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Wednesday, November 18, 1998

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THE HONOURABLE GILDAS L. MOLGAT  
SPEAKER

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*Debates*: Chambers Building, Room 943, Tel. 995-5805

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## THE SENATE

Wednesday, November 18, 1998

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

Prayers.

[*Translation*]

### ROYAL ASSENT

NOTICE

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that the following communication had been received:

RIDEAU HALL

November 18, 1998

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada, will proceed to the Senate Chamber today, the 18th day of November 1998, at 15:00, for the purpose of giving Royal Assent to a bill of law.

Yours sincerely,

Judith A. LaRocque  
*Secretary to the Governor General*

The Honourable  
The Speaker of the Senate  
Ottawa

[*English*]

• (1340)

### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
CHARLES JOSEPH CLARK, P.C.**

CONGRATULATION ON WINNING LEADERSHIP  
OF PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

**Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, this morning the national caucus of the Progressive Conservative Party had the great pleasure to meet for

the first time with its new leader, the Right Honourable Joe Clark.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

**Senator Lynch-Staunton:** He was selected by an overwhelming vote last Saturday, a vote in which thousands of party members participated. It was the first time in history that a Canadian national political leader has been chosen by the party membership in every province and territory.

On behalf of all my colleagues, I want to congratulate Mr. Clark most warmly for his victory. His past contributions to his country and party have the admiration of all Canadians, supporters and opponents alike. His willingness, once again, to make his talents and experience available augur well both for the country and the party.

He has our warmest wishes as he assumes his new responsibilities.

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I should like to join with the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming the Right Honourable Joe Clark back to the parliamentary precincts.

I was President of the Liberal Party of Canada when Mr. Clark became Prime Minister. Some would say that was a dubious distinction, particularly those on this side of the chamber. I was also President when the government changed nine months later. I claimed neither victory nor defeat in either instance or of having played any key role. However, I do know that Mr. Clark was always modest in victory, and very gracious in defeat.

I followed his career with particular interest. I recall one particular incident when he was Secretary of State for External Affairs, a post which he held with great distinction. He had met with President Mandela shortly after he was released from 27 years of imprisonment. As I recall, the meeting was held in Zambia. At that time, Mr. Mandela asked Mr. Clark for Canadian assistance to help with democratic education in South Africa, in particular, to teach the people about the electoral process and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

When Mr. Clark returned to Canada, he called together people who might help in the raising of funds for that purpose. I was one of those people. There were others, such as Archbishop Ted Scott, formerly the head of the Anglican Church of Canada; Roy McMurtry, now Chief Justice of Ontario, former Attorney-General of Ontario and former High Commissioner to Great Britain; and Howard McCurdy, former New Democratic Party member from Windsor. We met on many occasions. Some of those meetings were held in my former office in the East Block which is now occupied by Senator Whelan.

I recall this series of events to point out that, at the time, when we went to the business community, there were very few in that community who thought that apartheid could be eliminated in South Africa. Indeed, there were many doubts about whether or not Nelson Mandela could be successful in bringing both democracy to South Africa and winning an election. To his credit, the Right Honourable Joe Clark was not one of those individuals. He had a great deal of faith in Mr. Mandela. He continued during his period as Secretary of State for External Affairs to advance the democratic process in many countries which were trying to achieve or strengthen democracy.

Mr. Clark will bring a great deal of expertise to his new responsibilities, and I am sure, serve his party and his country with great distinction. I warmly welcome him back to the precincts of Parliament.

## AGRICULTURE

### ECONOMIC CRISIS IN RURAL CANADA

**Hon. Leonard J. Gustafson:** Honourable senators, the crisis in agriculture is very serious and some action is needed immediately. Canadian farmers and their families are facing a serious income crisis. Yet, the government is doing nothing to assist the industry, the backbone of rural Canada. The pain is real. It is about more than statistics; it is about people who are suffering and who need assistance now.

Our farmers are, perhaps, the most efficient producers in the world and can compete with the best, given a level playing field. However, the playing field is not level for our agricultural producers. The Asian financial crisis combined with huge support payments being paid by the U.S. government and the European Union to their farmers have decimated the markets of Canadian farmers across the country.

Farm incomes across Canada are down drastically. Net farm income fell in 1997, and it will fall again in 1998. There is a crisis in the hog industry. Farmers are selling hogs at less than what it costs to raise the animals. Different areas of the country have suffered drought. Other farmers have good yields but face very low prices.

Agriculture was a priority for the Progressive Conservative government. The PC government developed farm safety nets; the Gross Revenue Income Plan, or GRIP; and the Net Income Stabilization Account, or NISA. These programs were designed to support farmers through trade wars and fluctuations of annual income. They were designed to complement each other. Unfortunately, today, the government has done away with these essential components of the safety net.

GRIP was eliminated at a time when grain prices and yields were good, and trade distorting practices by the Europeans and Americans were a distant blur. They eliminated GRIP, promising whole farm income support, and did not deliver. The Liberals opted for short-term gain and now the farmers are feeling the long-term pain.

It is now 1998, and our farmers are hurting again. It is essential that Canadian agriculture get the support. It is in our nation's interest to support the vibrant agricultural industry and

the rural way of life. The Canadian agricultural industry contributes directly to our way of life and helps to support the foundation of this great nation.

The Liberal government is sitting on a \$10-billion surplus. Yet, it continues to tell farmers to draw on their NISA accounts. This will not pay for the cost of production for most farmers alone, let alone put food on the table for the winter. If the Liberals do not move on this issue soon, there will be fewer farmers around. Despite calls by provincial governments, producer groups and individual farmers, the Minister of Agriculture is still telling people that nothing will be implemented until the NISA accounts are dried up.

The government must immediately implement an emergency assistance program so that Canadian farmers who really need help can bring their net farm income up to 70 per cent of their average over the past five years. This must be done quickly so that farmers in need will have income to get through the winter and to plant their crops in the spring.

The federal government must also implement a total safety net program like that developed by the Progressive Conservative government. Consultations must begin with the provinces and the stakeholders to develop a GRIP-like program that will be affordable, easily administered, and cover the majority of the agricultural sectors.

Canadian farmers do not and should not have to depend on the whims of the party in power for their long-term viability. A national safety net program that will assist farmers through disaster, whether economic or natural, is needed and it is needed now.

## CHESTER BRASS BAND

### CELEBRATION OF ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

**Hon. Wilfred P. Moore:** Honourable senators, I rise today to make a statement in recognition of the Chester Brass Band, of the Village of Chester, Nova Scotia, which celebrated its 125 years of music-making with an afternoon anniversary concert at the Chester Area Middle School on Sunday, November 8, 1998.

Since the band was first organized in 1873, all of its members have been volunteers. For more than 100 years, the members of the band were from Chester proper. From 1981, the band grew from a hometown band to a band of 30 players which now includes talented musicians from other South Shore communities, the Annapolis Valley and Halifax.

