations — 54 countries, 2.1 billion people of every race, colour, faith and background, of which she is also the head — is a marvellous example of how a human unelected symbol — above the fray but with the people — can do and mean so much to so many.

Prime ministers advise heads of state or their representatives, such as the Governor General. The separation of the head of state from the duly elected first minister or president, as the case may be, is an important part of our constitutional framework, as our two colleagues have said. It is a framework called “responsible government” because it is about a series of responsibilities that, by their very existence, limit power and restrain its excess.

Members of our Armed Forces, as Senator LeBreton said, maintain their loyalty to the Queen. Oaths of loyalty on the part of new citizens and members of this chamber are not exacted for a Constitution or a flag but to Her Majesty the Queen. Our police officers wear crowns on their cap badges. When a prosecutor lays charges in this country in open court, they are not in the name of the “people,” but in the name of the sovereign, the Crown, who represents everyone, not one group of people against another.

Let me give two examples of Her Majesty's majestic use of symbols to build a bridge of civility and inclusion, both in this country and on behalf of this country.

In the visit of 1959, referenced by the Leader of the Government in the Senate, *Weekend Magazine* — some of us are old enough to remember *Weekend Magazine* — summarized the quantum of her cross-country tour in that year. She also visited Washington as the Queen of Canada, attending with the Prime Minister of Canada — at the time, Mr. Diefenbaker — as her senior adviser on that trip to the United States, flying in an aircraft of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Her Majesty on that trip reviewed 17 military parades, attended 21 formal dinners, reviewed 64 Guards of Honour, received 193 bouquets, made 381 platform appearances and shook hands well over 7,000 times. I want to talk about one event and one handshake.

[*Translation*]

It was in the town of Outremont, one of Montreal's boroughs. It was not Upper Outremont, where the rich lived, but working-class Outremont.

[*English*]

It was working-class Outremont, the northwest part of Montreal, where my family and many other immigrant families lived. Her official tour called for Her Majesty to visit the town hall, make a brief speech, and then move on to the rest of her tour — she was in Canada at that time — with President Eisenhower, to open up the St. Lawrence Seaway.

When she arrived in an open Cadillac, I was on my dad's shoulders. I know honourable senators find that hard to imagine. He was a short man, but I was actually very young in 1959 and did not have, as the economists say, the *avoirdupois* that I am now glad to carry around.

When the Queen left the car and began to move towards the dais, there were a series of the usual suspects on the dais. There were: the Mayor of Outremont; the Member of Parliament of the Liberal Party, but those were difficult days; the head of the local militia regiment; a lot of people who were part of the hard-working volunteer community and being honoured by being on the dais on that day; and many members of the clergy. There were various Christian denominations, a Muslim Imam and a rabbi. The rabbi was the rabbi of my little synagogue on the corner of Durocher and Lavoie in la basse ville, Outremont. He was Rabbi J.J. Zlotnick and he had a Bronx accent in his Saturday sermons, which was the case with many rabbis who served in Canada in those days. He often gave fire and brimstone speeches about how one should not associate with Gentiles, never shake their hands and never break bread with them because it could lead to intermarriage.

• (1450)

At the age of eight, I stuck with that advice very intensely. Here was this young Queen making her way to the dias, and I was on my dad's shoulders. My dad said, "She is not only the Queen of Canada, Australia, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and New Zealand, but she is the head of the Church of England." In those days in the 1950s, in Montreal, we referred to them as the Anglicans, and they mostly lived in Upper Outremont and Upper Westmount at the time. I took that all in, as best I could.

Her Majesty went to the dias and, after the Royal Salute and before she sat down, she walked down the middle of the aisles and extended her hand to every single person on the dias, including the Imam, all the Christian clergy and Rabbi J.J. Zlotnick. He stood, doffed his hat and extended his hand, and they spoke for what appeared, to this young man, to be maybe six hours. It might have been only seven seconds in reality.

I was affected by that and the next Saturday morning in synagogue, where I was part of the junior congregation, I could not wait to ask Rabbi Zlotnick, "What did you and the Queen discuss?" Rabbi Zlotnick looked at me with a little bit of condescension, homburg hat firmly in place, prayer shawl on his shoulders, and said, in a remarkably Bronx accent, "Young man, one does not discuss private conversations with our sovereign."

