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**Tuesday, October 19, 2004**



THE HONOURABLE DAN HAYS  
SPEAKER

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## THE SENATE

Tuesday, October 19, 2004

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

Prayers.

### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in our gallery of a delegation led by His Excellency Longin Pastusiak, Marshall of the Senate of the Republic of Poland. He is accompanied by Anna Pastusiak, and his Senate colleagues, Krystyna Helena Sienkiewicz, Janusz Stefan Bielawski, Józef Sztorc and Krzysztof Szydłowski, all members of the Senate of Poland. We welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

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

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### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

#### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND COUNCIL OF THE DISABLED

##### THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

**Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck:** Honourable senators, it has been said that the measure of the compassion of a society is the degree to which it fosters a climate in which all members of that society have equal opportunities. Today I want to recognize the thirtieth anniversary of an organization that has committed itself to the pursuit of that goal.

The Prince Edward Island Council of the Disabled was established 30 years ago to advocate for the rights of all disabled people in the province. It brought together representatives of a number of disability organizations to speak with one voice.

It has worked hard to improve housing, transportation, support services and programs, education and employment for disabled people. Over the past 30 years, it has been guided by the fundamental belief that all people, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, have the right to fully participate in the social and economic life of their society.

I was the provincial minister of social services when the council was established and was strongly supportive of its mandate and its goals. Over the years, I have observed, with pride, the achievements it has made and the difference it has helped to make in the lives of those with disabilities. It is through the work of organizations such as the Council of the Disabled that barriers are coming down. All of us have a responsibility to help make that happen.

I want to congratulate the Council of the Disabled on its thirtieth anniversary and wish it every success in meeting the challenges of the future.

### MR. WILL SENDER

#### CONGRATULATIONS ON NOMINATION TO CANADIAN PROFESSIONAL RODEO HALL OF FAME

**Hon. Gerry St. Germain:** Honourable senators, I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding gentleman who has recently been recognized and will soon be inducted into the Canadian Professional Rodeo Hall of Fame. Mr. Will Senger will be the first British Columbian in recent memory to be distinguished with such an honour.

Originally from Rutland, B.C., Will Senger was born during the Depression and grew up around horses. As a youngster, he was a stable hand and soon began riding horses, but it was not long before he started competing in rodeo events such as bareback riding and steer wrestling. In 1961, Will became a director with the Cloverdale Rodeo and Exhibition Association.

For more than four decades, Will has volunteered his time to running a world-class event, establishing one of pro rodeo's richest purses and bringing professional rodeo to thousands of fans each year in British Columbia and around the country.

Will has been an organizer and founder of several events and organizations in the Fraser Valley — Little Britches Rodeos for young people and the B.C. Quarter Horse Association — and has served as a director of the Pacific National Exhibition.

In 1983, Will Senger was honoured by the Fraser Valley Exhibition Association. In 1986, his peers in professional rodeo voted Mr. Senger the Committee Man of the Year, and in 1992 the Governor General's Medal was presented to Will for his dedication to rodeo in Canada.

Over the years, and under Will's leadership and hard work as a director, chairman and volunteer with the Cloverdale Rodeo and Exhibition Association, the Cloverdale Rodeo now consistently gets over 450 rodeo contestants from across North America and Australia. This annual cultural event celebrating our Canadian country heritage and western tradition now offers six rodeo performances and attracts over 81,000 visitors during the four-day event on the May long weekend.

Will's contribution to rodeo serves as a testimonial to the fact that the Cloverdale Rodeo is ranked as one of the top four pro rodeos in Canada and one of the top 30 pro rodeos in North America.

Cowboys and cowgirls throughout Canada will always recognize Will's booming voice and warm handshake wherever he goes.

The Canadian Professional Rodeo Hall of Fame is recognizing Will's vast contributions to rodeo by inducting him into the "builder category" at the 2004 Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame induction banquet on October 30, 2004, in Calgary, Alberta.

Honourable senators, I know Will Senger; I know what he has contributed to our community. He brings great honour to British Columbia and to Canada.

### CHILD ABUSE

**Hon. Sharon Carstairs:** Honourable senators, newspaper headlines can be shocking; in fact, they are often meant to be. However, none are more shocking to me than those that tell the story of abuse. Consider these stories pulled at random from newspapers across the country in the past 15 years:

From *The Globe and Mail*: "Couple imprisoned for death of child: Three year old was starved, beaten, bitten, then dies after being punched in stomach"; and, "Couple enter guilty plea in death of nephew, 2, from brain injury."

From the *Toronto Star*: "Dad who beat girl to death jailed 5 years: something went horribly wrong during spanking"; and, "Mother of dead infant admits to severe beatings"; and, "Juror weeps at details of tot's shocking abuse"; and, "Father jailed 15 years: Wife gets five years for her part in baby Paolo's 'horrible' murder."

From the *Ottawa Citizen*: "Man charged in baby's death."

From the *Winnipeg Free Press*: "Tot dies after beating: Police say little girl suffered for two days before ambulance called."

• (1410)

This week marks the ninth year for the YWCA Week Without Violence campaign. The YWCA Week Without Violence challenges Canadians to imagine their life without violence by engaging communities in a variety of activities and dialogues around violence and its prevention.

Honourable senators, this week, I challenge you to imagine what life would be like without the shocking headlines telling the stories of the physical abuse of children.

### AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver:** Honourable senators, as you know, October is Autism Awareness Month. Autism is a complex brain disorder that affects approximately two out of every 1,000 births in Canada. It afflicts thousands of Canadians every year, irrespective of race, ethnicity or social background. I call the attention of honourable senators to this frightening disease because the causes of autism are still largely unknown.

Autism causes impairment to three major areas of development — that is, verbal communication, social interaction and physical behaviour — but no one child with autism behaves like another child with the same diagnosis. Each case is unique because autism is a spectrum disorder, meaning that it is defined by a wide variety of characteristics ranging from mild to severe.

Twenty years ago, the Autism Society of Canada estimated that one child out of every 10,000 was afflicted with autism. A few years ago, the society estimated that the proportion of children with autism was one out of every 1,000. The Autism Society of Canada now fears that these numbers have become worse. Reported cases have risen by 150 per cent in the last six years. Doctors now estimate that as many as one in every 200 Canadian children has a form of autism.

Honourable senators will recall that on October 23, 2001, I called your attention to the formation of the first ever Canadian research chair for the study of autism at Dalhousie University, in Halifax. This is believed to be the first program of its kind in North America. The \$1 million chair began with an extremely generous donation from Jack and Joan Craig of Halifax. Since then, the Craigs have continued their commitment to autism research.

In 2002, the Craig Foundation founded the Provincial Autism Centre in Halifax. The centre is a non-profit association that helps Nova Scotians afflicted with autism and provides support to parents coping with the difficulties of raising an autistic child.

Honourable senators, doctors once believed that autism was a life sentence. Thanks to the commitment and vision of people like the Craigs, there has been improvement in the lives of thousands of Canadians afflicted with this disease. It is estimated by researchers at the Provincial Autism Centre that with the proper treatment and intervention, noticeable improvements can be seen in nearly 90 per cent of all autism sufferers.

In conclusion, on October 6, 2004, in reply to the Speech from the Throne, the Honourable Senator Munson addressed the importance of treating autism before the symptoms become permanent. I agree with Senator Munson that autism is indeed a growing problem in this country and that we need leadership and vision from our government in order to combat it.

Honourable senators, I need your help to raise awareness about this frightening disease.

### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

#### ALBERTA—BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY— PETITION TO OPEN UNITED STATES BORDER

**Hon. Terry Mercer:** Honourable senators, it is my pleasure to rise today to inform you that on Thursday, October 14, 2004, I accepted a letter from Alex Baum and Dan Kroffat as a representation of the 114,483 signatures that were collected on a petition entitled "Open the Border."

My Conservative colleague from the other place, Myron Thompson, was also on hand to accept the petition. The BSE crisis is shared by all people and all political parties. I believe that bipartisan spirit was present last Thursday.

When I first spoke to Dan and Alex about their petition, I was impressed by their concern for the cattle industry and their dedication to the success of this petition. Their effort to promote awareness of the crisis facing the cattle industry has been quite successful, and they are not even ranchers or farmers.

The petition represents the concerns of all Canadians from coast to coast. The overwhelming support that Canadians have shown the cattle industry is important to the farmers and all stakeholders in the industry. Hundreds of our American friends across the border have also signed the petition to show their support for this industry.

This petition comes at a crossroads. Opening the border to Canadian beef needs to be done, should be done and will be done with the support of all Canadians. The government needs to hear from all sides that opening the border should be at the top of its list of priorities. Through this petition, Canadians have spoken clearly, saying to the government: The industry supports you, but you can do more.

I believe the impact of this petition will be a huge success in showing not only Canadians, but also Americans that we believe in our cattle industry, its safety and its people.

Honourable senators, I applaud the efforts of Alex Baum, Dan Kroffat and all Canadians as we work together to reach our goal of an open border.

## JUSTICE

### YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT—COMPATIBILITY WITH CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

**Hon. Serge Joyal:** Honourable senators, two years ago, the Senate studied Bill C-7, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, for four months.

*[Translation]*

These debates were difficult ones and they created tensions among the senators.

*[English]*

The Senate was presented with key amendments to the bill, many of which were defeated and only one of which was finally adopted with a single vote majority. The bill was then sent back to the House of Commons where that single amendment was accepted. The amendment dealt with special sentencing dealing specifically with the convictions of young Aboriginals, who comprise 60 to 80 per cent of Canadian youth involved with the justice system.

Among the amendments defeated in the Senate were some related to the interpretation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. These amendments were based essentially on the concept that youth cannot be assimilated with adults in the context of criminal trials and sentencing. In other words, a young offender cannot be given an adult sentence when he or she does not have the same legal and psychological capacity as an adult. That was one of the key objections raised against the legal philosophy embodied in some provisions of Bill C-7.

Yesterday, a judge from the Provincial Court of British Columbia ruled that two sections of the Youth Criminal Justice Act are unconstitutional because they violate Charter of Rights guarantees against age discrimination.

The two sections of the act that were struck down require violent young offenders to serve custodial sentences when an adult could merely serve house arrest for the same crime. The judge concluded that the act:

...promotes the view that the young person is less worthy of recognition as a member of Canadian society.

That ruling does not bind other lower court judges; however, it may have what we call in legal language a "persuasive impact" upon them. I remind honourable senators that five judges of the Court of Appeal of Quebec have also concluded in their ruling on the same act on March 31, 2003, that two series of provisions of the act were contrary to section 7 of the Charter.

Our chamber has an important constitutional duty to revise legislation coming from the other place within the context of the Charter and to amend those bills when there are clauses that violate Charter provisions.

Following those two court decisions, should the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs have a further sober look at that act and its Charter implications? The decision rendered yesterday by a British Columbia judge reminds us that our chamber should live up to the values and standards enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

## CANADA'S CITIZENSHIP WEEK

**Hon. Consiglio Di Nino:** Honourable senators, to celebrate Canada's Citizenship Week, I would like once again to express my gratitude and heartfelt thanks to Canada and Canadians for opening the doors for my family and me, as well as for millions of others who, for various reasons, chose Canada to start a new life.

For my parents, it was a search for a place to bring up their only child, a search for peace after decades of devastation caused by unending wars in Europe.

When I arrived in Canada in 1951 at Pier 21 in Halifax, I was a 13-year-old boy scarred and forever changed by the horrific tragedies I witnessed during World War II.

Honourable senators, I wish I could tell you that all Canadians were hospitable and welcoming, but that would be a lie. In 1951, a few years after the war, emotions were still high. My country of birth had been the enemy. Thousands of Canadians had died in its lands, and their mothers, fathers, siblings, sons, daughters and friends were not in a forgiving mood — and, frankly, I do not blame them. Thankfully, though, most Canadians were understanding and quite fair.

The early years were tough, but generally as we got to know each other things improved rapidly. Through hard work and perseverance, most of us who came from other places have succeeded and prospered in all areas of endeavour and have contributed to making Canada a more tolerant country and a better place to raise our families.