The band has always enjoyed the support of the near 1,000 residents of Chester, whose donations have assisted in the acquisition of instruments, sheet music and uniforms. The band regularly performs concerts at the Chester bandstand during the summer months.

It should be noted that the band performs in many communities in Nova Scotia, often assisting in the raising of funds for local charities and community organizations. In addition, the band has performed at other events worthy of

mention including the G-7 Economic World Leaders Conference in Halifax, the World Conference of Girl Guides at Wolfville, concerts commemorating the *Bluenose* and The Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic at Lunenburg, and the Lieutenant-Governor's garden party at Halifax. They have also played with the Nova Scotia Symphony in Halifax.

The Chester Brass Band has competed five times in the North American Brass Band Championships held in Washington, Toronto and West Chester, Pennsylvania. It has earned a third place and four second-place marks. The band is currently conducted by Ken Foote of Bridgewater, who, in the 1995 championship, received the top mark for euphonium soloists.

In closing, I wish to commend the Chester Brass Band, its members and conductors, past and present alike, for the joyful music they have provided to the village and beyond for 125 years, and for the well-deserved recognitions they have earned for themselves. I extend every good wish to the band in its future activities.

• (1350)

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY IMPLEMENTATION BILL

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

**Hon. John B. Stewart**, Chairman of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, presented the following report:

Wednesday, November 18, 1998

The Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs has the honour to present its

#### SEVENTH REPORT

Your committee, to which was referred the Bill C-52, An Act to implement the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, has examined the said bill in obedience to its Order of Reference dated October 28, 1998, and now reports the same with the following amendment:

1. *Page 13, clause 27.1*: replace lines 5 to 8 with the following:

“Tabling of report

(2) The Minister of Foreign Affairs shall cause a copy of the report to be laid before each House of Parliament on any of the first fifteen days on which that House is sitting after the Minister receives the report.”

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN B. STEWART  
*Chairman*

[ Senator Moore ]

**The Hon. the Speaker:** When shall this report be taken into consideration, honourable senators.

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

### CRIMINAL CODE CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**The Hon. the Speaker** informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-51, to amend the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and the Corrections and Conditional Release Act.

Bill read first time.

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

On motion of Senator Carstairs, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading on Tuesday next, November 24, 1998.

[*Translation*]

### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I call your attention to the presence of a delegation in our gallery. It is the Association interparlementaire Canada-France, headed by Mr. François Loncle, member for l'Eure and Chairman of the French section of the Association. Mr. Loncle is accompanied by Mr. Jean-Marie Poirier, senator for Val-de-Marne, and by Mr. François Deluga, member for Gironde.

My colleagues will allow me a little aside in order to mention that Mr. Deluga's mother's family comes from Manitoba.

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

[*English*]

## QUESTION PERIOD

### SOLICITOR GENERAL

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO TREATMENT OF PROTESTORS  
AT APEC CONFERENCE BY RCMP—CONTINUED EFFICACY  
OF COMMISSION—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I am glad that His Honour has not missed out on Question Period today, because we would miss out on another episode of the “forces of darkness.”

**Some Hon. Senators:** Shame!

**Senator Kinsella:** For those who continue to read *The Ottawa Citizen*, today's edition states that lawyers for the RCMP want the RCMP Public Complaints Commission dismissed as they fear that the chairman may have prejudged the outcome of the hearing. We therefore have a situation of the lawyers for the RCMP wanting this commission disbanded when, according to reports, it has historically been fairly sympathetic to the RCMP when hearing complaints of impropriety on the part of its officers. This was highlighted in our question yesterday concerning the former senior analyst and investigator for the RCMP Public Complaints Commission, François Lavigne, who alleged that the former head of the commission had ordered staff to rewrite reports and change conclusions when RCMP officers were found to have acted improperly.

My question today to the Leader of the Government in the Senate is this: Now that we can add the RCMP itself to the long list of those who have lost faith in the ability of the RCMP Public Complaints Commission to deal with the APEC tragedy, would the Leader of the Government explain why his government continues to believe that the commission will be able to do its work in a fair and unbiased manner?

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, people are getting a little tired of Senator Kinsella's references to the "forces of darkness."

**Senator Berntson:** I get cards and letters every day.

**Senator Graham:** I am sure that someday they will see the light.

As to the value of the process that has been set out, I have every confidence that the Public Complaints Commission will be able to do its work, although it has run into some hurdles along the way.

As all honourable senators understand, questions are currently before the Federal Court, and I suggest that we wait until we hear from the Federal Court, and find out what other action the Public Complaints Commission intends to take.

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO TREATMENT OF PROTESTORS  
AT APEC CONFERENCE BY RCMP—ROLE OF AIDE  
TO PRIME MINISTER IN PROCESS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, as a supplementary, might I ask the Leader of the Government to explain just what is the role of Mr. Donolo?

**Senator Lynch-Staunton:** The Prince of Darkness.

**Senator Kinsella:** Does he speak on behalf of the Prime Minister with reference to this APEC file?

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, Mr. Donolo is the Communications Director in the Prime Minister's Office, and he is a ray of sunshine and light at all times.

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

### EYE INJURIES REPORTEDLY INFLICTED WITH LASER DEVICE— COMPENSATION FOR VICTIM—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. J. Michael Forrestall:** Honourable senators, my question is to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Captain Pat Barnes, a Sea King pilot, together with an American naval intelligence officer, suffered somewhat serious eye injuries in March of 1997 when they were attacked, supposedly with a laser device, by the Russian spy ship, the *Kapitan Man*. The Americans have admitted the incident and the injury to the naval intelligence officer's retina, but Canada has not admitted that it occurred. The net result is that the American intelligence officer has been compensated for his injuries, but Captain Barnes has not.

We know that laser attacks on NATO pilots was something that the Russians experimented with during the Cold War, and that on November 3, 1998, there was a reported attack on a UH-60 in Bosnia. There were also several incidents of attack with laser devices against NATO choppers in the former Yugoslavia prior to this incident of November 3.

With that evidence in mind, perhaps the government should take another look at this situation, and determine whether or not they were, or might have possibly been, wrong in their conclusion that Captain Barnes had not been injured in this manner? If they satisfy themselves on this subject, would the government give consideration to arresting the *Kapitan Man* and impounding it? The vessel visits this country quite regularly, and there is nothing that I have read or seen, so far, that suggests that there could not be a repeat of the incident.

• (1400)

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, as I understand it, the Americans recently completed a new report on this particular case. Although we were made aware of the existence of that report only very recently, the Government of Canada is taking steps to obtain a copy of it. That report will be reviewed, and appropriate measures taken.

