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THE HONOURABLE DANIEL HAYS
SPEAKER

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, June 22, 2005

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

TRIBUTES

THE HONOURABLE ISOBEL FINNERTY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I received a notice today from the Leader of the Government in the Senate requesting, pursuant to rule 22(10), that additional time be provided for consideration of Senators' Statements for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable Senator Isobel Finnerty, who will retire from the Senate on July 15, 2005.

Hon. David P. Smith: Honourable senators, I was eager to speak today to pay tribute to Senator Isobel Finnerty because I regard myself as president of the Isobel Finnerty fan club.

Let me say just a few words about her background. She was born and raised in Timmins, Ontario. She knows Northern Ontario inside out. Her husband, Les, has been with CN management, so they have lived all over Ontario, in such places as Ottawa, London, Toronto and Burlington. She knows this province inside out, like no one else, and she knows it politically.

Something I really like about her is that when you look in the *Canadian Parliamentary Handbook* under "Profession," it reads "political organizer." To me, that is a badge of honour because it is people like her who make our democracy work. There are cynics out there who might think that this is just political patronage. We have many lawyers in this place, and I am one myself; we probably have too many. We have some senators from the medical and teaching professions and from the business world, but a place like this, which is a political institution when it comes right down to it, always needs several people whose background is political organizing. Senator LeBreton, for whom I have the highest regard, could fall into that category, as could Senator Mercer and Senator Murray, and one of my great heroes, Senator Davey. We need people who know how our parliamentary and political systems work at the grassroots. No one has paid their dues longer and harder, in by-elections, general elections and leadership conventions, to make parliamentary democracy work in this country than has Senator Finnerty. We need a few people like her in the Senate, and a few more of them on both sides.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton: Honourable senators, I will second that!

I am pleased to rise today to honour our colleague Senator Finnerty. As Senator Smith pointed out, she is a native of Timmins, Ontario and, as she has demonstrated, Timmins certainly produces good citizens.

Senator Finnerty began her remarkable career when she was appointed to the Timmins Parks and Recreation Commission at the tender age of 19, where she served as the sole woman member. When one thinks of it, a woman at the table was a rare commodity at that time. She served until 1967. She has served on boards and committees, contributing greatly to whatever community she was living in at the time.

In 1994, she was invited to Benin, Africa, as an international trainer for the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

Senator Finnerty, as Senator Smith pointed out, is a partisan, and good for her. She has worked hard for her party for several decades, provincially and federally, across the country. She has been active in the campaigns of people such as John Turner, Jean Chrétien, Brian Tobin and Ralph Goodale, to name a few. She has worked with well-known Liberals such as Elinor Caplan, David Peterson, Doug Frith and John Munro.

During her time in the Senate, she has devoted her energies to the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, as one would expect from someone from Northern Ontario.

I am told by many who know her well that she is a woman who gets the job done. We all know the old reality in politics: When a job has to be done, ask a busy person because they always find the time to take on an extra job.

While we are definitely on different sides politically, I do admire her energy and stamina. I will miss seeing her in pictures of the Liberal caucus. Practically every time there is a photo op at a Liberal caucus, there she is, at the head table.

I wish Senator Finnerty all the best. I hope she will enjoy having a little extra time to spend with her family and I would ask her not to devote so much time, please, to the Liberal Party!

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, shortly after Senator Finnerty was appointed to this chamber in 1999, she came to Vancouver for a conference. When I heard she would be in town, I made absolutely sure that she came out to dinner with me and my husband.

I was hoping at that time that if I showed her around the city, I would be able to thank her for all she had taught me over the years. I took her on a tour of Queen Elizabeth Park and then down to India town, where we were able to try on a few different saris.

• (1340)

Her appointment was such a great thrill that I was concerned that she would get so caught up in her duties as a senator that she would never again find the time to visit me in Vancouver. I remember making her promise to put aside a little bit of time to visit with me again.

Honourable senators, my wish came true two years later when I had the honour of being summoned to this place myself.

Like many others, I have had the opportunity to work with Senator Finnerty on a number of campaigns over her breathtaking career. She has worked selflessly to help others realize their dreams and goals. She can look at many people in this chamber, in the other place and at those who sit in legislatures and assemblies all over the country and identify them as people she has helped to realize their dreams and potential.

Her efforts to improve our political system to be inclusive and to allow so many others to make their mark have been exemplary. She is one of the best campaigners and organizers this country has ever seen.