In the services that day, the traditional prayer for Queen and country, which always occurred at the end of the service, before people ran out to do other things like watch a football game or whatever, was moved to that part of the service when the Ark is open and the five books of Moses are being read as part of the liturgy for that Sabbath, the most important part of the service.

That act of inclusion, that act of Her Majesty's handshake, had a huge impact on an entire generation of people who came from different backgrounds and different religions, minority groups, immigrant groups and the rest. Her gesture meant, "You are all part of this family. I work for all of you. I am in service to all of you."

Let us move almost 60 years from that, to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth, Australia, in October of last year. At that meeting, foreign ministers had worked on something called the Eminent Persons Group Report, which a group of Commonwealth individuals worked on to strengthen the Commonwealth's position on human rights, the rule of law, democracy and the basic freedoms that are the essence of Commonwealth values. Without being unkind to the foreign ministers, after two days of work, they had considered just two of the 106 recommendations that had been worked on for over 18 months.

Her Majesty, of course, was there to open the conference. Her role as the head of the Commonwealth is one of the things she takes very seriously. I will read into the record what Her Majesty said at the opening of that conference:

I should like to thank the Commonwealth Eminent Persons' Group for their work, and I look forward to hearing the outcome of discussion of their recommendations.

[Senator Segal]

That is very neutral, not taking sides. Then, she continued:

And I wish Heads of Government well in agreeing further reforms that respond boldly to the aspirations of today and that keep the Commonwealth fresh and fit for tomorrow. In these deliberations we should not forget that this is an association not only of governments but also of peoples. That is what makes it so relevant in this age of global information and communication.

The theme of that Commonwealth conference was Women as Agents of Change.

If anyone wants to underestimate what a human, dynamic and compassionate symbol can mean, then they do not understand the tremendous contribution, over the last 60 years, that Her Majesty has made.

"Above the fray" is something that Senator Cowan made reference to in his comments. I would add to that, with the greatest of respect, "above the fray, but with the people." That is what her 60 years of service have meant, and that is why we are so delighted to rejoice in the celebration and extend to her our very best wishes.

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, my colleague, Senator Day, prepared some remarks, but he had to go to chair the Finance Committee and has asked me to deliver them to the Senate.

As we sweep through the life and times of Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, we recall 60 years on the throne, 60 years of devoted service to her peoples and her lands, spanning the careers of nine Canadian Prime Ministers. A public figure from the day of her birth, she has been a constant target of universal curiosity throughout her life.

Elizabeth Alexandra Mary of Windsor was born on April 21, 1926, during the political and economic turmoil before World War II. She was crowned Queen at 25 years of age, the same age as her predecessor of the same name, Elizabeth I. She succeeded to the throne on February 6, 1952, during the reconstruction of almost every facet of our society following that war. Her coronation, itself, was on June 2, 1953.

Her Majesty has embraced the new and marvellous invention of television, presided over the reformation of the Commonwealth concept, adjusted, expanded and modified the place of the Crown within its disparate realms, embraced both multiculturalism and technology, and responded stoically to personal family challenges. During the last 60 years, the Crown has evolved with the times, due, in large measure, to her leadership as an exemplary figure of duty, continuity, dignity, goodness and stability in our rapidly changing world.

Elizabeth II is the enduring, living symbol of our unique constitutional evolution and our living link with many centuries of our history. Indeed, on being sworn in as a member of the Senate of Canada, the sole oath that we affirm is allegiance to Her Majesty, so help us God.

One could cite the record of the Queen's service of public duty, but the details would be endless. There are plenty of statistics highlighting the incredible volume of her work, the sheer number of the unveilings, walkabouts, Commonwealth tours, official foreign visits, garden parties, weekly meetings with the British prime minister of the day, attention to endless boxes of cabinet documents, hosting of foreign heads of state, investitures of honours on public officials and military heroes, presentations at ceremonies to recognize exceptional cultural figures, presiding at annual openings of Parliament, attendance at numerous religious anniversaries, listening to expressions of welcome from thousands of mayors and other dignitaries, presiding at the annual Trooping of the Colour, and her solemn presence at cenotaphs honouring the valour of her subjects who gave their lives in war for their Queen and country.