In the meantime, I wish to assure Senator Forrestall that Captain Barnes has received first-rate medical treatment. He has been seen by the world's leading experts. He has been tested using state-of-the-art technologies both in Canada and in the United States. His case continues to be reviewed in the context of the most recent developments in medical technology.

Captain Barnes is still serving as a member of the Canadian Forces. The high standard of treatment currently afforded to him will continue, regardless of what any report or investigation may find. It is very important — and, I am sure that Senator Forrestall will appreciate this more than anyone else — that Captain Barnes' files be as complete and accurate as possible, to ensure that he is able to receive every compensation to which he is entitled.

**Senator Forrestall:** Honourable senators, would the minister be kind enough to take it upon himself to provide to this chamber the summary of the findings contained in that report, once it has been completed?

I wish to remind the Leader of the Government that, while I am sure Captain Barnes has received nothing but the finest medical treatment, the fact is that he cannot fly, and probably will never be able to fly again. This fairly brave individual deserves some form of compensation. He deserves the benefit of the doubt. For some of us, there is no doubt as to what that vessel was doing and how the accident occurred.

**Senator Graham:** Honourable senators, as I indicated, I wish to assure Senator Forrestall that the high standard of treatment that Captain Barnes has been receiving will continue. The government will ensure that he is able to receive every compensation to which he is entitled. I will personally take an interest in the file, and keep Senator Forrestall informed as to its progress.

## AGRICULTURE

### ECONOMIC CRISIS IN RURAL CANADA— EFFECT OF SUBSIDIES GIVEN TO FARMERS IN OTHER COUNTRIES—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Leonard J. Gustafson:** Honourable senators, my question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate is with regard to the farm crisis. This question could well be asked by any member of the Agriculture Committee who heard the reports from the Canadian Wheat Board or from the Federation of Agriculture. Indications from the Wheat Board were that farm income was down by 15 per cent last year, and this year it is down by 55 per cent, which makes a total decrease of 70 per cent. This is a serious crisis.

American farmers have been subsidized in the last year to the tune of \$14 billion. In fact, over the last five years their subsidies have amounted to \$40 billion. The European Common Market is supporting their farmers at 103 per cent. This places a heavy burden on Canadian farmers, and one that must be addressed.

I asked the minister a question on this matter about three weeks ago. My concern is that a small amount of money will not solve this problem. The government is now talking about generating something in the order of a \$10-billion surplus. Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate give us some idea as to what amount is being discussed or suggested in the way of helping the farming communities? Anything less than \$1 billion will not even begin to deal with this serious problem. Can the Leader of the Government give us any direction as to what the minister is saying in cabinet, and what else is being done to deal with this crisis?

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I wish to thank Senator Gustafson for his question. When he raised this matter earlier, I pointed out that the Government of Canada invests about \$600 million per year in agricultural safety-net funding. I believe the provinces spend an additional \$400 million. We also discussed and agreed that, with the exceptionally good prices that had prevailed over the last few years, Canadian farmers have saved approximately \$2.5 million in their net income stabilization account. I take it that Senator Gustafson's point is, undoubtedly, that that money has already been used up.

I wish to assure the honourable senator that the Minister of Agriculture is very cognizant of this matter. Early this month, he

[ Senator Forrestall ]

met with his provincial counterparts to discuss this issue and other concerns that face the agricultural industry. However, I will bring Senator Gustafson's serious questions to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture once again.

**Senator Gustafson:** Honourable senators, has any amount been discussed by the government in this regard? The problem that I see — and farmers are seeing this also — is that the numbers that have been thrown out to them, namely, \$200 or \$300 million, will not begin to touch upon the crisis that we face.

Can the minister give us some direction on what the government is thinking in these terms?

**Senator Graham:** Honourable senators, I am not aware of any specific amounts that are being discussed. In consideration of this serious matter, some suggestions have been made by provincial representatives. I am sure that the Minister of Agriculture is cognizant of their concerns and, in particular, the concerns of those who truly represent the farming communities that are most directly affected.

Again, I give Senator Gustafson my assurance that I will discuss this matter directly with the Minister of Agriculture and press upon him his concerns and those of all honourable senators in this chamber.

## UNITED NATIONS

### ABSTENTION ON VOTE ON NEW AGENDA COALITION RESOLUTION TO ELIMINATE NUCLEAR WEAPONS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Douglas Roche:** Honourable senators, my question is addressed, respectfully, to the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

On November 13, Canada abstained on a vote at the United Nations on the new agenda coalition resolution numbered L-48. This resolution called on the nuclear weapons states to make an unequivocal commitment to commence negotiations that would lead to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

In the past, Canada has supported the call of the International Court of Justice for such negotiations. Because the "Explanation of Vote" was vaguely worded, can the leader inform the Senate precisely what was contained in the new agenda coalition resolution that prevented Canada from voting "Yes," thus reflecting the will of 92 per cent of Canadians who want Canada to play a leading role in global negotiations to eliminate nuclear weapons?

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I thank the Honourable Senator Roche for his question.

Canada's abstention on the new agenda coalition resolution came after careful, intense, high-level consultation. Canada has worked closely with the co-sponsors of that particular resolution over a period of several weeks. A number of Canada's suggestions were taken into account in the final text. While the final version of the resolution addressed many of Canada's concerns, Canada concluded that it had not gone far enough.

From a national perspective, we were also conscious of the fact that the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade had undertaken a study of Canada's nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation policy. As that committee report is expected to be tabled in the next few weeks, Canada did not wish that particular vote to prejudice the process. We are also deeply concerned that the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime that has served us so well is now under very serious strain.

**Senator Roche:** Honourable senators, I thank the government leader for his answer. He would likely agree that the criterion for judging how Canada will vote on any particular United Nations resolution is whether the resolution falls within or without existing Canadian policy. It does not depend on how a committee in the other place or even in here may or may not make recommendations.

Would the government leader give an undertaking to review the resolution in question and inform the Senate precisely of the words or the paragraphs which Canada was unable to support? Which paragraphs or sentences fell outside Canadian foreign policy?

**Senator Graham:** Honourable senators, Senator Roche is much more qualified than I to go over the fine print of the resolution and determine just what part of the resolution may or may not have complemented Canada's objectives. I believe I said that Canada felt the resolution did not go far enough. However, I will attempt to fine-tune the answer and consult with the appropriate authorities.

It is recognized that Canada is in the forefront of those countries that have condemned the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan. Senator Lois Wilson had tried to go to India during the recent break as part of a non-governmental organization, and she was refused a visa in that country, I believe, on the grounds that she was allegedly a government official. Consequently, she was considered to be a part of Canada's decision to condemn nuclear testing by India.

A Canadian co-sponsored resolution on that particular testing received widespread support at the first UN committee on November 12. We recognize that progress has been made on the disarmament front. We think that there is both room and, indeed, an imperative to do more. Whatever the final outcome, Canada intends to actively pursue the issues raised by the resolution with our allies.