Canada's Citizenship Week provides us with the opportunity to reflect on the value and benefit we all derive from the contribution of every Canadian who works toward the public good — some more than others, but the vast majority add value and we should recognize and celebrate this.

As a country of immigrants, Canada's Citizenship Week also provides us with an opportunity to encourage men, women and children from every corner of the world who are looking for a better place to make their new lives to choose Canada.

• (1420)

We need to better address the concerns of new Canadians, to convince them that Canada is still the land where peace, tolerance, opportunity and welcome awaits them, for when they come, in all their diversity, all of Canada and, indeed, all Canadians benefit.

As for me, I am one of the luckiest ones. I am proud of my citizenship. I will be forever grateful to my mother and father for having chosen Canada, and I am very thankful to the thousands of Canadians who have, over the years, extended a hand in friendship and have helped me achieve my goals.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### THE ESTIMATES, 2004-05

#### TABLED

**Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2004-05 Estimates, Parts I and II, the government's expenditure plan and Main Estimates, as well as Part III, reports on plans and priorities for every department in the Government of Canada.

[Translation]

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER

#### 2003-04 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, pursuant to section 66 of the Official Languages Act, the annual report of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages for 2003-04.

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

#### REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 104 TABLED

**Hon. Eymard G. Corbin:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 104 of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table the first report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages concerning the expenses incurred by the committee during the Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament.

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 51.)

[ Senator Di Nino ]

[English]

### NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

#### REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 104 TABLED

**Hon. Colin Kenny:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 104 of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table the first report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, which outlines the expenses incurred by the committee during the Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament.

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 51.)

### ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

#### REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 104 TABLED

**Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 104 of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table the first report of the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, which deals with the expenses incurred by the committee during the Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament.

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 52.)

### THE ESTIMATES, 2004-05

#### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY MAIN ESTIMATES

**Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that tomorrow, Wednesday, October 20, 2004, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2005, with the exemption of Parliament Vote 10; and

That the papers and evidence received and taken on the subject during the Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the Committee.

#### NOTICE OF MOTION TO REFER VOTE 10 TO THE STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

**Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that tomorrow, Wednesday, October 20, 2004, I will move:

That the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament be authorized to examine the expenditures set out in Parliament Vote 10 of the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2005;

That the papers and evidence received and taken on the subject during the Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the Committee; and

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

### FEDERAL LAW—CIVIL LAW HARMONIZATION BILL, NO. 2

#### FIRST READING

**Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government)** presented Bill S-10, to harmonize federal law with the civil law of the Province of Quebec and to amend certain Acts in order to ensure that each language version takes into account the common law and the civil law.

Bill read first time.

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

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

[Translation]

### CRIMINAL CODE

#### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Jean Lapointe** presented Bill S-11 to amend the Criminal Code (lottery schemes).

Bill read first time.

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

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

[English]

### PERSONAL WATERCRAFT BILL

#### FIRST READING

**Hon. Mira Spivak** presented Bill S-12, concerning personal watercraft in navigable waters.

Bill read first time.

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

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

### CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867 PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

#### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver** presented Bill S-13, to amend the Constitution Act, 1867, and the Parliament of Canada Act (Speakership of the Senate).

Bill read first time.

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

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

[Translation]

### L'ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

#### THIRTIETH ANNUAL SESSION, JULY 4-7, 2004— REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 23(6) of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, which attended the thirtieth annual session held in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, from July 4 to 7, 2004.

#### MEETING OF COMMITTEE ON CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, MAY 24-27, 2004—REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 23(6) of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the parliamentary delegation of the Canadian branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, which attended the meeting of the Co-operation and Development Committee of the APF held in Marrakesh, Morocco, from May 24 to 27, 2004.

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

#### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. Eymard G. Corbin:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages have power to engage services of such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

• (1430)

[English]

## ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC COVERAGE

**Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples be authorized to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings.

## BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC COVERAGE

**Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce be authorized to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings.

## NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. Colin Kenny:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence have power to engage the services of

such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

**Hon. Colin Kenny:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence be authorized to examine and report on the national security policy of Canada. In particular, the Committee shall be authorized to examine:

- (a) the capability of the Department of National Defence to defend and protect the interests, people and territory of Canada and its ability to respond to and prevent a national emergency or attack, and the capability of the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to carry out its mandate;
- (b) the working relationships between the various agencies involved in intelligence gathering, and how they collect, coordinate, analyze and disseminate information and how these functions might be enhanced;
- (c) the mechanisms to review the performance and activities of the various agencies involved in intelligence gathering; and
- (d) the security of our borders and critical infrastructure.

That the papers and evidence received and taken during the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the Committee;

That the Committee report to the Senate no later than March 31, 2006 and that the Committee retain all powers necessary to publicize the findings of the Committee until May 31, 2006.

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC COVERAGE

**Hon. Colin Kenny:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence be authorized to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings.

## THE HONOURABLE JEAN-ROBERT GAUTHIER

### CONTRIBUTION TO CANADA—NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Sharon Carstairs:** Honourable senators, I give notice that on Thursday, October 21, 2004:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the contributions to our country, to the francophone population outside Quebec, to the citizens of Ottawa and particularly of Vanier and to those suffering from disabilities by the Honourable Jean-Robert Gauthier, Senator.



## ASSASSINATION OF LORD MOYNE AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO BRITISH WEST INDIES

### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Anne C. Cools:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 56(1), (2) and 57(2) of the *Rules of the Senate*, I give notice that:

I will call the attention of the Senate to:

- a) November 6, 2004, the sixtieth anniversary of the assassination of Walter Edward Guinness, Lord Moyne, British Minister Resident in the Middle East, whose responsibilities included Palestine, and to his accomplished and outstanding life, ended at age 64 by Jewish terrorist action in Cairo, Egypt; and
- b) to Lord Moyne's assassins Eliahu Bet-Tsouri, age 22, and Eliahu Hakim, age 17, of the Jewish extremist Stern Gang LEHI, the *Lohamei Herut Israel*, English translation, the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel, who on November 6, 1944 shot him point blank, inflicting mortal wounds which caused his death hours later as King Farouk's personal physicians tried to save his life; and
- c) to the 1945 trial, conviction and death sentences of Eliahu Bet-Tsouri and Eliahu Hakim, and their execution by hanging at Cairo's Bab-al-Khalk prison on March 23, 1945; and
- d) to the 1975 exchange of prisoners between Israel and Egypt, being the exchange of 20 Egyptian prisoners for the remains of the young assassins Bet-Tsouri and Hakim, and to their state funeral with full military honours and their reburial on Jerusalem's Mount Herzl, the Israeli cemetery reserved for heroes and eminent persons, which state funeral featured Israel's Prime Minister Rabin and Knesset Member Yitzhak Shamir, who gave the eulogy; and
- e) to Yitzhak Shamir, born Yitzhak Yezernitsky in Russian Poland in 1915, and in 1935 emigrated to Palestine, later becoming Israel's Foreign Minister, 1980-1986, and Prime Minister 1983-1984 and 1986-1992, who as the operations chief for the Stern Gang LEHI, had ordered and planned Lord Moyne's assassination; and
- f) to Britain's diplomatic objections to the high recognition accorded by Israel to Lord Moyne's assassins, which objection, conveyed by British Ambassador to Israel, Sir Bernard Ledwidge, stated that Britain "very much regretted that an act of terrorism should be honoured in this way," and Israel's rejection of Britain's representations, and Israel's characterization of the terrorist assassins as "heroic freedom fighters"; and
- g) to my recollections, as a child in Barbados, of Lord Moyne's great contribution to the British West Indies, particularly as Chair of the West India Royal Commission, 1938-39, known as the Moyne Commission, and its celebrated 1945 Moyne Report,

which pointed the way towards universal suffrage, representative and responsible government in the British West Indies, and also to the deep esteem accorded to Lord Moyne in the British Caribbean.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### JUSTICE

#### LISTING OF AL-TAWHID WAL JIHAD AS TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

**Hon. J. Michael Forrestall:** Honourable senators, today, I wish to extend congratulations to the Speaker and to the officers of the house on this first occasion I have had to be back among you. I wish them well in their endeavours and promise them my support.

Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

The Al-Tawhid Wal Jihad group has issued a statement that it is now joining al-Qaeda. Its leader, Abu Musab Zarqawi, as is widely known, is a follower of Osama bin Laden, and was al-Qaeda's chemical and biological weapons expert. That organization has killed in excess of 1,000 people, most of whom are Iraqi citizens. The same group has barbarically beheaded a number of people.

When will the government take the occasion to list this group under Part II.1 of the Criminal Code of Canada as a terrorist organization?

**Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I thank the honourable senator for his question. I will take it as notice and endeavour to reply very quickly.

**Senator Forrestall:** Honourable senators, this has been going on for a long time and it is a little alarming to note that the government has not advised themselves of the seriousness and taken action.

• (1440)

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

#### REPLACEMENT OF SEA KING HELICOPTERS— ACQUISITION PROCESS—INFLUENCE OF LITIGATION

**Hon. J. Michael Forrestall:** Honourable senators, why is it that the government seems prepared to move forward with the contract to replace the Sea King without waiting for a decision to be rendered by the Federal Court in the matter of Westland versus the government? Can the Leader of the Government give us some indication of the government's policy with respect to these matters? There is a certain urgency and government expediency that might elevate it into that category, but I do not see any reason for this. The helicopter matter is old now. Why go ahead when the matter is before the courts and before a decision is taken?

**Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, if I may add to the answer I gave to Senator Forrestall's first question, I wish to be advised when the group that he referred to was first organized and became known as a distinct group, following which I will be able to respond. I will try to do so quickly.

On the second question, the government has made its decision with respect to the acquisition of helicopters to replace the Sea King. Litigation has been commenced, as Senator Forrestall has said. I am sure my honourable friend recognizes that if the litigation is successful the government may be responsible for damages — that is, cash — to compensate. The government has made a decision to put new helicopters in place as soon as it can be done, and I am sure that Senator Forrestall wishes to see such a conclusion.

### OFFICE OF INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS RESOLUTION

#### ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver:** Honourable senators, my question relates to the federal government's alternative dispute resolution process. ADR, which was set up to accelerate the settlement of abuse cases involving Indian residential schools, has not worked well at all. Administrative costs are now reportedly over \$18,000 per case. It appears that former students are reluctant to use the new compensation process, as only 800 of the approximately 12,000 claimants have applied for arbitration, with less than 200 cases having been settled. What is the federal government doing to fix the many problems related to the alternative dispute resolution process?

**Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, without accepting any of the arguments that Senator Oliver has placed in his question, and without accepting that a full answer can be given to a general question during Question Period, I will take the question as notice and provide him with an answer when it is available to me.

**Senator Oliver:** Honourable senators, since May of this year, the federal government has provided advisers to assist those making claims for compensation with the extensive paperwork they must complete. The neutrality of these advisers, as is well known, has been questioned, as their salaries are paid by the federal government. Is the government concerned that the apparent lack of independence of these advisers may open up any of these settlements to legal challenges at a later date?

**Senator Austin:** Honourable senators, again the question is quite argumentative and does not seek facts alone, which is the purpose of Question Period. In due course I will endeavour to provide, without counter-argumentation, a statement with respect to a response to the extent that it is available.

### HEALTH

#### MONITORING OF FLU VACCINE SUPPLY

**Hon. Wilbert J. Keon:** Honourable senators, I have a question about the shortage of flu vaccine in the U.S. There have been

media reports lately of Americans coming across the border to receive their annual flu shots due to a severe shortage of vaccine in the United States this year. While the provinces of Alberta and Ontario have instructed physicians not to administer free flu shots to Americans, other parts of the country have indicated an increase in the number of Americans receiving flu shots in Canada. Could the Leader of the Government tell us if Health Canada will work with the provinces to monitor the flu vaccine supply to ensure that there is enough to administer to the Canadian population?

**Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, the Minister of Health has already said publicly that he and provincial health ministers are watching carefully and believe at the moment there is an adequate supply for Canadians. Indeed, an additional reserve may be made available to the United States should an agreement to that effect be achieved. The key policy point for the federal government and the provinces is security and adequacy of supply for Canadians.