- (1500)

This week, there is a strong sense of nostalgia in Canada. Our newspapers report the reminiscences of many Canadians who recall important moments in our Queen's life of service that relate to our own lives. For so many of us, this week has been an occasion to pause and reflect on our prosperity and good fortune under our Canadian monarchy. I strongly believe we would not be ourselves without the monarchy. The person wearing the crown is at the apex of our society — a pivotal figure above the controversies of our age.

Our laws about the Queen's name: Queen Elizabeth II is the ultimate Commander-in-Chief of our Armed Forces and is, therefore, the focal point of our unity as a people. The Queen embodies the ties that bind us together; she is a living symbol of our nationhood. We congratulate Her Majesty on the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of her reign, and we pray that Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, may continue to reign in peace and prosperity.

Hon. Daniel Lang: Honourable senators, I rise today to congratulate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee. Like other senators who have spoken before me, I recall the visit of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh in 1959. You can imagine what it would be like to be in a Northern community with a very small population, no road access and little airplane traffic into the small airport. One day, the Duke of Edinburgh landed in a community called Mayo. I recall as a young child, along with my twin brother, greeting the airplane as it flew into this little airport in the middle of nowhere and seeing this huge man, dressed to the nines, get off the airplane and walk down the gravel tarmac to greet the people of Mayo.

I remember at the end of the day being very jealous of my brother because the Duke of Edinburgh shook his hand and I did not get the chance. Forever and a day, he still holds that over me when we see the festivities that the Queen and the Duke are involved in.

While I am speaking about the Duke, I want to extend my condolences in view of his health concerns. I am sure the Queen is very sad that she had to participate in the last portion of the festivities without him by her side. Like Senator Cowan, I wish him a speedy recovery.

I look back over the 60 years of her reign and when she first came to Canada; over the last few years and the number of times that she and other members of the Royal Family have visited

Canada and all the changes that have taken place. Canadians should sit back in celebration with the Queen and celebrate our good fortune for the reign she has given us for 60 years. Certainly, we live in one of the greatest countries in the world, and we are very fortunate to have someone in the personage of our Queen, who has done such a fabulous job on behalf of all of us.

I cannot think of a better way to mark the occasion of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee than by recognizing and taking this opportunity to mention the wonderful day-to-day contributions that Canadians make to their communities. I know I share with all honourable senators that it is a true honour to be able to present the Diamond Jubilee medals to deserving citizens in the regions that we represent.

We have come a long way in 60 years. I have no doubt looking forward that we have probably one of the brightest futures of any country on the planet. Over the course of this week, we as Canadians should be very proud to be members of the Commonwealth, cherish the Diamond Jubilee and truly appreciate the good fortune we have to share with Queen Elizabeth and her family.

God bless Canada, and God save the Queen.

Hon. David P. Smith: Honourable senators, I rise to pay tribute to Her Majesty and the 60 wonderful years over which she has reigned this country.

My first personal contact with her was in 1951 when I was 10 years old and she was Princess Elizabeth. My family had a country place in Cobourg. Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip were driving by where we were and near the intersection of Highway 2, traffic had slowed down. There were about 50 people. The Royal car went by slowly, and I looked right at her and waved. There were other people, but I knew that she was looking at me and waving back. I have never forgotten that.

On another occasion, my uncle took me to a Leafs exhibition hockey game against the Blackhawks that she attended with Prince Philip. It was a one-period game at Maple Leaf Gardens. The place was packed and I will never forget that either.

I guess it is sort of in the genes because my mother was a great supporter of the monarchy. They lived in Ottawa in 1939 on the occasion of the first Royal tour in Canada. I think my mother was at six different events, and I heard about them all my life. I have been very fortunate through fluky circumstances to sit at the same table with her at lunches or dinners on about six occasions, when we had quite a few chats. I will mention one chat in particular.

There were about 20 people at a lunch in London. It was the first time that the Queen had come to the residence of the Canadian High Commissioner, Roy MacLaren, who was very anxious for my wife and me to attend. I was doing things at Cambridge University so it was quite easy.

It was at about the same time that the two princes were on a boat with their mother near Cannes, France. The High Commissioner talked about how I would take my children on overseas trips but only if they agreed to the historical and cultural components of the trip. The Queen said that was very interesting

and asked where I would take them when in France. I said that in Paris, I would take them to the usual places like the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, Versailles, and the Bastille. She asked where we went when we left Paris. I said that it was Vimy to show them where Canadians fought in the Battle of Vimy Ridge. We were down in the tunnels and saw the graves. We spent the whole day lined up by special guides. She said that it was very important for children to see that and asked what we did the next day.