As I indicated to Senator Roche, I would be very happy to do some fine tuning on his concerns to bring forward an answer that might satisfy his objectives.

## AGRICULTURE

### ECONOMIC CRISIS IN RURAL SASKATCHEWAN— CONSULTATIONS OF MINISTER WITH PROVINCIAL COUNTERPARTS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver:** Honourable senators, my question was designed to be a supplementary question to the series of questions by Senator Gustafson on the farming crisis. This is a

little out of order and context, but the Honourable Leader of the Government will know that the situation for farmers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba is so grave that farmers in the hog industry are getting 1930s level prices for those hogs, and 1972 level prices have become the norm for those in the grain industry.

So far the Minister of Agriculture's response to this crisis is to point out that he is consulting with his provincial colleagues and farm groups as to the magnitude of the crisis. My question, very much like the question of Senator Gustafson, is: When can we expect a detailed announcement from this government as to both the short-term and the long-term intentions for dealing with this grave situation?

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is monitoring market developments and their effects on farm income in order to manage the situation effectively. The minister and his officials are working with the provinces and the industry on further refinements to the safety net system.

I know that is a long-range view. It will not necessarily satisfy the immediate concerns of farmers who are adversely affected, but I want to assure Senator Oliver and others, as I did Senator Gustafson, that the Minister of Agriculture has the farmers uppermost in his mind with respect to this particular situation. He is discussing with his cabinet colleagues the appropriate assistance that can be provided.

### ECONOMIC CRISIS IN RURAL CANADA—SOLUTIONS SUGGESTED BY NEW LEADER OF PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY— GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver:** The honourable senator might be aware that, yesterday, the Progressive Conservative Party announced its position on the farm income crisis. Under the guidance of our new leader, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, we are calling for action on two fronts. First, we feel the government must look seriously at Canadian Federation of Agriculture's proposal for an immediate \$468-million cash injection to ensure short-term income stability and to ensure that farmers can plant crops for the next year. Second, to deal with the long-term fluctuations we are calling on the government to consider our crop and revenue insurance program. It is similar to the Gross Revenue Insurance Program, or GRIP, which currently exists only as a companion program in Ontario and which was instituted on a far broader basis by the former Progressive Conservative government.

Could the Leader of the Government in the Senate please tell us what his government's thinking is on these two proposals?

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, as Senator Oliver arrived late and missed some of the glowing tributes paid to the new leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, he would have understood, certainly from my comments, that anything that Mr. Clark says, whether on foreign policy or farm policy, is to be taken very seriously by this government. We would be very happy to examine the proposals that have been made.



## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

### ISSUES AT UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL—PROPER FORUM FOR REQUESTED DEBATE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Marcel Prud'homme:** Honourable senators, I would like to go back to a question asked yesterday. The Honourable Senator Andreychuk asked a question that opened up other questions on the United Nations. I made a suggestion yesterday and the minister was kind enough to tell me the rules. Honourable Senator Carstairs helped him there because I watched her saying, "Inquiry."

I want to talk about Canada's position at the United Nations now that we have been given, for the sixth time, the great honour of sitting on the Security Council. This session will last through 1999 and 2000. You have seen the interest by Senator Roche. We have already prepared an inquiry. We will table it tomorrow. I am skeptical about such an inquiry because once a senator has spoken, any senator can move the adjournment of the debate.

I was reminded by my esteemed and knowledgeable colleague that December 10 is World Human Rights Day, and this may bring to your memory what the Senate did many years ago.

We are of the opinion that an inquiry would be appropriate, of course, but we are afraid that only a very few could speak.

I am encouraged by the leader's answer yesterday, at page 2164 of the *Debates of the Senate*:

Honourable senators, depending upon the nature and wording of the inquiry...

It is a non-controversial inquiry. You will see that tomorrow. I have submitted it already to your staff.

...I would encourage all honourable senators, particularly those on this side, to participate in such a debate...

Tomorrow we will make a proposal to put aside perhaps three hours. I am submitting this idea to the Conservatives this afternoon, to senators on the government side and to others. I am proposing that we spend an hour a day on world affairs during December 8, 9, and 10. We will not take much time. I know there is more expertise here than in the House of Commons, more independent minded people who have views on world affairs.

When I look around this chamber I see Senator Rompkey for defence, Senator Whelan for world affairs, who was host of a very successful event last evening, as the chairman of the Canada-Russia parliamentary group. The new ambassador of Russia was there, and it was a very successful exchange.

I also see Senator Perrault. There is much expertise here, with Senator Forrestall in defence, Senator Andreychuk and Senator Ghitter in human rights. We can make suggestions, the senior people of Canada in this house, which is always unfairly under attack. We can live with that and we can contribute.

Canada will have immense responsibility at the United Nations. I will be more direct than my esteemed colleague, who

is too polite. I do not wish to be a replica of our very good friend, the United States of America, and carry the water on every resolution.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Prud'homme, your question please?

**Senator Prud'homme:** Would the Leader of the Government consider having more than an inquiry? Would he consider giving a little more time, or would he say, right now, that no senator will adjourn debate unless it is indicated that no other senator wishes to speak?

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** I am sure, Your Honour, that you will not deduct five minutes from Senator Prud'homme's time when he formally speaks to his inquiry. We will give him the first 15 minutes, and even more, if he would like to have that time to speak on such an important question.

I am serious when I say it is an important question. I would hope that it would not be dismissed or adjourned in a cavalier way. We have a heavy agenda between now and the Christmas break. I am sure that sufficient time can be found to allow for an appropriate debate on this subject. I do not know that we would wish to set aside a specific time of two or three hours on any given day, because sometimes people, in responding, like to examine what has been said by previous speakers. I am sure there would be much anticipation.

I shall await Senator Prud'homme's proposal with keen anticipation. Perhaps I will be astounded and amazed when I see what he puts forward tomorrow. We will respond accordingly. I would be prepared to have appropriate discussions with the leadership opposite as to how we might improve on the normal procedure in this place with respect to a special inquiry. I believe that this place has functioned well and that that particular part of our Order Paper called "inquiries" has served us very well in the past. I am sure it will do so in the future.

## AGRICULTURE

### ECONOMIC CRISIS IN RURAL CANADA—INADEQUACY OF NET INCOME STABILIZATION PROGRAM—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Terry Stratton:** Honourable senators, I come back to the agriculture question. Of course the safety net is not working. What is left of it is not sufficient and the Minister of Agriculture has asserted that farmers must draw down on their NISA, the Net Income Stabilization Accounts. However, some farmers do not have sufficient balances in the NISA to draw upon. The national account average for farmers with sales in the zero to \$50,000 range is \$9,846. That is not enough to feed their families this winter, let alone pay the bills for their cost of production. Furthermore, some farmers do not have NISA accounts. This is particularly true for young farmers who have not attained adequate profit levels to contribute to NISA.