Isobel Finnerty is a trailblazer for Canadian women becoming involved in political activism. She is a consensus builder and a promoter of greatness. She is a compassionate and caring person who has become like a sister, mentor and role model for me and others. It would be impossible to appreciate just how many lives she has touched or how deeply she has touched them.

It is with great pleasure, mixed with some sadness, that I pay tribute to my friend, because I know that it means we will be missing her in this chamber.

I invite her once again to call me, be it for dinner or a chat or sari shopping, because I will be just as thrilled to see her or hear from her as I have always been.

I know honourable senators will agree with me when I say that we will miss her very much.

Hon. Lowell Murray: Honourable senators, Senator Finnerty and I worked closely together on the National Finance Committee. During a good part of that time, she was my deputy chair. As a representative of the governing party, her role on the steering committee was to ensure that government legislation moved ahead. She did so quietly and efficiently, and for this I would say that the government is in her debt.

She and her party have a majority on committees, as they do in the Senate. However, her approach to our business has always been one of negotiation and honourable compromise. There are two sides to this chamber and at least two sides to most questions that come before us. All sides must have an opportunity to develop their arguments and to make their case, at which point we should come to a decision. Senator Finnerty has an instinctive appreciation of those working assumptions of our legislative system. Her understanding comes not from a long parliamentary background, for she was appointed here only six years ago, rather, it springs from her deep roots as a partisan in the Liberal Party.

She is one of those political volunteers who emerges or is thrust forward from the crowd because of an exceptional ability to mobilize, motivate and even inspire hundreds of others who are

committed to the party as an instrument of service to the country. Deeply attached to her own political family, and wise from political experience, it is impossible for Isobel Finnerty not to understand and even empathize with the perspective and the predicament of her adversaries in other parties.

Partisans like Isobel Finnerty contribute to the culture of collegiality that distinguishes the Senate at its best, even when we disagree profoundly on principles and policies

I believe she knows that, for my part, I always enjoyed our encounters and looked forward to them. I will not go so far as to say that we traded political secrets. She is far too discreet for that — and so was I, when I knew any political secrets. We did trade insights, however, and hers were always thoughtful, interesting and informative. Isobel Finnerty knows not only where the bodies are buried, but also how many of them are likely to turn up for the next election.

For those who believe, as I do, that restoring political parties to their proper and vital place is the cure for much of what ails our electoral democracy and our parliamentary democracy, Canada, as Senator Smith and Senator LeBreton have said, needs more Isobel Finnertys.

I thank her for her time and our association in this place.

Hon. Shirley Maheu: Honourable senators, in rising to pay tribute to our colleague and my friend Isobel Finnerty, I must say that I do not know of any Liberal of my generation who has participated in more election campaigns in so many diverse locations across this nation than she has.

Senator Finnerty began her lifelong affair with politics as a child when one of her brothers sought a seat in the Ontario legislature in the 1930s. Fresh out of high school, she was the first woman on the Timmins Recreation Commission in Northern Ontario, arguably one of the first women in Canada to sit on such a commission.

When she married her husband, Les, she began a lifetime of moving around the country, remaining a couple of years here and a couple of years there, while Les advanced up the ranks of the CNR to his final position as chief engineer of our railroad.

In each community, Isobel left a legacy of service with local Liberals. For more than 50 years, probably more Liberals have been trained and prepared for election readiness by Isobel Finnerty than by any other Liberal in Canada.

Having left her mark everywhere, Isobel Finnerty was the logical choice to become executive director of the federal wing of the Liberal Party in Ontario in the late 1970s. That was when I met her. In the early 1980s, she became chief political advisor to the Honourable John Munro, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, and she managed his national leadership campaign in 1984. When Greg Sorbara, the current Ontario Minister of Finance, contested the leadership of the Ontario Liberal Party in the late 1980s, Isobel Finnerty was his campaign manager. When Jean Chrétien sought the leadership of the Liberal Party of

Canada, she had a leading role in his Ontario campaign and subsequently served as the Ontario campaign manager for the party in the victorious general election of 1993.

I mention here only a few highlights of the life of one of the top political organizers ever of the Liberal Party.

Isobel Finnerty and I served many years together — I think it was eight years — on the national executive of our party. Those were exciting years. They included Mr. Trudeau as the leader of our party, then briefly as the retired leader, and ultimately leader again. These were the years of the multiple by-elections of 1978, back-to-back general elections in 1979 and 1980, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the National Energy Policy and the brief Joe Clark interregnum. They were, indeed, many exciting years.

In our party, political strategists wonder about Isobel Finnerty's uncanny sense of knowing what to do and when to do it. Her timing in the decision-making process has always the quality of being impeccable. Isobel's dual capacity for insight and instinct always made her a formidable adversary.