This issue reminds me of my honourable friend's question on February 17 of this year when he talked about the risks of single-source suppliers of vaccine, and we have now seen a problem emerge in the United States. They had multiple sources of supply, but even with that, their major supplier, a British firm owned by a U.S. firm, experienced contamination, and the Americans are now in some difficulty to cover vulnerable people in the United States.

I am pleased to acknowledge that the honourable senator's question gave rise to an alert in Canada with respect to the adequacy of supply, including the distribution from sources. We obtain our supplies of flu vaccine from two major and quite different sources.

**Senator Keon:** I thank the leader for that answer. I suspect that Americans will be purchasing some vaccine from Canada, which is a good thing. Indeed, I would hope to see our production of vaccine in Canada come from multiple centres.

How will Health Canada estimate the reserves we need to keep? Has any thought been given to that question?

**Senator Austin:** Honourable senators, the usage of flu vaccine last year and in previous years has been calculated, and I understand that Canadian demand is estimated to be at about 10 million vaccinations. I am advised that at the moment supply exceeds that figure by 2 million to 3 million additional vaccinations. Certainly if we can help people in the United States, we would want to do so out of humanitarian considerations alone.

The question of securing and making supplies adequate is a question for the provinces. They control the actual use of the flu vaccine. At the moment there is a continuous dialogue, and we will see whether the United States wishes to acquire surplus vaccine. Indeed, the British Columbia manufacturer believes they have in hand many more units of vaccine than are required in Canada.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUDAN—CONFLICT IN DARFUR—EFFORTS OF  
GOVERNMENT—INCLUSION OF OPPOSITION

**Hon. Gerry St. Germain:** Honourable senators, the UN now places at approximately 70,000 the number of dead in the conflict in Darfur. This is an increase of 20,000 since the Prime Minister gave his speech to the UN in September on the need for rapid humanitarian intervention in cases like Darfur.

• (1450)

The Prime Minister talks of thousands of people dying, but when will the government live up to the words of the Prime Minister and do something about the situation in Sudan before the death toll increases; or is this just talk and no action? There has been a litany of similar situations, such as in Rwanda and Biafra, where the UN failed miserably. Will the leader indicate to the house what the government is actually doing? When I refer to numbers as high as 70,000 and 20,000, it tears at my heart because the numbers are most likely higher. When one person dies in Canada, everyone panics, but thousands have died in Africa and we simply sit back on our lofty perches. Are they children of a lesser God? The way this tragedy is being handled is truly a travesty of mankind.

**Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I commend Senator St. Germain's humanitarian instincts and convictions. He can be proud of the steps that Canada has taken with respect to Darfur. The honourable senator is likely familiar with the Prime Minister's comments to the United Nations General Assembly in which he spoke to the importance of intervention when governments fail to protect the safety and security of their own populations. The Prime Minister advocates a doctrine that adds to the world of global responsibility. The classic doctrine of national sovereignty and the right of a state to shield what goes on within its national borders against all scrutiny and judgment is now giving way. The Prime Minister is a leader in advocating new standards. In Hungary last week, the Prime Minister obtained the endorsement of 11 state leaders with respect to the issue he currently advocates that entitles nations to take action through the United Nations.

The government has led the way in funding the African Union, which is the body designated by the United Nations to deal on the ground with the security of the Darfur population. We have supplied military equipment and cash. I do not think any other country has been more active in this area or has put more money behind the nations of the African Union, who have placed 6,000 or 7,000 troops in the Darfur region. As well, Canada is extremely active in assisting volunteer organizations in the Darfur region.

A lengthy article in last Sunday's *New York Times* magazine dissects the origins of the situation in Sudan. The honourable senator might find it interesting.

**Senator St. Germain:** Honourable senators, I thank the leader for his response. I have not read that article, but we can dissect all the articles we want to dissect. When Roméo Dallaire was in Rwanda, he did not dissect anything. We should have intervened and he should have received UN support. The UN has failed

dismally. I believe that going through the UN is asking for continued failure. NATO initiated action in Serbia where there was persecution and mass execution. The situation is such that if we continue to rely on the UN and if we do not take extraordinary steps, then we will have a repeat of the past. We are seeing it now with 70,000 deaths in Darfur. I commend the government if it is indeed taking action; but it is not enough. Sometimes one has to take action over and above. President George W. Bush did what he did in Iraq because he could not rely on the UN to take action. Why do we rely on an organization that has failed the continent of Africa time after time? How many times does this have to occur? It is an honourable thing to address the UN and dissect the problem backward, forward and sideways; but action is required to help these people. Imagine our families starving and dying like their families are doing. What are we doing? We are talking and we have sent some assistance, but we are not solving the problem as thousands continue to die.

I understand that the government has begun its training of African Union troops. Has it begun the training program to assist in this situation? What more could be done? Should we participate in a joint, non-partisan effort to bring the situation to the world stage in a quicker, more dramatic manner?

Do honourable senators remember Stanley Burke? He quit his job at CBC because he saw such a need in Biafra, which led to dramatic action in Biafra. Perhaps something similar to that can be done now.

**Senator Austin:** Honourable senators, again I commend Senator St. Germain for his concern. The government took early action to place a key observer with the right qualifications on the ground in Sudan. I am speaking about Senator Jaffer who was almost the first, if not the first, non-African to go to Sudan to engage in fact-finding. She remains highly active in this endeavour and plays a key role in advising the Canadian government and international organizations in respect of what could be done in Sudan.

It is an unfortunate fact that Canada cannot be effective acting on its own in these issues; we have to act in concert with others. Bearing in mind many of the issues that Senator St. Germain has mentioned, the United Nations took relatively quick action in the case of Darfur when it recruited the African Union to act as an international presence in the Darfur region to restrain action against innocent citizens and to provide security in refugee camps in Chad and along the border. They have been effective in providing additional security.

The United Nations has mobilized programs to provide food aid, water and medical care. Countless tens of thousands of lives have been saved by these actions. Thankfully, the situation is not the same as it was in Rwanda, but it is still a human tragedy. Canada is endeavouring to help create a new sense of legal responsibility for such situations and to supply people and material to alleviate the situation. Certainly more needs to be done.

I recognize what lies behind Senator St. Germain's impatience. The international community is learning how to handle such issues through concerted action. Canada acting against the views and opinions of African nations would not enhance anyone's security but would likely endanger Canadians.

**Senator St. Germain:** Senator Jaffer is credible and understands Africa, from which she immigrated to Canada. However, why is it that the government does not include the opposition when it undertakes to send a special envoy in such situations, whether sending someone to the Olympics or to a country such as Sudan? It is perceived as a partisan action rather than as a joint effort of the Senate.

• (1500)

Some members on this side have great credentials on human rights and related matters. Why would both sides of this establishment not be included in works of this nature so that we can work as a unified force and have a unified voice in the world?

**Senator Tkachuk:** That might be a little argumentative.

**Senator Austin:** Again, that is an interesting idea, and one that should be given further study.

We have a Westminster model, one in which the system encourages the opposition to criticize the government and endeavour to replace it. The government side is very eager to prove that it is carrying out its responsibilities effectively and ought not to be replaced.

Apart from that general lecture, the honourable senator will recall that Senator Jaffer, as he said, has a special background, and I believe she was chosen more for her background than for her partisanship. The honourable senator may recall also that Senator Lois Wilson, an independent senator, was asked by the government to play an important role in the situations in both the Korean peninsula and in Sudan, and she did so very effectively. She was not chosen for partisan reasons but because she had a special access to the people and issues of the time.

[Translation]

#### DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

**Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government)**  
Honourable senators, I have the honour to table a delayed answer to the question raised by Senator St. Germain on October 6, 2004, regarding bovine spongiform encephalopathy and aid to the cattle industry.

#### AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

##### BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY— AID TO CATTLE INDUSTRY

*(Response to question raised by Hon. Gerry St. Germain on October 6, 2004)*

The Honourable Senator suggests that the Government in some way has brought into question the integrity of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Government fully recognizes the CFA's unwavering commitment to representing the interests of its members. In fact, Bob Friesen, President of the

Canadian Federation of Agriculture, made the September 10th repositioning the industry announcement with Minister Mitchell in Winnipeg to express the CFA's support for the plan.

As the Honourable Senator indicated, the CFA proposed government assistance to address reduced producer income and the current oversupply of animals in the Canadian herd. The Government agrees that these issues are important, and the industry repositioning package announced on September 10 contains program elements designed specifically to address these pressures.

Producer income is, of course, a major concern; the economic stability of producers is critical to not only the agriculture sector but also to the rural communities that depend on it. Governments have delivered a number of programs to keep the industry functioning. In March, the Transitional Industry Support Program (TISP) provided direct payments totalling \$995 million to producers to bridge the gap until CAIS (Canadian Agriculture Income Stabilization program) payments were available.

Over the summer, the federal and provincial governments, in close consultation with the cattle industry, including the Canadian Cattleman's Association and the CFA, discussed a range of options to assist the industry but ultimately agreed that CAIS is the best program available to address reduced producer income resulting from BSE. In response to the need for immediate cash flow, the package announced on September 10 provides for advance payments of the 2004 CAIS in those provinces that choose to participate.

Governments considered a range of measures, including the tax incentives proposed by the CFA, but the decision was ultimately taken to let CAIS respond to income pressures. The cash advances will allow producers to benefit from CAIS funds now. Though we may differ on the instrument used to address producer income, we share the CFA's commitment to achieving this objective.

The September 10 repositioning package includes several elements whose purpose it is to address the oversupply of animals in the Canadian herd.

A national Loan Loss Reserve, funded by the federal government, will be established to encourage lenders to extend financing to groups or individuals planning slaughter facilities.

In addition, a number of cost-shared programs were announced to address specific imbalances in supply and demand. The provinces will select the programs that address pressures facing their producers.

Set-aside programs for fed cattle and feeder cattle will hold a number of animals off the market, taking pressure off slaughter capacity and providing some buoyancy for prices. The federal government will provide 60 per cent of

projected program funds in those provinces that choose to participate. Provinces may provide some or all of their 40 per cent. The province may alternately elect to not contribute funds, but the federal portion could be offered if the province administers the program.

Another program element would be to address the oversupply of older animals in the system. It has proven difficult to get these animals to market given the abundant supply of younger animals, and the resulting lack of slaughter space for older animals that would normally be culled.

Under this program, producers will receive a payment for eligible animals, which will be humanely euthanized and disposed of in an environmentally acceptable manner. The federal government will cost share this program on a 60:40 formula with interested provinces; the program can only be offered 60:40 since costs such as trucking and disposal must be paid in full.

The Government is committed to the long term viability of the industry, and is addressing both the immediate pressures, as well as underlying structural issues facing the industry.

#### LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT SCRUTINY OF REGULATIONS

##### MEMBERSHIP OF JOINT COMMITTEES— MESSAGE FROM COMMONS

**The Hon. the Speaker** informed the Senate that the following message had been received from the House of Commons:

*IT WAS ORDERED*,—That the Standing Joint Committees be composed of the Members listed below:

#### LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

Members: Angus, Boulianne, Byrne, Eyking, Galant, Goldring, Kadis, Lapierre (Lévis-Bellechasse), LeBlanc, Simard, Stinson, Vellacott—(12)

Associate Members: Abbott, Ablonczy, Allison, Ambrose, Anders, Anderson (Cypress Hills-Grasslands), André, Batters, Benoit, Bezan, Breitzkreuz, Brown, Carrie, Casey, Casson, Chatters, Chong, Cummins, Day, Devolin, Doyle, Duncan, Epp, Finley, Fitzpatrick, Fletcher, Forseth, Goodyear, Gouk, Grewal (Newton-North Delta/Delta Nord), Guergis, Hanger, Harper, Harris, Harrison, Hearn, Hiebert, Hill, Hinton, Jaffer, Jean, Johnston, Kamp, Keddy, Kenney, Komarmicki, Kramp, Lauzon, Lukiwski, Lunn, Lunney, MacKay (Nova-Centre), MacKenzie, Mark, Menzies, Merrifield, Miller, Mills, Moore (Port Moody-Westwood-Port Coquitlam), Moore (Fundy-Royal), Nicholson, Obhrai, O'Connor, Oda, Pallister, Penson, Plamondon, Poilievre, Prentice, Preston, Rajotte, Reid, Reynolds, Richardson, Ritz, Scheer, Schellenberger, Schmidt, Skelton, Smith (Kildonan-St. Paul), Solberg, Sorenson, Stronach, Thompson (New Brunswick-Southwest), Thompson (Wild Rose), Tilson, Toews, Trost, Tweed, Van Loan, Warawa, Watson, White, Williams, Yelich.