My question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate is: When will the government be bringing in an adequate safety system for the farmers, or will they continue to assert that NISA is enough?

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, as I tried to explain earlier, the Minister of Agriculture, along with his provincial counterparts, is examining this very question. NISA, of course, encourages farmers to put money aside now that can be drawn down in future poor years. As I understand it, producers may deposit 3 per cent of net sales up to a maximum net sale of \$250,000, or a maximum deposit of \$7,500. These funds are deposited in an approved financial institution with a NISA account. Governments, at the rate of, I believe, two-thirds federal and one-third provincial, match the producer's contributions.

Obviously we have had a bad year. I recognize that Senator Stratton, Senator Gustafson and Senator Oliver all have further enunciated the problem, and I shall again bring this matter to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture.

**Senator Stratton:** Honourable senators, in the other place, last week, the Minister of Agriculture made a commitment to farmers to which we on this side will certainly hold him. As part of the government's efforts to examine ways to ease the burden of the farm income crisis, he said that the government will look at the \$134 million that farmers are paying in cost recovery charges and fees.

Could the Leader of the Government in the Senate please provide further details about this commitment that the Minister of Agriculture has made, paying heed to the specifics of these cost-recovery charges and fees?

**Senator Graham:** Honourable senators, I will be very happy to bring forward that information for Senator Stratton as soon as I can make it available.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I should like to remind you of the rule of not quoting anything that has been said in the House of Commons. I assume Senator Stratton was not quoting but simply using the information.

**Senator Stratton:** Yes.

[Translation]

## NATIONAL FINANCE

### COMMENTS OF AUDITOR GENERAL ON GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING METHODS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Roch Bolduc:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. These past two years, the government has been fiddling with accounting methods and applying against a given year expenditures that will not be made for another year or two.

In 1996-97, the government earmarked \$800 million for the Canadian Foundation for Innovation. This amount was applied against that year, although not a penny had actually been spent. The Auditor General said it did not make any sense. The government took note of this comment and, the next year, did the exact same thing. In 1997-98, the government earmarked \$2.5 billion for the Canadian millennium scholarship foundation and applied it against that year, in spite of the fact that the said

foundation, a public corporation, had yet to be established. The foundation was established last summer. It is rather unusual for a government to include in its budget for the 1997-98 fiscal year expenditures for an institution that did not even exist, whose eligibility criteria will only be established in one or two years and that will not spend any money until the year 2000.

The Auditor General is a polite man, but he has become more insistent. There are accounting principles and standards. We are asking the government to adhere to them, something it did not do in 1996-97 and 1997-98.

Could we get a firm commitment from the Minister of Finance, through the government's spokesperson, that he will not make it a practice to interpret accounting principles as he pleases when it comes to government budgets? We no longer know what the deficit is. We cannot tell whether Canada has a deficit or a surplus. I would like to have a commitment from the Minister of Finance that he will put an end to this charade.

[English]

• (1430)

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I will bring Senator Bolduc's concerns to the attention of the Minister of Finance. However, what we are dealing with is an apparent difference of opinion between that of the Auditor General and other chartered accountants.

**Senator Berntson:** How many?

**Senator Graham:** This government believes it is appropriate to book these types of expenditures at the time they are committed, as is done in the private sector. The government sought the opinion of two of Canada's largest accounting firms as to how to account for such bookings like the Millennium Fund. If I remember correctly, it was Coopers&Lybrand and Ernst&Young, both of whom believe that the accounting method used meets the guidelines set out by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

[Translation]

**Senator Bolduc:** Honourable senators, there have been accounting rules in existence for a long time. We do not have to reinvent accounting today. It is not a new science. There is nothing magical about it. The problem is settled from the accounting point of view. If the Minister of Finance pays for professional advice, that is one thing, but the Auditor General says in his report that these accounting practices are not right. That is what we want a response to.

[English]

## ANSWER TO ORDER PAPER QUESTION TABLED

### NATURAL RESOURCES—CAPE BRETON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION—GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Deputy Leader of the Government)** tabled the answer to Question No. 116 on the Order Paper—by Senator Murray.

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

### ORDER PAPER QUESTIONS—REQUEST FOR ANSWER

**Hon. J. Michael Forrestall:** Honourable senators, I am looking for delayed answers, but actually I rise to question a derailed question.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable Senator Forrestall, would it be a question that derailed in Question Period, or does it have to do with delayed answers?

**Senator Forrestall:** This question has been on the Order Paper for a year and a half and has been derailed, not delayed. We know how long an instant is around here — it is about four years. Delayed could be any time.

The question had to do with my searching out what funds continue to exist for the management of the Land Forces Command, the shortfall pertaining to those funds, and some of the details as to whether the funds can be recovered.

A question I asked last June was half derailed. It sought somewhat the same information in a different format. I wonder if we might have a response to that.

I ask these questions because we have a \$10-billion surplus. The way these things work, it goes up in leaps and bounds. Within a year, there should be some \$40 billion to \$45 billion in that fund. Do not try and hide that from the Canadian people or the people in the Canadian Armed Forces who need it.

**Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, my only comment is that I bring to the house every question and reply as soon as I receive it. I know that the minister has been urging responses to delayed answers, and as a result there are very few of them on the Order Paper.

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## VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to bring to your attention a distinguished visitor in our gallery. I refer to Mr. Arthur Donahoe, Secretary General of the International Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

As some honourable senators will know, Mr. Donahoe was a member of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia for many years and its Speaker. His father, Richard Donahoe, was one of our colleagues. Mr. Donahoe tells me that Senator Donahoe is in good health.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

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## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### CANADIAN PARKS AGENCY BILL

#### THIRD READING—MOTION IN AMENDMENT—VOTE DEFERRED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Fitzpatrick, seconded by the Honourable Senator Ruck, for the third reading of Bill C-29, to establish the Canadian Parks Agency and to amend other Acts as a consequence,

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Murray, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Phillips, that the Bill be not now read a third time but that it be read a third time this day six months hence.

**Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk:** Honourable senators, I rise to support Senator Murray's amendment to the parks bill. Canada's national parks are too important to be placed at arm's length from government and Parliament. Agencies do have their place. They have the potential to carry out their tasks with a minimum of government interference, with a clear mandate and sometimes with discretion to be innovative and visionary, and therefore provide valuable work. However, there are some interests in Canada that demand public knowledge, public scrutiny and continuous public input. These interests are best carried out directly by the government under parliamentary scrutiny. I believe that our national parks are one of these interests.