I said that I took them to Dunkirk, where the British Army fought in 1940, and told them the story of what happened there. She was very pleased with that. She asked what we did the next day. I said that for the next two days, we went to a place in Belgium where they have the best mussels in the world. Then, we went to the Groesbeek Memorial in the Netherlands, where there is a large cemetery of Canadian soldiers who fought in the liberation of Holland. About 2,600 are buried there. She said that she knew that cemetery very well. She had been there and had walked and looked at the graves. I was very moved by her knowledge of what had happened there and the Canadians who had died. This made her curious.

She asked where I took them when in London. I said that it would be the usual things like Buckingham Palace, the changing of the guard, St. Paul's Cathedral, et cetera. However, because there are three children, sometimes I would let them vote on where to go. I would say Oxford or Cambridge and they could vote on which one. We would take the train, tour the colleges and come back in the evening. She asked which they voted for. I said that it was Cambridge. She smiled because the Royal family has quite a close association with Cambridge. One day I told them it was out-of-town-cathedral day, Canterbury or Winchester. She asked which they voted for, and I said Canterbury. She said that was natural because it is the premier cathedral of England. I told her, with great respect, that it had nothing to do with that, that it had to do with the *Canterbury Tales*.

• (1510)

They got to go to the Canterbury Tales Museum, plus the cathedral to see all the things related to Thomas Becket. I was touched by her response. She said, "I have learned something today that is very, very interesting."

Roy McLaren, who was then the High Commissioner, pointed out that my great-great-uncle had been prime minister of Britain a little over 100 years ago. My father, who was born before he was prime minister, was named after him; Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. I casually mentioned that he was the only prime minister to die right in 10 Downing Street and the Queen said that she did not know that. She said that he had a house right behind 10 Downing. I said that I knew the house, but he was too ill and could not leave. She said, "I have learned something else today."

It was very touching of her to say that she was learning things and was very interested.

Any time I was able to talk to the Queen directly, she was elegant, gracious, genuinely warm and very interested in anything to do with our country. I am a supporter of the relationship between Canada and the monarchy. I know it will exist for the rest of my lifetime. I hope that she will have many more years on

the throne. We have been very well served by this lady, an elegant Queen.

Hon. Asha Seth: Honourable senators, I have the immense pleasure of extending my most sincere congratulations and affection to Her Majesty, my Queen, Queen Elizabeth II, on the glorious occasion celebrated only once before in the history of our nation 115 years ago, her Diamond Jubilee.

For me, Queen Elizabeth has been a link across the globe, a comforting presence by my side since childhood. Born in India, educated in England, and now having the pleasure and honour to live and serve in Canada, I can proudly say that I have been Her Majesty's subject across three Commonwealth nations.

From the far reaches of Asia to the green fields of Scotland and to our vast golden land, Her Majesty is the head and constant moral leader of the world's most developed and innovative countries. She has inspired generations of young and old Canadians to live lives of quiet, unwavering duty and honour.

As the Queen of Canada, she cannot lead us into battle; she cannot give us laws or administer justice, but she has done something else; she has given her heart and her devotion to all the peoples of our brotherhood of nations.

This government has recognized the uniqueness of this moment. Like the passing of a comet, this occasion deserves a pause to recognize not only the remarkable accomplishment of our Queen, but also the incredible institution that is the Crown and how, unlike any other organization in the world, it connects us historically, geographically and culturally.

As a Conservative, I also recognize how our Commonwealth has the potential to be harnessed as an economic partnership. For parliamentarians, these Jubilee celebrations give us the incredible honour of acting on Her Majesty's behalf as we award Jubilee Medals to some of Canada's most remarkable individuals. Choose well, for it is her most divine blessing and gratitude that you bestow upon the recipient.

She has been aware at all times that her peoples, spread far and wide throughout every continent and ocean in the world, were united to support her in the task to which she has now been dedicated with such solemnity.

The lessons from her life are clear. Whatever life throws at us, our individual responses will be all the stronger for working together and sharing the load. Therefore, I am sure that her Diamond Jubilee is not a symbol of power and splendour but a declaration of our hopes for our future and for the years she may, by God's grace and mercy, be given to reign and serve us as our Queen.