#### SCRUTINY OF REGULATIONS

Members: Anders, Bevilacqua, Bouchard, Grewal (Newton—North Delta/Delta Nord), Guay, Hanger, Kamp, Lee, Macklin, Meyers, Wappel, Wasylcia-Leis—(12)

Associate Members: Abbott, Ablonczy, Allison, Ambrose, Anderson (Cypress Hills-Grasslands), Batters, Benoit, Bezan, Breitzkreuz, Brown, Carrie, Casey, Casson, Chatters, Chong, Cummins, Day, Devolin, Doyle, Duncan, Epp, Finley, Fitzpatrick, Fletcher, Forseth, Gallant, Goldring, Goodyear, Gouk, Grewal (Fleetwood-Port Kells), Guergis, Harper, Harris, Harrison, Hearn, Hiebert, Hill, Hinton, Jaffer, Jean, Johnston, Keddy, Kenney, Komarmicki, Kramp, Laframboise, Lauzon, Lukiwski, Lunn, Lunney, MacKay (Central Nova), MacKenzie, Marceau, Mark, Ménard, Menzies, Merrifield, Miller, Mills, Moore (Port Moody-Westwood-Port Coquitlam), Moore (Fundy-Royal), Nicholson, Obhrai, O'Connor, Oda, Pallister, Penson, Poilievre, Prentice, Preston, Rajotte, Reid, Reynolds, Richardson, Ritz, Scheer, Schellenberger, Schmidt, Skelton, Smith (Kildonan-St. Paul), Solberg, Sorenson, Stinson, Stronach, Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest), Thompson (Wild Rose), Tilson, Toews, Trost, Tweed, Van Loan, Vellacott, Warawa, Watson, White, Williams, Yelich.

That a message be sent to the Senate to acquaint their Honours of the names of the Members to serve on behalf of this House on the Standing Joint Committees.

*ATTEST:*

WILLIAM C. CORBETT  
*The Clerk of the House of Commons*

[English]

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

##### MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Munson, seconded by the Honourable Senator Chaput, for an Address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her Speech from the Throne at the Opening of the First Session of the Thirty-eighth Parliament.—(2nd day of resuming debate)

**Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I am pleased to rise today to offer a few brief remarks on the Speech from the Throne delivered by Her Excellency the Governor General in this chamber on October 5.

On behalf of the official opposition in the Senate, I would like to extend our best wishes as Her Excellency continues to undertake the important vice regal work during an extended mandate.

Honourable senators, I would also like to salute the Honourable Senator Lynch-Staunton —

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

**Senator Kinsella:** — who serves this chamber and all of Parliament with wisdom and care. In particular, I wish to thank Senator Lynch-Staunton for his remarkable and distinguished leadership for more than a decade as the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate. The honourable senator continues to be a role model for all who seek to meet their constitutional obligations in this upper house of Parliament. It is my good fortune to have Senator Lynch-Staunton as a colleague and a mentor. I hasten to add that any failings that I demonstrate while serving as his successor should be predicated of the apprentice and not of the master journeyman.

**Senator Lynch-Staunton:** Thank you.

**Senator Robichaud:** We will hold you to that.

**Senator Kinsella:** Honourable senators, it was made clear in the Speech from the Throne itself that it does not have much that is new. Indeed, it might be better titled “The Legacy of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien — a reprise,” because so much of the content could be footnoted to previous editions. Her Excellency was kind enough to say explicitly that the new parliament will be working in part from the text of the final Speech from the Throne of the last parliament. This is a rather novel departure from parliamentary traditions, as each parliament has traditionally been considered distinct from its predecessors. Some might think that the expression of the will of the Canadian people in the intervening election ought to be given more than a token nod, but this does not appear to be on the agenda of the new government.

Unfortunately, the Speech from the Throne did not even provide an indication as to which of the measures from the predecessor speech Canadians might expect will be implemented or continued, which is perhaps not surprising as the government itself seems to have little or no idea as to which of those commitments it will pursue.

Rather than trying to second guess what the government itself failed to express, I will simply note that a Speech from the Throne is often almost as interesting for what it does not say as for what it does.

For example, I was disappointed that there was no reference to the fact that, pursuant to United Nations resolution 53/197, this coming year of 2005 has been proclaimed the International Year of Microcredit. Governments are invited to highlight and give enhanced recognition to the role of microcredit in the eradication of poverty, its contribution to social development and its positive impact on the lives of people living in poverty. This government passed up the opportunity to do so.

Microcredit in the form of credit, savings and related business services is an important element of providing access to capital for people living in extreme poverty. The program uses methodologies that promote responsibility, self-esteem and financial self-sufficiency by capturing the capacity of communities to solve their own problems. It is a key strategy in achieving many of the goals agreed upon at major global conferences over the last 10 years, particularly including eradication of poverty and empowerment of women.

This non-traditional lending strategy has effectively made commercial credit available to low-income people, which in practical terms has meant primarily women. The reality is that these individuals would not normally be eligible for loans of any kind in any amount. Microcredit programs have achieved excellent repayment rates. They play a significant role in helping low-income people to become self-sufficient while at the same time achieving development in their communities. The Speech from the Throne would have been an excellent place to at least make mention of this poverty-reduction mechanism and to affirm Canadian support for it.

This honourable house might well do a great service for the government and the people of Canada by recalling Canada's international obligation to take steps through international assistance and cooperation for the protection and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights in the world community. This government must remember that Canada did ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Honourable senators, the coming year, 2005, will also be a banner year for the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, both of which will be celebrating the centenary of their entry into Canada as full-fledged provinces. In light of continuing concerns over western alienation, the government might have taken this opportunity to highlight the importance of these provinces and their contributions to the nation.

It also is with some surprise that I noted the absence of any mention of the valiant efforts of our Canadian Olympic and Paralympic athletes this year. Individual performances were admirable in both events, and there was considerable discussion after the fact relating to the nature and scope of government support for these national performers. Something more than the promise contained in the Speech from the Throne that “the Government will also work with partners to enhance sports activities at both the community and competitive levels” was in order. In saying this, we should all bear in mind that the eyes of the world will again be on Canada when the 2010 Winter Olympics are held in Vancouver. The fact that there was an announcement of additional supplemental funding for coaching less than a week after the speech suggests that there is a serious lack of coordination and planning in the government. This is not an auspicious beginning for a new government.

• (1510)

Honourable senators, during the dissolution period, a number of former parliamentarians passed away, including our former colleague in the Senate, the Honourable Jack Marshall. To his family we have already extended our sympathy.

Honourable senators, numerous questions have been raised in recent years about accountability and transparency in the Government of Canada. While these are basic requirements of a truly open government, the apparent absence of effective control mechanisms over expenditures in one form or another, ranging from payments for non-existing reports to difficulties simply tracking how taxpayers' dollars were spent, have resulted in a loss of confidence in the ability of government to manage effectively.

Restoring the trust of Canadians after many years of reports of problems will be difficult, and the Speech from the Throne does not give any indication as to what, if any, steps the government proposes to take.

One area in which the government has been particularly remiss has been in its inability to provide anything even resembling accurate forecasting of its revenues and spending. The government has a litany of excuses for the size of the error each year, but the fact is that Canadians no longer place any reliance whatsoever on the figures being mooted about. Disbelief is widely expressed from the moment the federal budget is tabled and continues right through the year up to the moment when the government finally is compelled by actual results to acknowledge that its figures were wrong. Even with the inevitable fiscal surprises during the course of a year, both unpleasant, as with BSE and SARS, and pleasant, as when economic and revenue growth appear to exceed expectations, government estimates have become notorious for being consistently inaccurate and unreliable. Protestations that the government is blending private sector forecasts and then hedging on the conservative side simply means that the likelihood of an accurate outcome is negligible. If the government expects that it will have a large surplus at the end of the year to apply to the national debt, it should simply say so. Reduction of debt surely is a legitimate goal, one which the government should not be reluctant to acknowledge.

In order to bring some rationality to the process, the government should consider setting up an independent parliamentary budget office to provide the kind of objective, timely, non-partisan analyses required for economic and budget decisions by the government, by Parliament, and even by Canadians. Key to the effectiveness of such a body would be the disclosure of assumptions and methods used, which would reinforce the notion that the information generated is both objective and impartial. Naturally, publication of an evaluation of its economic forecasting record is an essential element to ensure the openness and transparency that Canadians ought to be able to expect from their governments.

Regular updates to economic projections would also be of assistance in giving all concerned either reassurance that plans would stay on track or an opportunity to make appropriate revisions to accommodate significant variances from initial expectations.

Honourable senators, after numerous promises by the Liberal government over the last decade to produce legislation to protect whistle-blowers in the civil service, I was surprised and even disappointed to note the absence in the Speech from the Throne

of any mention of an intention to repair this continuing gap in our laws. Canada urgently needs comprehensive legislation with real teeth to ensure that those who expose corruption and wrongdoing will not face reprisal. Again, I found it curious that the government would make no mention of the issue in the Speech from the Throne, and yet introduce a bill on the subject less than a week later.

There was a time when the Speech from the Throne, honourable senators, was expected to be in the nature of a fairly comprehensive outline of the government's intentions regarding legislation in a new session, a mechanism by which to inform Canadians as to what they could expect from the government. Sadly, it would appear that this is yet another tradition that is being cast overboard.

In passing, I would note that the same arguments regarding the need for effective protection for whistle-blowers also hold for the private sector. Amendments to the Canada Labour Code might well be in order.

Also missing from the Speech from the Throne was any reference to health care for Canadians facing mental health problems. The Kirby-LeBreton Senate report of 2002 on the state of the health care system in Canada noted that, "about 3 per cent of Canadians suffer from severe and chronic mental disorders that can cause serious functional limitations and social and economic impairment, such as bipolar personality and schizophrenia." Combined with stress, depression and cognitive impairment, mental health is, honourable senators, an issue that merits serious ongoing attention.

While this is not an area that generally lends itself to the instant fix of increased funding, which seems to be the preferred approach of this government when it comes to health care, there are serious infrastructure issues in relation to mental health care that do need to be addressed. As I mentioned, our Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology has already resumed its study of mental health and mental illness. Perhaps the lack of mention of the issue in the Speech from the Throne will not be reflected by a lack of action on the part of the government in beginning to come to grips with the problems in this area that are faced by so many Canadians.

Although there was no mention of it in the Speech from the Throne, it appeared, briefly, that the government had finally recognized, after years of discussion and focused debate, that an arbitrary date does not make a satisfactory dividing line for the distribution of funding to those unfortunate Canadians who have contracted hepatitis C. This represented a significant change in policy, which one would have expected would have been included in the Speech from the Throne. Keeping in mind that the purpose of the speech is to provide Canadians and Parliament itself with an outline of government plans for a session, it was curious that significant announcements were being made so soon after its delivery, without any real indication of their priority being contained within the speech itself.

However, honourable senators, it turned out that the applause may have been premature, with the Speech from the Throne remaining mute on the matter, and with the government restoring the status quo ante by saying that it has gone back to studying the issue rather than taking action to deal with those unfortunate Canadians who were infected by tainted blood prior to 1986 or after 1990.