Sometimes on paper the idea of creating an agency such as the parks agency looks good, but let us take the National Capital Commission as an example. If public interest and scrutiny are necessary, one can easily see in the NCC process with their *in camera* meetings that there is very little public knowledge of and public input in the ultimate decisions made by that agency. Should there be a variance from the public perception of their needs and the commission's perception of public needs, generally there is very little that the government can do. It is at best a situation where governments are reticent, having created an arm's length agency, to interfere with the mandate. At worst, governments can hide behind these agencies and allow them to make the hard decisions.

One can argue that boards or agencies such as the NCC are responsible to ministers. However, it is very difficult for a minister. If a minister interferes, the criticism can be just that — interference by government. If the government publicly states that it does not wish to interfere with the mandate, there is very little the public can do to put its ideas and wishes forward, thereby controlling its ultimate interests.

Canada's national parks demand a higher degree of continuous accountability by Parliament. It is one of the areas that should not be hived off and put at distance from continuous scrutiny. I think others have already spoken adequately of the need for national parks, their conservation aspects, their contributions to our environment, to our recreation, and to our national pride.

Honourable senators, I wish to speak today on the importance of the heritage of the parks. As with the issue of security, our heritage cannot be left to a small group to determine. I will speak

from the Western Canadian perspective where western national parks have been special places. They are, to me, a place to reflect on the privilege of being a Canadian, on feelings of gratitude, on the immensity of our environment and its fragility, and on their importance to the fabric of Canadian society.

I should like to pay special attention to one aspect of the heritage of our parks, a legacy that cannot be regarded as our finest hour, and that is the use of our national parks as labour camps. Throughout Western Canada, our national parks were hosts to numerous young men deemed to be aliens during World War I, who were rounded up, deprived of their rights and put into labour camps to build our national parks. These aliens were generally migrant workers, who at the outbreak of the First World War were placed in detention camps across Canada.

• (1440)

Canada's first national park, Banff, was also the first to house a detention camp in such a setting. These detained people had committed no offence, were often landed immigrants or Canadian citizens, but were classed as aliens because they had the misfortune to have emigrated from countries which were at war with Canada or its allies. In extreme hardship and cold, with very few tools and clothing, these park prisoners or detainees were used to build and construct what was then called "Canada's recreational playground."

Hundreds of Canadians who, in the depths of the depression, found themselves in a transient state without employment and without a livelihood to support themselves and their families also contributed to the development of our national parks.

Relief offices and soup lines saw these people on a daily basis as unemployment reached 30 per cent in 1933. Many of the people behind the statistics were homeless single men. They had quit school to help their families, and the government's response to these transient Canadians was to set up relief camps in the parks.

These people, living at a subsistence level, built their own camps and contributed to the labour-intensive development of our national parks. Therefore, our heritage of national parks is not to be given away, but to be acknowledged, maintained and cherished. It demands the kind of public scrutiny in a democratic system that only parliamentary oversight through ministerial responsibility can provide.

The demand for parliamentary scrutiny, debate and preservation of our national parks must be one of our highest responsibilities, and therefore not one to be delegated away. In my opinion, there is a need to strengthen the role of Parliament in the scrutiny and development of our parks.

Senator Murray's amendment to delay this issue for six months in order to allow more debate is warranted, if not mandatory. Many of us have not taken the time to reflect on the need of our national parks and many of us have not taken the time to acknowledge the heritage of those Canadians to whom the national parks are a living monument. I do not believe we should move with haste.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** If no other honourable senator wishes to speak, I will proceed to put the question on the motion in amendment moved by the Honourable Senator Murray.

Honourable senators, will those in favour of the motion please say "yea."

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yea.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Will those opposed to the motion please say "nay."

**Some Hon. Senators:** Nay.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** In my opinion, the "nays" have it.

*And two honourable senators having risen.*

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, is there an agreement between the whips regarding the bells?

#### MOTION TO DEFER VOTE

**Hon. Mabel M. DeWare:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 67(1), I move that the standing vote be deferred until tomorrow. However, with the agreement of honourable senators, we would accept that the vote be held 15 minutes after the completion of the Orders of the Day on Thursday, November 19, 1998.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators under the *Rules of the Senate of Canada*, it is automatic that the deferred vote is to be held at 5:30 the following day. There is a proposal that the vote be held 15 minutes after the completion of the Orders of the Day tomorrow. Is it agreed, honourable senators?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**Some Hon. Senators:** No.

**Senator DeWare:** Perhaps it would be preferable to have the vote 15 minutes after Routine Proceedings have been completed.

**Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** We suggest a vote 15 minutes after Routine Proceedings.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, it is preferable to have a clear understanding of what we are talking about. I want to caution the Senate that having nebulous times for votes is not a wise practice. It is better to have a fixed time for a vote. However, I am at the will of the Senate.

**Hon. Léonce Mercier:** I would propose a vote at 3:30 p.m. tomorrow.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, is it agreed that the vote will take place tomorrow at 3:30 p.m.?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** The bells will ring at 3:15 p.m. and the vote will take place at 3:30 p.m. tomorrow on the amendment proposed by the Honourable Senator Murray.

## MERCHANT NAVY WAR SERVICE RECOGNITION BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Forrestall, seconded by the Honourable Senator Atkins, for the second reading of Bill S-19, to give further recognition to the war-time service of Canadian merchant navy veterans and to provide for their fair and equitable treatment.—(*Honourable Senator Perrault, P.C.*)

**Hon. Raymond J. Perrault:** Honourable senators, I rise to speak on Bill S-19 at second reading, a bill which Senator Forrestall introduced in this chamber last June.

[*Translation*]

The honourable senator is moved by the most noble of sentiments in presenting this bill. We share his desire to see the merchant navy veterans receive the recognition they deserve, and the support of a nation, which owes them a debt of gratitude.

[*English*]

The contribution of Canada's Merchant Navy veterans to the victory was brought into sharp focus this past year as the world commemorated the 55th anniversary of the turning point of the Battle of the Atlantic. The number of enemy U-boats destroyed or the number of Luftwaffe planes shot down did not signify the victory in that battle. The true measure of achievement was the arrival of some 25,343 merchant ships in British ports after their perilous voyages across the North Atlantic. The victory is measured by some 165 million tonnes of cargo delivered, supplies that sustained Britain in its darkest hours, supplies that made possible the liberation of Europe.

How many Canadians are aware of the fact that Winston Churchill paid the ultimate tribute to the merchant mariners when he stated that without the Atlantic lifeline, we could not have won the war. Canada's merchant seamen played a key role in that process. It should be a source of pride to all Canadians that we played such a key role.

A few months ago, as part of a delegation, Senator Forrestall and I went to Liverpool, accompanied by a group of merchant seamen from Canada who had seen wartime service. I have never seen such a tribute paid to any Canadian delegation. As the Canadian merchant seamen marched through the streets of Liverpool, they received by far the greatest applause. The woman next to me in the crowd cheered, "Thank you for coming then!" Her husband added, "Thank you for coming now!" It was a very moving occasion.