Dei Gracia Regina. God bless the Queen.

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Honourable senators, I rise to speak today to this address to our most gracious sovereign Queen, Elizabeth II. Today we celebrate the sixtieth year of the reign of our sovereign and Queen, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen of Canada. I offer my sincere congratulations on the happy completion of the sixtieth year of her reign, commonly called the Diamond Jubilee.

Honourable senators, this is a most stupendous achievement. This is the most extraordinary and exceptional human and queenly triumph, a 60-year reign over all her subjects, of every colour, every race, religion and nationality in many countries all over the world.

Today I congratulate her. Today I praise her and I thank her. Today I send my deepest esteem and affection to her and her family. I thank her and them for their lives of service in peace and in war.

I note that during the Second World War this family stood as the honourable, fixed and visible symbol of strength, endurance and resistance. This family stood as that symbol in the face of the most terrible, menacing and formidable threat to our humanity, to our individual and collective lives, and to our very existence as free peoples connected and joined by our communion with this Royal Family, then headed by her father, King George VI, whom I remember very well.

I shall read from the Proclamation as printed in the *Canada Gazette* on February 9, 1952, announcing the February 6 demise of His Majesty King George VI and proclaiming the accession of the then Royal Princess Elizabeth. We should note its assertion of unanimity in cabinet and Privy Council in their allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, remembering, honourable senators, that the word “allegiance” is derived from the old French word “liege” and describes the relationship between king and subject being fealty and allegiance owed to the king and protection and security owed to the subject.

All senators here have taken the oath of allegiance, but we do not swear to the heirs and successors like most people.

Honourable senators, interestingly, this proclamation was not given under the hand of the Governor General of Canada. It was given under the hand of the administrator of Canada, whom, as we know, is a replacement or substitute for the Governor General when the Governor General is ill or absent.

The administrator is always the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. The beautiful, poetic, and solemn proclamation reads in part:

Now Know Ye that I, the said Right Honourable Thibaudeau Rinfret, Administrator of Canada as aforesaid, assisted by Her Majesty’s Privy Council for Canada do now hereby with one voice and consent of tongue and heart publish and proclaim that the High and Mighty Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary is now by the death of Our late Sovereign of happy and glorious memory become our only lawful and rightful Liege Lady Elizabeth the Second by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas QUEEN, Defender of the Faith, Supreme Liege Lady in and over Canada, to whom we acknowledge all faith and constant obedience with all hearty and humble affection, beseeching God by whom all Kings and Queens do reign to bless the Royal Princess Elizabeth the Second with long and happy years to reign over us.

That is now 60 years ago. She has reigned for long and happy years, and is celebrating the sixtieth year of her reign. I would like to say to honourable senators that I find it a very touching

moment. I recall these events very clearly as a child in Barbados. I was about nine years old at the time. My school, Queen’s College, named after Queen Victoria, was a large school set on about 10 acres of land — three tennis courts — full of school mistresses and form captains.

• (1520)

My school staged a pageant. I was a little girl at the time. Those schools have prefects and big girls. I vividly remember a big girl portraying Queen Elizabeth I as she addressed her troops at Tilbury while awaiting the Spanish Armada. Whoever organized the pageant brought a live horse and one of the big girls rode sidesaddle and made those famous statements:

I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman,
but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of
a king of England too;
and think foul scorn that Parma and Spain,
or any prince of Europe,
should dare to invade the borders of my realm.

That is what she said and her men cheered her on.

That touched me very deeply. I went to school and I heard daily about the great principles of British liberalism, enlarging the franchise, abolishing slavery and all those fine accomplishments. That was my childhood. It is very attached to my childhood.

Honourable senators, I will say something that some people may know, but some may not. Canada has had a long and abiding relationship with Kings and Queens of the United Kingdom. Many of the Fathers of Confederation had wanted Canada to be a kingdom. In fact, the term “dominion” displaced the word “kingdom” during the drafting of the British North America Act, 1867. The fourth draft of the act published in Sir Joseph Pope’s book *Confederation* informs us:

The word ‘Parliament’ shall mean the Legislature or Parliament of the Kingdom of Canada. . . . The word ‘Kingdom’ shall mean and comprehend the United Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The words ‘Privy Council’ shall mean such persons as may from time to time be appointed, by the Governor General, and sworn to aid and advise in the Government of the Kingdom.