In another area of dashed hopes, the Speech from the Throne has again failed to come to grips with the ongoing problems faced by post-secondary education students. The Canada Learning Bond Program surely is a positive step, but it is hardly sufficient by itself. Improvements to the Canada Student Loans Program would help overcome the financial barriers students face in pursuing post-secondary education and training opportunities. A range of other measures could be implemented to ease the crunch, measures that might include a broader definition of eligible expenses, increased family income thresholds, increased Canada Education Saving Grants, a registered lifetime savings program and first-year tuition grants for students from low-income families. Honourable senators, education is a key element in maintaining the prosperity of our nation and we neglect it at our peril.

The vague reference to “options for reform of our democratic institutions” in the Speech from the Throne was also not very reassuring. After years of discussion followed by years of inaction, perhaps the government will finally come to the realization that massive changes are neither readily nor easily agreed upon. Rather than waiting for the mythical “perfect storm” to sweep in and bring everyone simultaneously to the same conclusion, the government ought to consider a process of incremental change. There are some fairly simple starting points that do not require huge leaps. Perhaps we could begin, as is being proposed by my colleague Senator Oliver, by choosing the Speaker of the Senate by election, as has been done in the House of Commons, rather than by the Prime Minister exercising prime ministerial fiat. This would barely qualify as “one small step,” but it would be indicative of an openness to actual change.

• (1520)

Equalization payments are a subject of more than passing interest to all provinces in Canada. Honourable senators will recall that the intent of the program is to enable less wealthy provinces to offer comparable levels of service at comparable levels of taxation and that the program itself is written directly into the Constitution of Canada. The extravagant claim that the government plans to implement “the most fundamental reform of the Equalization Program in its 47-year history” is one that I am sure will be viewed with some concern in many quarters. It is not clear to me what “fundamental reform” is required simply to make the total payments more stable and predictable.

It was just last spring that the Liberal government renewed the Equalization Program through to March 31, 2009, including what were touted to be improvements to the formula. Therefore, I ask if all that is now to be thrown overboard.

In this context, had the result of the election been somewhat different, the Conservative Party of Canada government would have revisited the equalization formula, moving toward a 10-province standard that excludes non-renewable resource revenues. This latter provision is one that would be particularly helpful to provinces like Saskatchewan and the Atlantic provinces. Included in this proposal would be transitional provisions to ensure that no province would receive less money under the new formula.

Honourable senators, the Employment Insurance Program continues to generate large surpluses, largely because the government “temporarily” took away the independent rate-setting responsibility of the Employment Insurance Commission in 2001 and has intentionally set the rate at a level certain to collect far more than is required for the proper operation of the program. In doing so, the Liberal government has ignored the Auditor General’s advice as to an appropriate accumulated surplus. It is time that this fiscal flim-flam is brought to an end, with funds collected under this rubric being restricted to utilization for the benefit of the contributors and not for any other purpose.

Another element of the economy that, once again, received scant attention in the Speech from the Throne is the entire agricultural sector. One critical ongoing problem in this area lies in the fallout from the single case of BSE, a severe problem which has crippled the cattle industry in Canada, in the West, in Ontario, in Quebec and in Atlantic Canada. It is not good enough that there was hardly a mention of it. Indeed, BSE was mentioned only once in passing, and that was in relation to obtaining reliable access to U.S. markets. The government’s efforts to fully reopen the border to Canadian beef exports to the United States have, to date, been very unproductive — a failing of this government.

With estimates exceeding \$6 billion lost along with thousands of jobs since May 20, 2003, when the one and only case of BSE was found, one wonders what it will take to actually get serious attention from this government. The lacklustre efforts to assist and compensate cattle producers to date have been widely criticized as being half measures at best, measures that are likely to create longer-term problems as they serve primarily as a means under which the debt load of farmers will be substantially increased.

Indeed, Canadian farmers in all parts of Canada face constant challenges ranging through a full gamut of problems, including increased costs of inputs, foreign subsidies, adverse weather conditions, increased debt loads and low grain prices. On top of that, the current government safety net, if one can call it that, appears to be largely ineffective and overly bureaucratic.

Symptomatic of the problem is the continuing decrease in the number of farm workers and the increased necessity for those who do make the effort to continue with their chosen career as farmers to find it necessary to obtain other jobs simply to make ends meet.

The U.S. barriers to our softwood lumber exports, honourable senators, similarly received scant attention in the Speech from the Throne. Canadian lumber firms have closed some 50 mills and laid off thousands of workers. Meanwhile, the U.S. has collected around \$3.4 billion in duties from Canadian firms. Will there be actual action on this front by this government during this session of Parliament? The vague promise that there will be “measures designed to develop a more sophisticated and informed relationship involving business and government officials in the United States” is not particularly reassuring.



Honourable senators, while the operation of our trading agreements, including both NAFTA and the World Trade Organization, should ultimately lead to a resolution of the differences, a temporary support program for workers displaced by the softwood lumber dispute would not be out of place.

Other resource-based industries have been victims of international trade disputes as well as natural disasters and epidemics. The government has been slow to respond in almost every case, and I see nothing in this Speech from the Throne to suggest that Canadians can expect better in the future. In Atlantic Canada, the fisheries have been in trouble for an extended period of time, and, as usual, the government has not even thought it worth a mention in the Speech from the Throne. A previous promise of legislation to modernize the Fisheries Act seems to have been left by the wayside.

A Conservative government would develop a fisheries managerial framework to give provinces and territories more input and control over fisheries management in their regions. The 200-mile limit would be extended to the edge of the continental shelf. Greater investment in fisheries science and in fisheries research, especially in relation to sustainable harvesting, would be high on the priority list. Increased fines for first occurrences of ocean spills together with possible seizure of both ships and cargo until fines are paid would go some way to reducing a recurring problem.

Whatever the industry, whether it be farmers, fishers or forestry workers, a Conservative government would not be hesitant to move swiftly to ensure adequate support and compensation, particularly where circumstances beyond their control require a response.

Whatever the current government may think, our traditional resource-based industries continue to have a vital role to play in the new economy. The people who work in these industries feed and house Canadians while acting as the stewards of our land and resources. Despite their importance to our economy and our collective life as a country, they continue to be given short shrift by this government.

As I review the scope of this Speech from the Throne, I see many gaps in its coverage, gaps which vary in size and importance, but gaps nevertheless that cry out for comment and constructive action by all in Parliament.

At the outset, I indicated that items which are left out or paid scant attention are often just as informative as to government intentions as the items that are specifically mentioned. I have noted just a few of them and suggest that Canadians deserve better and should demand better.

Honourable senators, one of the functions of opposition in our Parliament is to ensure that those who are neglected or ignored by the government are not, in the final result, left out at sea.

• (1530)

It remains to be seen whether or not the many gaps and oversights in this latest Speech from the Throne will end up being properly addressed by the government. While a Conservative government would have made different choices in many areas and would have offered better from the outset, the Conservative opposition will demand better on behalf of all Canadians.

#### MOTION IN AMENDMENT

**Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Leader of the Opposition):** Accordingly, honourable senators, I move, seconded by the Honourable Senator Stratton, that the following be added to the address:

and we urge Your Excellency's advisors, when implementing the details of their proposals, to review the Employment Insurance program to ensure that it remains well-suited to the needs of Canada's workforce, to reduce and improve the fairness of taxes, to be unwavering in the application of fiscal discipline, to examine the need and options for reform of our democratic institutions, including electoral reform, and to rise above partisanship to address the public interest;

That Your Excellency's advisors consider the advisability of the following:

1. an Order of Reference to the appropriate committee of each House of Parliament instructing the committee to recommend measures that would ensure that all future uses of the Employment Insurance program would only be for the benefit of workers and not for any other purpose;

2. opportunities to further reduce the tax burden on low and modest income families consistent with the government's overall commitment to balanced budgets and sound fiscal management;

3. an Order of Reference to the appropriate committee of each House of Parliament instructing the committee to make recommendations relating to the provisions of independent fiscal forecasting advice for parliamentarians including the consideration of the recommendations of the external expert;

4. an Order of Reference to the appropriate committee of each House of Parliament instructing the committee to recommend a process that engages citizens and parliamentarians in an examination of our electoral system with a review of all options;

5. with respect to an agreement on ballistic missile defence, the assurance that Parliament will have an opportunity to consider all public information pertaining to the agreement and to vote prior to a government decision;

And we ask Your Excellency's advisors to ensure that all measures brought forward to implement the Speech from the Throne, including those referred to above, fully respect the provinces' areas of jurisdiction and that the financial pressures some call the fiscal imbalance be alleviated.

**Senator Murray:** You're going to accept that, of course, Senator Austin?

**Senator Austin:** Later, later.

**Senator Murray:** Let the negotiations begin.

**The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*:** It was moved by the Honourable Senator Kinsella, seconded by the Honourable Senator Stratton, that —

**Senator Kinsella:** Dispense.

**The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*:** Is the house ready for the question?

Senator Mercer wishes to debate the amendment and the resolution.

**Hon. Terry M. Mercer:** Honourable senators, I guess that would not be classified as a ringing endorsement of the Speech from the Throne.

Honourable senators, I am pleased to rise to participate in this debate.

**Senator Stratton:** To give a ringing endorsement.

**Senator Mercer:** I would like to acknowledge Senators Munson and Chaput for moving and seconding the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Before I begin, I would like to congratulate the leadership on both sides of this chamber and I look forward to working with them in this session.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge Senator Lynch-Staunton for his dedication as an outstanding Leader of the Opposition. Upon my arrival, Senator Lynch-Staunton offered his guidance. Maybe on occasion he tried to misguide me, but I will not dwell on that. I thank him.

I would like to take this opportunity to discuss a few of the points raised by Her Excellency during the speech. As a proud Atlantic Canadian, I was pleased to hear the government reiterate its commitment to our diverse region. The program presented in the Speech from the Throne is positive for all Canadians. A minority situation clearly presents challenges to the Prime Minister and the government, but the speech stands as a living document outlining the government's priorities. The speech focuses on health care, families, a new deal for cities and communities, balanced budgets and a strong growing economy.

Strengthening health care strikes a chord in the heart of every Canadian. As we have seen with the 2004 health accord, the Atlantic provinces will receive \$2.5 billion in additional funding over the next 10 years, plus their respective shares of the \$5.5 billion Wait Time Reduction Fund. This is good stuff.

In addition, discussions are underway for a version of a national pharmacare program, lowering the burden of high drug costs, especially for those Canadians with lower incomes and seniors on fixed incomes. This is a necessary move.

A healthy environment is also important. For Nova Scotia, there is a commitment of \$500 million to help clean up contaminated sites, including the Sydney tar ponds. It is time to get on with these issues. The clean up of the Sydney tar ponds needs to start now. We have had enough talking.

I met recently with Bernd Christmas, the CEO of the Membertou First Nations. The Membertou Aboriginal community is keen to play a role in the cleanup effort at the tar ponds site. What is more encouraging is that the community hopes to develop the expertise to become a leader in environmental cleanup.

I was also encouraged to see the Government of Canada offering to provide enhanced offshore revenue payments to Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia. These payments, together with existing measures under the offshore accords, will ensure that both provinces receive greater benefits from their respective offshore revenues.

At the same time, the government will remain steadfast in its commitment to sound financial management, including paying down the debt and continuing to build upon the consecutive budget surpluses.

The Speech from the Throne confirms the commitment of government to regional development and to tools such as ACOA's Atlantic Innovation Fund. I am encouraged by the focus on innovation, as I have always been a believer in the intellectual infrastructure we possess in Nova Scotia through our universities and our network of community colleges.

Last week, I had the distinct pleasure to represent Minister McGuire at the conference of Regional Economic Development Authorities in Wallace, Nova Scotia. I am proud that all three levels of government in Nova Scotia have already been working together through the Regional Economic Development Authorities. This is in the spirit of the tripartite agreements for Vancouver and Winnipeg, which were specifically mentioned in the Speech from the Throne.

Despite our collective accomplishments, we still face challenges. Rural unemployment and the continuing out-migration of our youth are critical issues in the Atlantic region. That is why we must continue to work on solutions to offer our youth viable alternatives to going down the road. The Speech from the Throne outlines a plan to ensure venture capital for early stage businesses. This is encouraging news for the growing number of young entrepreneurs in Atlantic Canada.