These merchant sailors often served in highly flammable tankers, or freighters loaded with ammunition. They did not have a hope if enemy shells landed anywhere on their craft. They knew that naval escorts could not protect all the approaches to a convoy, and that every crossing of the North Atlantic carried with it the risk of death in icy waters or flaming ships. The chances of survival under those conditions were slim at best:

30 minutes at the outside, with hypothermia and exposure wiping out their lives in minutes.

These were absolutely incredibly difficult circumstances, and yet a number of merchant seamen who went down in ships managed to survive, and volunteered to come back and serve again.

• (1450)

Many of them had been torpedoed before, and chose to sail again. Many had watched comrades die as other ships went down around them. The motion picture *Das Boot* gives some idea of exactly what this submarine warfare was all about. Some 80 per cent of all the German submarine crews were destroyed as well. It was a vicious, unrelenting battle.

On voyage after voyage, these men were determined to serve once more. They sailed and sailed again, taking their chances and risking their lives, confronted as they were by a desperate enemy.

Many of these heroes of the North Atlantic were very young at the time, scarcely more than boys some of them. Too young to enlist in the Armed Forces, they sought out service in the Merchant Marine, which had one of the highest casualty rates of any of the services.

Young as these sailors were then, they are now reaching the age where they require the care and assistance that a grateful Canadian nation can provide. Even the youngest of them is now in his seventies; many are in their eighties, and a few are in their nineties.

The preamble to Senator Forrestall's legislation reminds us that there is only a short time left to redress any injustices which may have been done to the Merchant Navy. I want to commend the senator for the high motives that inspired him to introduce this bill. All members, regardless of party, are concerned that Canada's Merchant Navy veterans receive the recognition that is their due and the support of a grateful nation.

What kind of injustices were out there? It is a fact that, in the years following the war, the veterans of the Merchant Navy were entitled to some but not all of the Canadian government's benefits for veterans. Why was this? It appeared to some to be a blatant miscarriage of justice. Was there a reason?

The benefits that were not made available to Merchant Navy veterans arose from the belief of the government of the day that the sizeable Merchant Marine that had participated in the war effort would continue to exist, and that the approximately 12,000 members would therefore have no need for demobilization benefits, which had been designed to return over 1 million enlisted men and women to civilian careers. However, we just did not have a Merchant Navy after the war ended. The predictions were wrong.

Honourable senators, I have been focussing on the experience of Merchant Navy veterans of the Second World War, but similar stories could be told of those who served in merchant ships during the First World War and the Korean War. All too often the superb record of service has been unhonoured, unsung and unrewarded.

The bill before us seeks to ensure that any new or expanded benefits given to Armed Forces veterans in the future will automatically be extended to Merchant Navy veterans of the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. The bill also seeks to broaden the definition of Merchant Navy service.

Before looking further at what this bill proposes, I must say that frankly there seem to be some flaws here. Let us recall what has been done over the past 36 years to close the gap between the treatment of Merchant Navy and Armed Forces veterans. In 1962, merchant mariners became eligible for a civilian version of the income-tested War Veterans Allowance.

In 1976, merchant seamen were included in the Compensation for Former Prisoners of War Act, on the same basis and at the same rates as applied to Armed Forces veterans.

In 1992, with the passage of Bill C-84, the government accepted the principles of full recognition and of equality of eligibility for all currently available veterans' benefits. Senators Forrestall's legislation "would compel the end of legislative and governmental discrimination against Merchant Navy veterans."

Honourable senators, the passage of Bill C-84 in 1992 effectively did precisely that. However, to remove any doubt, on June 15, 1998, the Minister of Veterans Affairs announced before the biennial convention of the Royal Canadian Legion that the government would introduce omnibus legislation during the fall session of Parliament that would, among other things, bring Merchant Navy veterans under the same pieces of legislation which apply to Armed Forces veterans, namely, the Pension Act and the War Veterans Allowance Act.

While noting that the legislation passed in 1992 already conferred on Merchant Navy veterans exactly the same benefits currently available to Armed Forces veterans, the minister stressed that the proposed legislative changes were of symbolic importance, and would put to rest a longstanding concern of Merchant Navy veterans.

Are there any concerns about Bill S-19? Many of us are concerned that the bill would invalidate any federal act that would make any provision for a financial or other benefit to war veterans of the Armed Forces of Canada unless the act makes provisions for a like benefit for Merchant Navy war veterans or their dependants. The nature of this clause as written is unclear. Does it apply to all future federal legislation granting benefits to veterans? Does it invalidate all existing legislation? The text in French appears to cover both existing and future benefits; however, the wording of the summary in both French and English suggests that the legislation would limit future, but not existing, legislation.

Many of us fear that if we pass this bill the way it stands, the government could find itself in a position where all the current legislation applying to veterans, even though it does provide equal benefits to merchant mariners, could be declared legally invalid on an unintended technicality. That would halt the award of benefits to eligible veterans, including Merchant Navy veterans.

In short, were this bill to become law in its present form, it could well prove to be a time-consuming, extremely messy and,

frankly, unnecessary piece of legislation which might adversely affect the very veterans it is intended to help. The motivation behind the bill is first rate; no one is questioning that.

In addition, were honourable senators to adopt the definition of "Merchant Navy veteran" proposed in this bill, we would be extending veterans' benefits to essentially everyone who worked in a Canadian ship in wartime. For example, the crew of a ship sailing from Halifax to Montreal during the Korean War would qualify as Korean War veterans under Bill S-19. That is not my idea of what veterans' legislation was enacted to do.

We believe the government's upcoming omnibus bill is a more expedient way to satisfy the concerns of Canada's Merchant Navy veterans than the remedies proposed by the well-intentioned Bill S-19. It is for that reason that I recommend this chamber vote against the bill before us. At the same time, I encourage honourable senators to join me in commending the underlying values and message of the bill — the recognition of the enormous contribution that Merchant Navy veterans have made in the defence of freedom and all that we cherish.

Honourable senators, I wish to ensure that there is absolutely no doubt as to the background of the position taken by the government.

First, I am pleased to announce that the government will be introducing clarifying amendments prior to the Christmas recess in response to concerns raised by Merchant Navy associations about the wording of the existing legislation. That is a commitment of the government. These amendments are intended to put to rest even the slightest doubt about the Merchant Navy veterans' equality of status. Bill S-19 does not further that objective. Through clause 4, it only puts into question the government's ability to act on Merchant Navy concerns. We want to move ahead and bring in a proposal which has no defects and which is not subject to legal challenge.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Senator Forrestall and all senators for their interest in the welfare of merchant mariners.