Sir John A. Macdonald writes about this in an exchange of letters between himself and Lord Knutsford about the word change from “kingdom” to “dominion.” Sir John A. Macdonald wrote, published in Sir Joseph Pope’s work *Correspondence of Sir John Macdonald*:

A great opportunity was lost in 1867 when the Dominion was formed out of the several provinces. . . . The declaration of all of the B.N.A. provinces that they desired as one dominion to remain a portion of the Empire, showed what wise government and generous treatment would do, and should have been marked as an epoch in the history of England. This would probably have been the case, had Lord Carnarvon, who, as colonial minister, had sat at the cradle of the new Dominion, remained in office. His ill-omened resignation was followed by the appointment of the late Duke of Buckingham, who had as his adviser the then

Governor General, Lord Monck - both good men certainly, but quite unable, from the constitution of their minds, to rise to the occasion. . . . Had a different course been pursued — for instance had united Canada been declared to be an auxiliary kingdom, as it was in the Canadian draft of the bill, I feel sure (almost) that the Australian colonies would, ere this, have been applying to be placed in the same rank as *The Kingdom of Canada*.

Sir John A. Macdonald in his postscript to this letter added:

P.S. On reading the above over I see that it will convey the impression that the change of title from *Kingdom* to *Dominion* was caused by the Duke of Buckingham. This is not so. It was made at the instance of Lord Derby, then foreign minister, who feared the first name would wound the sensibilities of the Yankees. I mentioned this incident in our history to Lord Beaconsfield at Hughenden in 1879, who said, 'I was not aware of the circumstance, but it is so like Derby — a very good fellow, but who lives in a region of perpetual funk.'

Honourable senators, the term “dominion” itself was borrowed from the Bible; it was a biblical reference. In particular, Psalm 72, verse 8:

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

Honourable senators, I thank the Queen for her outstanding efforts as Queen and for being a beacon of light to so many. I thank her for upholding and living the great principles that are articulated as a concept of the leader as a servant. The leader, the Queen, is a servant of all whom she serves.

Honourable senators, our concept of public service as we know it in Canada was developed in the ideals of Christian service, civic responsibility, all couched in British and Canadian constitutionalism. Today I uphold those principles and concepts which have created us and sustained us as a country under our sovereign, and in particular under this sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II, whose service of Canada spans for a period of time that can be measured as over half of the total life of Canada as a country.

Canada has been a part of her life, and she has known many Canadian prime ministers. As a matter of fact, I remember reading of private dinners with the King, Queen Elizabeth and the girls in the writings of Mackenzie King.

Honourable senators, she is a unifying symbol; an eternal, stable and perpetual symbol. We must press for the renewal and the affirmation of these concepts to the public service of Canada in God and Queen, particularly in a time when there is so much instability economically and politically.

Being a sovereign, honourable senators, is about heart and stomach, lion heartedness in duty and service to God. It is about force and moral character. It is about the force of conviction. It is also about the force of intellect.

Remember, Her Majesty is the actuating power in the entire BNA Act, our entire Constitution. She is the fountain of honour, justice and mercy. It is for those reasons that I say these

individuals are trained all of their lives to do these tasks. The only words I can think of to describe them are “lion heartedness.”

I would like to close with a prayer from the Book of Sirach, also called Ecclesiasticus, Chapter 2, verses 1 to 5. I took it from the *Saint Joseph Edition of the New American Bible*:

My son, when you come to serve the Lord,
prepare yourself for trials.
Be sincere of heart and steadfast, undisturbed
in time of adversity.
Cling to him, forsake him not; thus will your future be great.
Accept whatever befalls you, in crushing
misfortune be patient;
For in fire gold is tested, and worthy men in the
crucible of humiliation.

• (1530)

I thank Her Majesty again. One can certainly say she has been tested as gold in fire. I would like to say that this woman was formed and forged in world events and has served throughout, unflinchingly. I shall end by saying: Long may she reign over us. God save the Queen.

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

Hon. Senators: Question.

The Hon. the Speaker: It was moved by the Honourable Senator LeBreton, seconded by the Honourable Senator Cowan, that the Senate do agree with the House of Commons and the said address by filling up the blank spaces left therein with the words “the Senate and,” and that a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that House accordingly.

Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to.)

STUDY ON EMERGING ISSUES RELATED TO CANADIAN AIRLINE INDUSTRY

FIFTH REPORT OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE AND REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the fifth report (interim) of the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications, entitled: *The Future of Canadian Air Travel: Toll Booth or Spark Plug*, tabled in the Senate on June 5, 2012.

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I move:

That the fifth report (interim) of the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications, entitled *The Future of Canadian Air Travel: Toll Booth or Spark Plug*, tabled in the Senate on Tuesday, June 5, 2012, be adopted and that, pursuant to rule 131(2), the Senate request a complete and detailed response from the government, with the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities being identified as the minister responsible for responding to the report in consultation with the Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism).

He said: Honourable senators, I will make a short statement today that we are hoping that the government will respond, and I will get back with a more formal speech later on.

The Hon. the Speaker: Am I to understand that the honourable senator wishes to take the adjournment of the debate?

Senator Dawson: Yes, I move the adjournment of the debate.

(On motion of Senator Dawson, debate adjourned.)

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE SPORTING FACILITIES AVAILABLE ONE DAY ANNUALLY AT A REDUCED OR COMPLIMENTARY RATE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Raine, seconded by the Honourable Senator Wallin:

That the Senate of Canada urge the Government of Canada to encourage local governments from coast to coast to collaborate in choosing one day annually to make their health, recreational sports, and fitness facilities available to citizens at a reduced or complimentary rate, with the goals of promoting the use of those facilities and improving the overall health and well-being of Canadians for the reasons that:

- (a) although Canada's mountains, oceans, lakes, forests, and parks offer abundant opportunities for physical activities outdoors, an equally effective alternative opportunity to take part in physical activities is offered by indoor health, recreational sports, and fitness facilities;
- (b) despite its capacity to be a healthy and fit nation, Canada is experiencing a decline in participation rates in physical activities, with this decline having a direct consequence to health and fitness;
- (c) local governments operate many public facilities that promote health and fitness, and those facilities could be better utilized by their citizenry;
- (d) there is a growing concern in Canada over the rise in chronic diseases, which are attributable, in part, to inactivity and in turn can cause other impediments to achieving and maintaining a healthy lifestyle;
- (e) health and fitness should be promoted and encouraged by all levels of government, to Canadians of all ages and abilities; and
- (f) we aspire to increase participation by Canadians in activities that promote health, recreational sports, and fitness.

Hon. Judith Seidman: Honourable senators, I am pleased to speak on the motion to establish a national health and fitness day. This motion was introduced in this place by the Honourable Senator Raine. She has shown exceptional leadership in moving it forward. Working in collaboration with Mr. John Weston, Member of Parliament for West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country, Senator Raine has brought an issue to our attention that is both prevalent and pressing. It is no wonder that this motion has strong support from all sides.

The motion proposes that the federal government call upon local governments to collaborate on choosing one day annually on which sports facilities across Canada offer a reduced or complimentary rate. This initiative will encourage newcomers, including families in a lower income bracket, to explore recreational facilities in their communities. It will also initiate a recurring national conversation about the benefits of an active lifestyle. In this way, this motion has the potential to evolve into something much greater than itself.

Honourable senators, obesity rates in Canada continue to rise. One in four adults is now obese and more than half of our population is overweight. Obesity is expected to surpass smoking as the leading cause of preventable morbidity and mortality. Experts have estimated the resulting disease burden in Canada is close to \$4 billion a year.

The solution is not an easy one. A myriad of genetic, social, cultural and economic factors influence individual health. In fact, recent research suggests that understanding unhealthy behaviours, such as smoking or overeating, requires an investigation of both genetic and environmental factors. Senator Raine has recognized the complexity of this problem and has advocated for a multi-faceted solution.

We know the benefits of exercise are significant. Regular physical activity is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, some types of cancers, osteoporosis, diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, depression, stress and anxiety.

However, we also know that a proper diet is essential to a healthy lifestyle and can help prevent chronic disease. For example, lowering consumption of refined sugars and grains can help maintain a healthy weight and reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. We also know that for some, decreasing sodium can help control hypertension and lower the risk of heart disease.

In short, proper nutrition is fundamental to good health. Therefore, it is crucial that fitness initiatives such as this one be accompanied by an emphasis on diet and nutrition.