I would now like to turn my attention to an issue that is close to my heart, the volunteer sector. Having worked in the volunteer sector for over 25 years, I was pleased by the government's idea of a new not-for-profit corporations act to help create conditions for the success of the many not-for-profit activities that benefit our communities. While details are limited, I am encouraged by the government's attention. However, I will not support any legislation that will limit the not-for-profit sector in attaining its goals.

As incoming chair of the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Foundation for Philanthropy in Canada, I am very interested in volunteerism and the work of charities. Charities play an important role in the lives of all Canadians. Whether providing them with health care or exposing them to the arts, charities reflect the values of all Canadians.

According to a study recently published by the Muttart Foundation entitled "Talking about Charities," there are more than 80,000 registered charities in Canada, ranging from small local groups to large institutions such as hospitals and universities. Registered charities are allowed to be exempt from a variety of taxes and enable their donors to claim tax credits for donations made to these charities.

Canadians value the work of charities and feel they play an important role in society. At the same time, the public has a healthy degree of scepticism when it comes to how charities function.

• (1540)

As with the business sector, Canadians see a need for greater accountability, with a high priority on issues such as fundraising, spending practices and financial reporting. I agree. Almost 94 per cent of Canadians feel that charities are important. The same number agrees that charities improve our quality of life. In contrast, almost 85 per cent indicated that more attention should be paid to the way charities spend their money.

Health prevention and promotion will be the cornerstone of a healthy society to come. Therefore, the onus will be put on volunteer organizations such as the Kidney Foundation, the National Ovarian Cancer Association, the Diabetes Association and others to prevent disease and to help those suffering from disease.

Are there other Bantings and Bests out there ready to discover a cure or other major breakthrough in the treatment of diseases? Without the voluntary sector, these future leaders may not have the resources to make these discoveries.

Another study worth mentioning is the National Survey on Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations, released in September 2004. It points out that non-profit and voluntary organizations often address the needs and interests of citizens where the government and private sector do not or cannot. Canadians have taken out a startling total of 139 million memberships in these organizations — an average of four memberships per person. Check your wallets. You may be a member of more. An estimated 161,000 non-profit and voluntary organizations operated in Canada in 2003. They include a wide variety of organizations such as sports and arts centres, hospitals and food banks, places of worship, and elementary and secondary schools.

Several themes emerge from the results of the national survey. Clearly, the story of not-for-profit and voluntary organizations is a story about how Canadians come together to build communities and to work for the benefit of the public. It is truly a story of how Canadians define themselves.

However, there are problems. A majority of organizations that participated in the study reported having problems achieving their goals. These findings suggest that many of them are struggling to provide the public with all the benefits that they have the potential to offer.

Honourable senators, not-for-profit and voluntary organizations are vehicles for citizen engagement. Collectively, these organizations draw on 2 billion volunteer hours — the equivalent of 1 million full-time jobs — and more than \$8 billion in individual donations to provide these services. These organizations have a substantial economic presence, with revenues totalling \$112 billion. The report, "Taking the Accord Forward," released by the Voluntary Sector Initiative also tells us that there is over \$109 billion in assets.

I ask you, honourable senators, how would we replace such an industry in Canada? Would it be possible?

Finally, I wish to draw your attention to National Philanthropy Day, November 15. We define philanthropy as the love of mankind. Philanthropy is people helping people because it is the right thing to do, not because it is a requirement. Charitable giving benefits everyone.

Last year, hundreds of charities and over 40,000 people across North America participated in ceremonies on November 15, honouring donors, large and small, volunteers, professionals and innovators in the charity field. National Philanthropy Day is the opportunity for all Canadians to recognize that when we choose to offer and give our time our nation becomes better. As a society we become more united. We become a community.

This day is becoming a huge success. In fact, the *National Post* created a special supplement last year entitled, "National Philanthropy Day," and has committed to produce it for the next five years.

I am also pleased to inform honourable senators that they will receive copies of *Advancing Philanthropy*, a bimonthly magazine highlighting the volunteer sector, and I encourage you to read it and discover the many faces of this diverse community.

I regret to inform honourable senators, however, that we have not been successful in having the federal government officially recognize this day. Through the efforts of my organization, the Association of Fundraising Professionals, and others, we are urging the federal government to have it recognized, not just for those who raise money or volunteer, but for all of those who benefit from the efforts.

In conclusion, I applaud the Speech from the Throne. It builds on the Liberal government's past successes, the successes of the Chrétien government, and the new plans of the Martin government.

We can and will do more to help all Canadians realize their potential in society. I will continue to advocate for the volunteer sector during my tenure in this chamber, and I can only hope that I will have the support of all of my honourable colleagues in doing so.

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver:** Honourable senators, the Speech from the Throne did not refer to bank mergers, and it should have. I have a longstanding interest in the subject of bank mergers, so today I rise to speak in reply to the Speech from the Throne to comment on the federal policy of restricting mergers between large Canadian financial conglomerates.

Since the last round of large bank merger proposals in 1998, many new developments have occurred in Canada. We have seen the introduction of a new regulatory framework articulated in Bill C-8 aimed at encouraging competition in the financial sector — our Banking Committee dealt with the bill in great detail — global financial consolidation continuing at a great pace, the creation of new banks and inroads by several foreign institutions, the rapid adoption of new technologies by consumers and service providers and federal government consideration of new ways to improve competition such as enabling consumers to conduct the full range of banking activities at any banking machine of their choice.

Clearly, the Canadian financial system is evolving rapidly, but I am concerned that the federal government's vision for the future of our financial system is not evolving as it should. Our largest financial institutions currently lack a crucial business option to respond to mounting international and domestic competition, and that is the ability to merge as they see fit. Worse, in my opinion, is the climate of political uncertainty they face about what their real options are or will be.

Changes in financial laws and regulations are often a response to mounting market pressures and have historically been a driver for major structural changes in the financial services industry. Thus, Parliament and other policy-makers have an essential role to play. They must ensure that the country's financial legislation and policy promotes the healthy development of the Canadian financial industry, together with ensuring continued access for Canadians and Canadian businesses to competitively priced and accessible financial services. A healthy financial industry is a key contributor to Canada's prosperity.

As public policy-makers, we senators must not jeopardize the prosperity of Canada's financial industry by not responding swiftly to evolving market developments. We must ensure that business decisions taken today are the most suited to build the foundations necessary to compete in tomorrow's environment. I believe that the best way to achieve this goal is to remove, to the greatest extent possible, political interference in the decision-making process and allow shareholders of large financial institutions the freedom to decide to merge or not to merge solely on the merits of the proposals in front of them. In fact, the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce concluded in its 2002 report on the major considerations that should apply in determining the public interest aspect of the large bank merger review process that, provided the merger proposal is approved by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions and the Competition Bureau, there is no reason for parliamentary committee scrutiny.

In 1998, the proposed mergers of the Royal Bank, the Bank of Montreal, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and the Toronto Dominion Bank were rejected by the then Minister of Finance, the Right Honourable Paul Martin. At the time, the

minister declared that the merger proposals were not "in the public interest because they would create excessive concentration in the financial sector." Although the mergers were blocked, it was recognized that a new policy framework was needed. The status quo required change.

In the same year, the Task Force on the Future of the Canadian Financial Sector, the MacKay task force, recommended that there be no general policy preventing Canadian financial institutions from merging, provided that general public interest considerations were preserved. The reform of Canada's financial sector occurred with the legislative changes in Bill C-8 enacted in 2001.

• (1550)

Bill C-8 acknowledged that mergers are a viable business strategy, and a merger review process was introduced. Nevertheless, as a matter of policy, the federal government prohibited mergers between large banks and large demutualized life insurers.

The merger review process established in 2001 closely resembles the steps the minister had followed in reviewing the 1998 large bank merger proposals. Indeed, I would argue that although we now have official merger review guidelines, the merger review framework introduced in 2001 did not bring significantly more clarity or certainty to the process the merger applicants had already endured.

Under the current large bank merger review guidelines, the Competition Bureau reviews the competition implication of the proposed merger. The Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions examines the so-called prudential implications, and the Minister of Finance, who has the final decision, appraises the public interest implications of the proposed transaction. The public can contribute to the review process through the work of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance and of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, which would be asked to advise on a specific list of questions about the public interest.

Since I believe that this process is clear and unambiguous, I was surprised by an October 2002 letter to the committee chairs of the House Finance Committee and the Senate Banking Committee in which the federal government asked both committees to conduct public consultations on the major considerations that should apply in determining whether a large bank merger proposal is in the public interest. In essence, the government thought it needed greater clarity. It sounded to me like a make-work or, more specifically, a delaying process.

In their reports released following the public consultations, the House Finance Committee and the Senate Banking Committee expressed their support for mergers as a legitimate business strategy. The Senate committee further recommended that unless there were compelling circumstances to the contrary, the Minister of Finance should assume that a merger was in the public interest where the Competition Bureau and the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions had approved it. It was the committee's view that parliamentary committees should not be involved in reviewing specific merger proposals.

In essence, the Senate committee was attempting to depoliticize the process of determining what constitutes public interest and what does not, and to introduce an element of certainty into the review of large bank mergers. In its current form, I fear the public interest test is ultimately a political test, a political decision if you will. Clearly, the committee hearings have shown that the public interest test is intrinsically linked to the federal government's vision about what structures and what level of concentration in the Canadian financial industry may best serve Canadians and Canadian businesses.

For example, in 1998, the Minister of Finance blocked the proposed large bank mergers, declaring they were not in the public interest because they would have resulted in excessive concentration in the financial sector, a statement issued only three days after the Competition Bureau had sent a letter to the merger applicants saying that the bureau could negotiate potential remedies with the parties to the proposed mergers if they felt an agreement was reachable.

In the 2003 response to the reports of both parliamentary committees regarding the public interest implications of large bank mergers, the federal government identified several key issues it wanted to be considered before finalizing a financial sector consolidation policy in Canada. Notably, the government wanted input on new measures to enhance competition in the banking industry which could mitigate some of the anti-competitive effects of large bank mergers, including guidelines for divestitures of merged bank assets; policy steps to enhance the ability of credit unions to fill the market gaps left by mergers, particularly in smaller communities; easing the restrictions on foreign banks to take retail deposits through branches in Canada, since the current policy prohibits foreign branches from taking retail deposits of less than \$150,000; and mandating shared deposit-taking at ATMs, enabling consumers to conduct the full range of banking activities at any banking machine of their choice.

The federal government also wanted input on mergers or acquisitions between or among large demutualized insurance companies and large banks. These types of combinations are currently not permitted as a matter of public policy. I believe this restriction should be lifted. If a proposed merger between a large bank and a large insurance company passes the merger review process that applies to large bank mergers, I see no reason why it should not proceed.

While the federal government had initially committed to releasing its new financial sector consolidation policy in June of 2004, I am disappointed to find that about four months later we are still waiting for a financial sector consolidation policy in Canada.

Over the last decade we have witnessed a worldwide wave of mergers and acquisitions in the financial services sector, resulting in the creation of very large financial conglomerates. Some of these have resulted from cross-pillar mergers of banks and insurance companies and other financial services entities. One of the reasons behind this wave of consolidation is the high fixed cost of new technologies and the quest by companies for economies of scale. Technology is expensive to develop and set up, but, once implemented, the cost of individual financial transactions becomes minimal. The higher the volume of

transactions, the cheaper these installations become. Technological progress is increasing the scale at which institutions must operate to be cost efficient. This pressure is happening at a time when Canadian banks are, in my opinion, losing their status in the international arena.

According to *Banker* magazine, Canada's largest bank, the Royal Bank of Canada, was ranked fifty-first worldwide in terms of assets in 2002. In 1975, the Royal Bank was the twenty-third largest bank in the world by assets. Although in 2001 the largest two U.S. banks were each more or less of the same magnitude as Canada's six largest banks combined, it is estimated that in 2002 each invested twice as much in technologies as Canada's six largest banks. This fact helps to illustrate the point that the greater an institution's revenue base, the greater is its potential for economies of scale and, thus, the greater is its capacity to afford the large fixed costs associated with technological investments.