**Hon. Eymard G. Corbin (The Hon. the Acting Speaker):** Is the Honourable Senator Forrestall rising to contribute to the debate?

**Hon. J. Michael Forrestall:** I wish to ask a question, Your Honour.

**The Hon. the Acting Speaker:** That is fine. However, if you wish to speak, I must inform the house that your speech will have the effect of closing the debate on this matter.

**Senator Forrestall:** Does the honourable senator not agree with me that with regard to clause 4(1), the clause which seems to be giving him some trouble, there may be some weakness in the French version? Does he not agree that it is not a money bill in any way because it is not retroactive? Would he not agree that for a bill to be retroactive, it must expressly state so? He knows the problem from the construction of statutes by Professor Driedger, with the second and third editions. His fears with respect to it are somewhat unfounded. Unless he is prepared to tell me whether it is the English version that he is concerned

with or the French version, I am at a loss to know why there is an objection from the government with respect to this bill, because it seeks only to set forth an apology.

• (1500)

**Senator Perrault:** There is no objection to the measure. In its present form, the legal advisors to Her Majesty's Canadian Government believe that as it stands it contains a defect. Under those circumstances, this measure should not proceed in its present form.

I gave a commitment with respect to the introduction of the omnibus bill before Christmas. I look forward, as all of us do, to Senator Forrestall's usual constructive contribution to the deliberations surrounding that measure.

**Senator Forrestall:** Honourable senators, apparently the honourable senator has given the assurance and has some written document in his hand — and, it is probably signed by the admiral himself — that there will be legislation with amendments introduced before Christmas. It is widely known that the other chamber will recess on December 7 and there is no way in the world that those amendments will be dealt with before that time. Furthermore, the honourable senator knows that any such amendments will die with prorogation. What is this exercise all about? Is it more smoke and mirrors, or is the “force of darkness” about the precincts?

**Senator Perrault:** The efforts by the government indicate the good faith that we have demonstrated with respect to veterans affairs. Canada has had the leading veterans programs in the entire world, as the honourable senator is aware. We have an international reputation for fair play with respect to our veterans, and we should all be proud of that fact.

The message from the minister reads that:

The government will be introducing clarifying amendments prior to the Christmas recess in response to concerns raised by Merchant Navy associations about the wording in the existing legislation.

In other words, there is a positive commitment to get the job done properly. I hope that I do not detect a note of cynicism on the part of the honourable senator.

On motion of Senator Carstairs, debate adjourned.

## DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL COHESION AND GLOBALIZATION

REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE  
AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the twelfth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology (*budget – study on the dimensions of social cohesion in Canada*) presented in the Senate on October 1, 1998.

**Hon. Lowell Murray** moved the adoption of the report.

He said: Honourable senators, let me ask the indulgence of the Senate with regard to this report. It is the twelfth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology. It was tabled in my name by our friend Senator LeBreton on October 1, 1998. I have been somewhat delinquent in getting to it. However, we need to deal with it rather quickly now because the report encompasses the budget for the special study on social cohesion which being conducted by the committee. That budget has been submitted by the committee to the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration and approved by that committee.

The budget is to be found in the *Journals of the Senate* of October 1, at page 966. It is a straightforward budget. It is in the total amount of \$68,700. There are three items: “Professional and Special Services,” “Transportation and Communications,” and “All Other Expenditures.” By far the greater part of the total amount is accounted for by the “Professional and Special Services” that we are engaging for the purpose of that study.

If there are any questions with regard to the budget or with regard to the report, I will be glad to answer them at this time. Otherwise, I would ask the indulgence of honourable senators for their cooperation in adopting this report.

**Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, this side of the chamber has no difficulties, and will proceed with the passage of this report. However, I should like honourable senators to take note that this report is quite different from reports that we have received from committees in the past. For example, it does not yet perform its principal function, which is to request that the committee be empowered to engage the service of such council and technical, clerical and other personnel that may be necessary, which would be, in and of itself, a report. It goes on to add two other items, both of which normally would involve separate reports: one to authorize television and radio; another to change the date of the publication so that the committee could report no later than June 30. However, if the Senate is not sitting at that time, the committee would then be able to deposit its report with the Clerk.

We have no objection to all three of these things being done. However, we think that this is outside of our normal processes. In future, committees should come to us with individual requests, not group requests.

**Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, what authority or precedent is the Deputy Leader of the Government relying on when she suggests that a report of a committee should not contain whatever that committee wants to put in its report?

**Senator Carstairs:** Honourable senators, I am going by the precedent set by the way in which such things have been done in this chamber for every other committee. I have not been able to find any instance of any other committee including authorization for a number of things in one report. Therefore, it is not in the normal practice. If we now wish to make it normal practice, then we are changing our normal practice and plans, and we can proceed that way. I wanted to bring this matter to the attention of the Senate.

I informed Senator Murray about this matter a long time ago, namely, that it was neither the normal practice nor the way in which our other committees or this committee have reported in the past. Apparently, this committee has a new clerk, and this report was done in this way because that was how she thought it would have been done under the normal process.

**Hon. Consiglio Di Nino:** Honourable senators, it makes sense.

**Senator Carstairs:** It may make sense, Senator Di Nino, but a number of senators have told me that they would like to vote on each individual item separately, and not to lump a number of concepts together at the same time.

**Senator Murray:** Honourable senators, I confirm, with thanks, the fact that the Deputy Leader of the Government spoke to me personally about this matter some time ago. I appreciate also the readiness of the government to accommodate us with regard to this report, notwithstanding the procedural reservations.

That being said, I inquired of the advisors to the committee as to the form of this report, and I was advised that the committee's advisors had modelled this twelfth report after a special study report and budget that had been done in the past. The clerk has not told me in particular which precedent she was referring to, but she tends to confirm the position of Senator Kinsella that this has been done in the past in this way. In any case, it is a matter that, perhaps, bears looking into.

Once again, I wish to express my appreciation for the readiness with which the Deputy Leader of the Government accommodated us with this report, notwithstanding her reservations on the process.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to and report adopted.

The Senate adjourned during pleasure.

[*Translation*]

### ROYAL ASSENT

His Excellency the Governor General of Canada took his seat upon the Throne. His Excellency was pleased to command the attendance of the House of Commons, and that House being come with their Speaker, His Excellency was pleased to give the Royal Assent to the following bill:

An Act to amend the Judges Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts (*Bill C-37, Chapter 30, 1998*)

The House of Commons withdrew.

His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to retire.

[*English*]

• (1510)

The sitting of the Senate was resumed.

### THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I should like to remind you that His Excellency will be in my chambers and will be pleased to receive all honourable senators who wish to greet him. I have taken this opportunity to invite the delegation from the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association to join us, as well as Mr. Arthur Donahoe.

I hope that you can all drop in, at least for a brief moment, although I know that many of you have committees waiting.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.



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