Diet may be one of the simplest and most effective tools to improve overall health. Yet, as we know, trying to break unhealthy eating habits can be very challenging. Therefore, it is important to encourage healthy behaviours at a young age. Honourable senators, childhood obesity has been rising sharply. In the 2007 to 2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey, more than 25 per cent of teenagers and children were overweight or obese. The repercussions of this trend are disturbing, both for the lives of Canadian children and for the future of an already burdened health care system.

How can we teach Canadian children about nutrition and diet and encourage them to make healthy choices? School-based nutritional programs are undoubtedly one of the most effectively tools we have to combat childhood obesity. Healthy breakfast programs have been linked to improvements in attendance and punctuality, better behaviour, increased concentration, and an understanding of how healthy eating habits contribute to energy levels and overall well-being.

There are many excellent examples of school-based nutrition programs in Canada. Club des petits déjeuners du Québec was launched in 1994 in Lionel-Groulx Primary School in Longueuil by founder Daniel Germain. Since then, this initiative has been recognized by the United Nations World Food Programme, and is the model used by Breakfast Clubs of Canada to develop school food programs in the rest of the country. Last year, Breakfast Clubs of Canada served over 16 million breakfasts and over 106,000 children in school breakfast programs across the country.

• (1540)

In 1980, Quebec took a legislative step towards reducing childhood obesity when it passed the Quebec Consumer Protection Act. The act banned print and electronic advertisements for toys and fast food aimed at children under age 13. The legislation was the first of its kind, and other countries, including Norway, Greece, Sweden and the United Kingdom, followed.

A very recent study out of the University of British Columbia found that, between 1984 and 1992, the ban reduced fast-food consumption by US\$88 million per year in Quebec and resulted in 2 billion to 4 billion fewer calories consumed by children. These results suggest that other initiatives, such as regulation of sodium and sugar levels or taxes on soft drinks, could have a significant impact.

While Quebec has been a pioneer in terms of provincial legislation, there is also progress at the local level. School boards in various jurisdictions have taken it upon themselves to establish official nutritional policies that benefit both students and communities.

The Eastern Townships School Board has the “Policy on Good Health for our Students,” which states that healthy nutrition supports learning and enhances physical, emotional, social and intellectual development. The policy also establishes specific objectives, such as the elimination of junk or empty-calorie foods in schools, the availability of a variety of wholesome foods at the lowest possible price and the increase in nutritional knowledge of students through education programs and projects.

The English Montreal School Board is another impressive example. It has a detailed nutrition policy that regulates all food distribution, paid or free, on school grounds. The policy includes a table of qualitative and quantitative food requirements, as well as a list of foods that may not be offered or sold to youth, such as doughnuts, deep fried potatoes and carbonated beverages. In fact,

the use of a deep fryer is forbidden in any school under the board’s jurisdiction.

Currently, the English Montreal School Board includes 38 elementary schools and 18 high schools. These school boards have taken the opportunity to educate students about the benefits of a healthy diet and regular exercise, while leading by example in school cafeterias, and, by establishing nutrition as a cornerstone of school policy and administration, they have ensured the longevity and success of their initiative.

Honourable senators, as parliamentarians, we have the opportunity to demonstrate similar leadership. By establishing a national health and fitness day in Canada, we will encourage Canadians to invest in their health by exploring the benefits of exercise and nutrition. This motion may represent only one small step towards curbing obesity rates; however, it is a tangible plan that engages local governments and galvanizes the nation towards a common goal: a healthier population and a stronger country.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

(On motion of Senator Carignan, for Senator Plett, debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF BOMBER COMMAND DURING WORLD WAR II

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Meighen, calling the attention of the Senate to the unconscionable delay, despite the resolution of this Chamber passed unanimously on June 18, 2008, of the awarding of an appropriate theatre decoration for the brave Canadian flyers and crew who served in Bomber Command during World War II, without whose efforts, courage and sacrifice the war and its destruction would have continued for many more years.

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, Senator Mercer adjourned this inquiry in his name. The senator has already started his speech, but he has not had a chance to complete his study. I would like to request adjournment in the name of Senator Mercer for the remainder of his time.

(On motion of Senator Tardif, for Senator Mercer, debate adjourned.)

(The Senate adjourned until Thursday, June 7, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

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