Others have argued that size itself increases the ability of a bank to finance, on its own, large merger and restructuring among commercial enterprises. Prudential concerns limit the amount of capital that any bank can risk to any particular client. The lead banker in such a deal, and the one earning the largest fee, must also be able to allocate the most capital to such a deal.

Also, the importance of banks' non-interest income relative to traditional interest income has grown substantially in the last 20 years. Banks' non-interest income comes primarily from their asset management business, wholesale and investment banking services, including securitization of assets, and service charges on automated services. It is with great interest that I note that those are also the areas where future competition is expected to be the most intense and where scale is definitely a factor of strength. Indeed, according to some analysts, one of the most profitable business lines for large banks is the fees garnered from structuring large equity or bond offerings for big international firms and advising on mergers and acquisitions.

Like others, I believe that mergers may also lead to economies of scope arising from complementarities between product lines and cross-selling. The potential for such economies of scope is particularly evident in cross-pillar mergers, for example, in mergers between large banks and large life insurance companies. Although life insurance companies and banks both offer savings products, they also have differentiated product lines. As well, life insurance companies do not actively compete with banks with respect to essential banking services, such as payment of credit services, and are extremely active in international markets, particularly in the United States and Europe. The merged entities — large banks and large life insurance companies — would therefore have better access to international markets to cross-sell their products and exploit their respective strengths.

Honourable senators, I think we can all agree that the nature of banking has changed over the last 20 or 30 years. Traditionally, a banks' basic role was to act as an intermediary between depositors and borrowers. This role is changing substantially, I believe, as banks worldwide are required, because of regulatory and technological changes as well as competitive pressures, to reorganize and redefine their role.

• (1600)

Since 1954, Canadian banks have been gradually taking on new functions as markets have changed. As a result of the 1992 legislative changes, banks are now able to provide insurance, trust and security dealing services through their subsidiaries. The same is true for insurance companies.

As a result of legislation in 2001, insurance companies, securities dealers and mutual funds now have access to the Canadian payments system, something that historically was limited to deposit-taking institutions. This access allows them to deal directly with customers through debit cards and chequing accounts, rather than using banks as intermediaries.

The forces of globalization are even more noticeable in the wholesale market, where Canadian companies have access to large and reputable foreign financial institutions more than willing to supply financial services. Large international niche players in areas such as mergers and acquisitions and payroll services are already effective competitors, and in some cases dominant ones.

Honourable senators, the most important debate from a public policy point of view is whether a short-term or a longer-term vision of the Canadian financial services industry should guide policymakers in their assessment of competitive implications.

A second important debate is whether large-scale consolidation may be consistent with the public interest if other competition-friendly policies are adopted in order to simulate competition in the longer term.

Under the current merger review process for large banks, the Competition Bureau reviews the impact on competition. The bureau uses a two-year time frame within which to assess the likely competitive impact of a merger, most probably for very practical reasons. However, we should be cautious in using such a short time frame because, in my opinion, a focus on short-term impacts runs the risk of potentially undermining the long-term global competitiveness of the Canadian financial industry.

Honourable senators need no reminders about the importance of a vibrant Canadian financial services industry for the health and prosperity of our economy. We must ensure that our current financial consolidation policy is adapted to current market realities. We must take the actions needed to ensure that our Canadian-controlled financial industry remains strong and that its relative contribution to our economy is to be maintained and expanded.

Some six years have passed since the last round of large bank merger proposals. New measures to enhance competition in the financial services industry have been —

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable Senator Oliver, I regret to advise that your 15 minutes have expired.

**Senator Oliver:** Your Honour, I would ask for two or three more minutes.

[ Senator Oliver ]

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is it agreed, honourable senators?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**Senator Oliver:** In those six years, the financial sector evolved rapidly with the adoption of new technology, the unbundling of financial services and a wave of consolidation at home and mostly abroad. I support those who believe that we must consider large bank mergers as a legitimate business strategy fully capable of meeting the requirements of the public interest test and consistent with protecting and expanding Canadian consumers and business access to competitively priced financial services.

I believe the federal government's financial consolidation policy, which many await with waning patience, should clearly reflect the public interest considerations and be free of any form of political interference.

We cannot afford to have new measures in place aimed at increasing competition both from domestic and foreign service providers while simultaneously restricting mergers between large financial institutions as a matter of policy. Consolidation between large players in the financial industry is viewed elsewhere in the world as a viable business strategy to build the foundation for tomorrow's competitive environment, and this option must be available for our institutions as well.

Will we have to wait until our Canadian-controlled large financial institutions become obsolete in the face of a future global financial world dominated by big, diverse and technologically oriented service providers to react? To ask the question is to answer it. The time for action is now.

[Translation]

**Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool:** Honourable senators, today I want to talk to you about something that is dear to my heart: Canada's place in the international Francophonie.

Two weeks ago, Senator Chaput talked to you about the joys and challenges of being a Franco-Manitoban and the importance of defending and, better yet, promoting the linguistic duality that is one the most significant characteristics of our great country.

Today I will pick up where Senator Chaput left off, but I will go beyond our national borders. As an Acadian from the peninsula in northeast New Brunswick, this year I have had the wonderful experience of celebrating the four-hundredth anniversary of the arrival of the Acadians, a people who, by force of circumstance, now live throughout the world.

Acadians can be found not only on the peninsula, but in the Acadian provinces and all across Canada. They also live in France, the United States and elsewhere in this great world. However, this year, in 2004, they came back to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to celebrate their four-hundredth anniversary. I was not alone in welcoming them; some of you also made the trip to Grand-Pré to offer your wishes, to witness their enthusiasm and happiness at seeing each other, and to remind them to come back to the Acadian peninsula in 2009 for the next Acadian World Congress.

The gathering of Acadians dispersed throughout the world is a good reason for Canada to get involved outside its borders. There are many other reasons. You will agree with me that since the days of Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, Canada has earned an excellent reputation abroad.

Our country is perceived as being moderate, open-minded, welcoming and objective. Our elected representatives, public servants, and members of the police are often consulted by foreign countries, and our regular participation in electoral or peacekeeping missions has earned us a warm place in the hearts of many throughout the world.

In the Speech from the Throne, the government said something in which I have always strongly believed. It confirmed Canada's commitment in those regions of the world where poverty and violence are rampant and democracy absent.

The government proposes to create an organization called the Canada Corps, which will give young Canadians the opportunity to help less fortunate countries by sharing their values and experiences.

Where does the Francophonie fit into this? What is planned for the Canada Corps will complement various initiatives already in place. The first that comes to mind — and honourable senators will forgive me for my parochialism — is the international cooperation program at the Bathurst campus of the New Brunswick Community College.

This program has been in place since 1984. I recently met with the program administrators, who send teachers and project officers to countries such as Burkina Faso, Congo, Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, Mauritania, Vietnam, Tunisia, Algeria and Rwanda. An odd coincidence, is it not, that these are all members of the Francophonie?

The people sent out to these countries by the New Brunswick Community College provide training and assistance to regional communities in creating infrastructures or services in the areas of electronics, mechanics, informatics, office automation or metallurgy.

The NBCC does not just export knowledge. It also opens its doors to international students from these same countries to do basic or advanced studies in these fields at Bathurst.

Although the winters on our peninsula can be a daunting prospect to some of these foreign students, no one has ever frozen to death, thanks to the warmth of their reception at the college. If the Kyoto accord is not adopted, perhaps a day will come when African students will be able to go out without a coat in winter. The Bathurst Community College is not the only Canadian body with an international program involving the countries of the Francophonie.

To give just one other example, there is the Société éducative de l'Alberta, connected with Edmonton's Centre culturel Marie-Anne Gaboury, which is also involved in partnerships with two member countries of the Francophonie.

• (1610)

In 2001, the Société éducative de l'Alberta opened a virtual campus in Yaoundé, Cameroon, offering complete training in information technology to local educators. The Société has also opened a second virtual campus in Dakar, Senegal, to provide computer training to adults. Among the contributors to these projects were the Canadian International Development Agency and the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie. Another NGO, the Société francophone de communication de l'Alberta, collaborates with the Société éducative. The aim of the two virtual campuses in Yaoundé and Dakar is to train citizens for the new millennium.

This project is intended to make the youth of Cameroon and Senegal more aware of the concept of good governance and of the political, economic and social realities of a democratic state. It provides a virtual meeting place for the organizations, professors, researchers, teachers, students and other interested stakeholders. To me, this project is a perfect example of the role that the francophones, francophiles and bilingual people of Canada can play within the international French-speaking community.

Nor should we forget all the efforts made by Canadian universities to offer programs in French, not only to their local francophone minorities, but also to the growing number of French-speaking international students they have convinced to come to Canada. I am thinking particularly of Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, which launched its francophone studies program last month. There is also the Faculté Saint-Jean in Edmonton, Collège Saint-Boniface in Winnipeg, which the members of the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages have visited. I could also add Collège Mathieu in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan. In this region, the University of Ottawa continues to attract record numbers of French-speaking foreign students who take home with them some of our values. Some decide to take root in Canada and contribute to our cultural diversity.

Even we parliamentarians contribute to promoting and representing Canada within the international Francophonie. Of course, I am speaking of the parliamentary associations we belong to, the most important of which is the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie.

The APF is the only international association that may advise the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, an equivalent to the Commonwealth. The APF is also the only international assembly at the table of heads of state at the Sommet international de la Francophonie. The next summit will be held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, at the end of November. This is proof that Canadian parliamentarians, members of the APF, have the means to influence the international Francophonie. I would be remiss if I did not mention the influence of the Canada-France Association, the Canada-Africa Association and the Canada-Europe Association. All these associations are forums that allow us, as parliamentarians, to promote Canadian values and practices among our foreign francophone partners, and to offer them our help.

Since we speak their language, we understand them immediately and they understand us just as quickly. Since they speak our language, they can easily explain how we can help and we can easily learn how to provide our help. Since we speak the same language, we can all maintain, develop and promote this cultural diversity that makes the Francophonie so captivating.

In Canada, our linguistic duality gives us a golden opportunity to step outside our four walls or the four corners of our country to travel through the global village with our foreign francophone friends. There are very few officially bilingual countries that are as lucky as Canada. We are privileged and we should make the most of this privilege to reach out to the rest of the Francophonie and take our place on the international francophone stage.

We have already started to do so. I am pleased to read in the Speech from the Throne that Canada will assert our interests and project our values on the international stage.

I was also quite pleased to read in the Speech from the Throne that the government intends to modernize Canada's Citizenship Act to reaffirm, among other things, the importance of our linguistic duality. This will send the francophone world an even clearer image of a Canada where people who speak French are truly welcome.

I thank my government for taking internal and external measures that will better help Canada take its place in the international Francophonie.

I will conclude with a quotation from a great friend of mine, Father Zoël Saulnier of Tracadie-Sheila, New Brunswick. In his recently published book *De la savane à la dune*, he describes the French language as:

...offering the treasures of infinite riches,  
The words required for mutual understanding,  
And the strength we need to live in harmony...

That description could, you must admit, apply equally to the Francophonie. It is my firm belief that Canada has a major role to play internationally to ensure that the countries of the Francophonie live in harmony. I am pleased to see that my government shares my convictions.

On motion of Senator Banks, debate adjourned.

[English]

### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY—TERMINATION OF DEBATE ON EIGHTH SITTING DAY—MOTION ADOPTED

**Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government),** pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the proceedings on the Order of the Day for resuming the debate on the motion for the Address in reply to Her Excellency the Governor General's Speech from the Throne addressed to both Houses of Parliament be concluded on the eighth sitting day on which the order is debated.

[ Senator Losier-Cool ]

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Does the honourable senator wish to speak to the motion?

**Senator Rompkey:** No.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Does any senator wish to speak to the motion?

**Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Leader of the Opposition):** This side of the house would like an explanation.

**Senator Rompkey:** After some discussions, it was agreed that this was the practice in past parliaments, that it was worth continuing and that it should be followed in this Parliament as well.

There should be adequate time to accommodate all those who want to participate, and this side intends to do that. The number of days allocated has differed, but this general practice has been followed for some time.

**Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I would agree. When does the eight days begin? Does it start today with the passage of this motion?

**Senator Rompkey:** The eight days started from "resuming debate." In effect, we would have a total of nine days for the debate. The eventual day would be November 2, which is one week from next Tuesday.

**Senator Robichaud:** There would be nine days for debate if we speak to it every day.

**Senator Rompkey:** We would have the rest of this week, all next week and the following Tuesday.

**Senator Kinsella:** What is the rush?

**Senator Stratton:** Is that subject to change, if additional speakers wish to reply? In the interest of the Senate, could we negotiate a continuance of one or two days?

• (1620)

**Senator Rompkey:** Let me just say that I am always open to negotiations. We are negotiators.

**Senator Stratton:** Thank you.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Question!

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to.



## FLAWS IN DELIVERY OF GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT

### INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Percy Downe** rose pursuant to notice of October 6, 2004:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the basic flaws in the delivery of the Guaranteed Income Supplement program for low-income seniors.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to the notice of inquiry that I gave regarding the difficulties some seniors have encountered in receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

Even for those of us who work in the heart of our parliamentary democracy, the vastness and complexity of the federal government can often be daunting. Here in the Senate, we have incredible resources. We have access to the parliamentary library, researchers and transcripts, and it is very easy for us to simply call government departments and request information. In spite of the volume of information available, the large size of the federal government can be daunting.

Now, honourable senators, imagine that you are a retired Canadian, struggling to make ends meet on limited resources and with no access to researchers, librarians, internal Internet services and a council of your peers. In such a situation, how can the individual Canadian begin the task of comprehending the responsibilities and opportunities that are required and available?

In the area of responsibilities, the task is made much easier. In the case of the Canada Revenue Agency, armies of public servants, equipped with the very best databases and resources, ensure that Canadians are meeting their responsibilities and obligations to the public purse, and so it should be. Virtually every Canadian recognizes the need of individual responsibility to the collective good. Canadians understand their individual duty to the greater good.

However, what about the opposite situation? What about the obligation of the federal government to ensure that all Canadians fully understand the opportunities to which they are entitled? I am referring, of course, honourable senators, to the Guaranteed Income Supplement, which is available to thousands of low-income Canadian seniors but is not being paid to all those individuals. In my opinion, the fact that so many Canadian seniors are not receiving this financial benefit is a clear indication of a basic flaw in the relationship between the federal government and the individuals the government seeks to serve.

As all honourable senators know, the Guaranteed Income Supplement is a program created by the federal government to deliver additional money to low-income seniors. It is a supplement paid directly to those Canadians who receive Old Age Security but who have either little or no other income. The supplement is a great program, and it can make a tremendous difference to those Canadians struggling to make ends meet. For example, a single senior with no income other than Old Age Security may be eligible for a supplement of more than \$6,600 per year.

Honourable senators, for many thousands of Canadians, the supplement can mean the difference between a daily struggle to make ends meet and a reasonably assured income. Across Canada, the Guaranteed Income Supplement assists about 1.4 million Canadians, and it has made a real contribution to the quality of life enjoyed by many seniors.

However, a gap has developed between government's good intentions and the way the program is being delivered across Canada. In the past, many Canadian seniors did not receive the supplement because they were unaware of the program requirements. In 2001, the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development and the Status of Persons with Disability released a report called, "The Guaranteed Income Supplement: The Duty to Reach All." The thrust of this report was to point out government's obligation to let all qualified seniors know which benefits were available and to make it as easy as possible for seniors to apply.

Honourable senators, Statistics Canada estimates that, in the year 2000, over 500 potential eligible seniors in Prince Edward Island were not receiving the GIS benefit. These estimates refer only to seniors who filed tax returns.

Honourable senators, it is my understanding that there has been some improvement in this area. The then Human Resource Development Department created a take-up initiative which had the objective of reaching seniors who may be eligible for the supplement and asking them to apply. In my own province of Prince Edward Island, a number of seniors were sent information, and more are now receiving the supplement. In P.E.I., 338 seniors were identified during the 2002 take-up initiative as receiving old age security benefits but not the GIS. Of the 338 pre-filed letters sent to those seniors, over 70 per cent returned the application and were paid. As a result, in 2002, nearly 9,300 Prince Edward Island seniors were receiving the supplement, and I am quite sure it has made a substantial difference in their lives.

I am concerned that seniors who have not applied or failed to file income tax returns may very well be the ones who are most in need. They may lack the ability to complete the application form, be socially isolated or simply unaware of the benefits to which they are entitled. Within the federal government, there is information available that would allow it to identify those seniors who are qualified to receive the supplement.

As a member of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, I was surprised to learn at a recent meeting that the projections for the fiscal year show a national decrease of over 39,000 in the forecast number of potential GIS recipients. Such a major decrease leads one to question how many seniors who live in a low-income bracket and who are eligible for the GIS are not receiving the supplement.

Yes, improvements have been made, but is it not an obligation of the government to go the extra mile and ensure that everyone who is qualified receives this assistance?

Currently, the problem, as I see it, is that there are restrictions and barriers in place. Seniors who do not file tax returns may be completely unaware of the existence of the supplement, and the government seems to have no way of directly contacting seniors who do not file income tax returns. Looked at from the other end of the telescope, does the federal government not expend a huge amount of effort ensuring that Canadians pay their taxes? Should government not also ensure that it pays its qualified citizens?

We have seen progress in reducing poverty among senior citizens in Canada. Statistics Canada reports that the poverty rate for seniors in Canada has declined in the past 10 years, going from 10.8 to 7.3 per cent today. The Government of Canada should be pleased, as seniors now have one of the lowest poverty rates of any group in our country. Still, the government is responsible to ensure that everyone who is qualified receives the GIS.

I would encourage all honourable senators to use their positions to publicize the GIS program.

Finally, honourable senators, I call on the Minister of Social Development to redouble efforts to ensure that Canadian citizens are reaping the full benefits to which they are entitled as citizens of this country.

On motion of Senator Ferretti Barth, debate adjourned.

• (1630)

## TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. David Tkachuk**, for Senator Fraser, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

Motion agreed to.

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO CONTINUE STUDY ON MEDIA INDUSTRIES

**Hon. David Tkachuk**, for Senator Fraser, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications be authorized to examine and report on the current state of Canadian media industries; emerging trends and developments in these industries; the media's role, rights, and responsibilities in Canadian society; and current and appropriate future policies relating thereto;

That the Committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than Friday, June 17, 2005; and

That the papers and evidence received and taken on the subject and the work accomplished during the First and Second Sessions of the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the Committee.

Motion agreed to.

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC COVERAGE

**Hon. David Tkachuk**, for Senator Fraser, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications be authorized to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings.

Motion agreed to.

[Translation]

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC COVERAGE

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004 moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans be authorized to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings.

Motion agreed to.

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004 moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

Motion agreed to.

[English]

## NATIONAL FINANCE

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC COVERAGE

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be empowered to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings.

Motion agreed to.

## COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

Motion agreed to.

ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

## COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. Tommy Banks**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED  
TO STUDY ISSUES RELATED TO MANDATE

**Hon. Tommy Banks**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources be authorized to examine and report on emerging issues related to its mandate:

- (a) The current state and future direction of production, distribution, consumption, trade, security and sustainability of Canada's energy resources;
- (b) Environmental challenges facing Canada including responses to global climate change, air pollution, biodiversity and ecological integrity;
- (c) Sustainable development and management of renewable and non-renewable natural resources including water, minerals, soils, flora and fauna;
- (d) Canada's international treaty obligations affecting energy, the environment and natural resources and their influence on Canada's economic and social development; and,

That the papers and evidence received and taken during the Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the Committee;

That the Committee report to the Senate from time to time, no later than June 30, 2006, and that the Committee

retain until September 1, 2006 all powers necessary to publicize its findings.

**Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I have a question for Senator Banks. Does this motion relate to the continuation of a study that is already underway?

**Senator Banks:** That is partly correct. The mandate referred to here was addressed in the last session of the previous Parliament and will continue to be addressed in a series of reports. The first report was nearly completed at the end of the last Parliament and is presently being reviewed. In fact, it is being reviewed tonight by the committee and will be released forthwith. The committee will continue with a succession of reports on different matters within the purview of this order of reference.

**Senator Stratton:** The forthcoming report will conclude the previous order of reference granted by this chamber. The committee will then continue with this new mandate. How much will the study cost?

**Senator Banks:** How much is a car?

**Senator Stratton:** Is it a Rolls Royce or a Volkswagen?

**Senator Banks:** Honourable senators, I cannot answer that question because, of course, while we have the proposed order of reference before us, which I point out is exactly the same order of reference as existed in the last Parliament, word for word, I have not yet had the opportunity of hearing from the committee as to exactly how it wishes to address these matters. They are being dealt with in meetings that begin today at 5 p.m., or when the Senate rises. We do not yet have a budget beyond the ordinary emergency budget available to all committees at the beginning of sessions to cover short-term matters. How much this study will cost will depend upon the determination of the committee, which has several new members who may have some things to say about the matter. The committee must then take the budget proposal to the Internal Economy Committee, which will deal with it in the normal way and eventually report it in public to this chamber, which will ultimately determine how much this study will cost.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** If no one else wishes to speak, are honourable senators ready for the question?

**Hon. Senators:** Question!

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

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED  
TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC COVERAGE

**Hon. Tommy Banks**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources be empowered to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings.

Motion agreed to.

## AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO CONTINUE STUDY ON PRESENT STATE AND FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

**Hon. Joyce Fairbairn**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry be authorized to hear from time to time witnesses, including both individuals and representatives from organizations, on the present state and the future of agriculture and forestry in Canada.

That the papers and evidence received and taken on the subject during the Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the Committee;

That the Committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than December 23, 2005, and that the Committee retain until January 31, 2006 all powers necessary to publicize its findings.

Motion agreed to.

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO CONTINUE STUDY ON DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING OF VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL, AGRI-FOOD AND FOREST PRODUCTS

**Hon. Joyce Fairbairn**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry be authorized to examine the issues related to the development and marketing of value-added agricultural, agri-food and forest products, on the domestic and international markets;

That the papers and evidence received and taken on the subject during the Second and Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the Committee;

That the Committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than December 23, 2005, and that the Committee retain until January 31, 2006 all powers necessary to publicize its findings.

**Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, my question is addressed to Senator Fairbairn. Is this mandate a continuation of the mandate given in the last Parliament?

**Senator Fairbairn:** Yes, it is, as are the others. This mandate in particular, as Senator Stratton knows, is very broad. It is the one under which the committee conducted its study on BSE, on which we have reported and will continue to monitor.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Seeing no other senator standing to speak, are honourable senators ready for the question?

**Hon. Senators:** Question!

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

Motion agreed to.

• (1640)

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO ENGAGE SERVICES

**Hon. Joyce Fairbairn**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical, clerical, and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of its examination and consideration of such bills, subject matters of bills and estimates as are referred to it.

Motion agreed to.

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO PERMIT ELECTRONIC COVERAGE

**Hon. Joyce Fairbairn**, pursuant to notice of October 7, 2004, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry be authorized to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings.

Motion agreed to.

## BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, before we adjourn, I would like to ask a question of the deputy leader in the chamber as to whether, with the consent of this chamber, he would be willing to have us sit at 1:30 p.m. instead of 2 p.m. tomorrow, to allow the committees to conduct their business at an appropriate time, that being 4 p.m. upon rising?

For the record, I asked this question earlier today, but I want to put on record that the history of this chamber in the last parliament and other parliaments was that we meet at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesdays to allow the chamber to rise at 4 p.m. for committees to meet — which is critical — as well as that, on Thursdays, we meet at 1:30 p.m. to allow going through a proper agenda, for obvious reasons.

**Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I take it as being laid on the record, and these are sentiments with which I can associate myself. We agreed in conversations that, at some points, particularly when we get busier, this is something we would take a close look at. I would like us to discuss it further as to the date on which we implement it.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

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