There are those who claim that Isobel Finnerty must be psychic or clairvoyant, perhaps in the grand tradition of William Lyon Mackenzie King; otherwise, how could anyone ever be as good as she is at what she does?

I am sad that Isobel will be leaving us soon. I wish her every happiness and contentment in her beloved cottage in Timmins and in her winter home in Burlington. Her kind does not lead us into battle often. Isobel Finnerty's *je ne sais quoi*, her energy and determination, and her organizational leadership will be greatly missed. Good luck, Isobel.

Hon. Pana Merchant: Honourable senators, I am not certain how long I have known Isobel Finnerty. We met at least 25 years ago in the midst of political organization. We know that Senator Finnerty has about 50 years of experience in the political trenches. With a huge contribution before becoming a Member of Parliament, as we say in the West, the Senate was not her first rodeo.

My husband and I had the good fortune to become associated with her about halfway through her political life. Isobel Finnerty came to Saskatchewan to help many times. She has a sense of what to do and when to do it. She has a focussed understanding of the challenges of the big picture and, at the same time, an extraordinary grasp of the details. Her many successes over the years are part of the Canadian political story. We will miss her expertise and dedication.

• (1350)

I am deeply grateful to Isobel for the friendship she extended when I first arrived here. She was always gracious and helpful, and she is a person of great reciprocity.

Senator Finnerty and I sat together on the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources. The topics were at the cutting edge of the future. On one of our

fact-finding missions, we shared the experience of driving the \$12-million fuel cell car that was still in its infancy in California. Committee hearings, both in Ottawa and elsewhere, addressed pressing issues. I know Isobel will miss that interaction.

Retirement is not only a time of reflection, but also a new beginning. Retirement will not mark an end to Isobel's contributions to Canada. We wish Isobel Finnerty every success in her future challenges. Thank you, Isobel.

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, it is days like these that we senators both lament and celebrate. The retirement of a colleague is a day to commemorate, especially when the colleague is Senator Isobel Finnerty.

Isobel's extraordinary dedication to politics and to this place cannot be matched. She has been a staunch promoter of women in politics from a young age. She is the most influential export out of Timmins, Ontario, surpassing even Shania Twain and Senator Frank Mahovlich.

While I was executive director of the Liberal Party in Nova Scotia in the early 1980s, I had the pleasure of working with Senator Finnerty, as she was executive director of the Liberal Party of Canada in Ontario. Her presence at the table during national executive meetings was unforgettable, her style of leadership unique, and her patience broad.

An interesting story that Isobel may not want me to tell you occurred at the Sheraton Hotel, in Toronto, during a provincial leadership campaign, the campaign that elected David Peterson as provincial leader.

She and I were at an establishment in the hotel that served beverages, and we were chatting about the politics of the land, when we noticed, almost at the same time, that we were both wearing very unique wedding bands. Initially we thought they were specially made at two separate places in the country, but they were identical. The wedding bands, both hers and her husband Les's and mine and my wife Ellen's were identical. It was extremely unusual. I knew then that our sense of style was equal.

I also realized that politics is deeper than appearance and material things. Isobel would influence me and many others to explore a realm of ideas in our vision for Canada. After that day, I knew she was someone I would come to know more and more.

In fact, I went on to work with her again during the 1990 leadership campaign, which saw the Right Honourable Jean Chrétien elected as leader of the Liberal Party of Canada.

Honourable senators, I can only hope that Isobel remains active in politics. She is truly an icon in the Liberal Party, an icon I could only wish to clone. Her experience and determination will most definitely serve the young generation well as they enter their own political futures. I wish her and Les all the best in the future.

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn: Honourable senators, there are some people who are born with a natural gift to teach, to guide and to persuade others in a way that pulls the victim into action before they even know they have been hooked. A prime example of that

gift would be our retiring colleague, Senator Isobel Finnerty. She has succeeded as a community activist, a philanthropist and a political wizard throughout her lifetime. For the last six years, she has been one great senator.

This woman is a patriot who is as tough as nails with a heart of gold and who gives politics a good name wherever she works in the democratic process across Canada and in other countries of the world. I doubt there is a political role that Isobel has not played for her party, prime ministers, premiers, cabinet ministers, MPs, MLAs, anyone who wanted to run, and particularly women.

I first met Isobel — it is hard for me to say this — a quarter of a century ago here in Ottawa. I was enclosed in the world of parliamentary politics as an advisor to Prime Minister Trudeau, and she had just become the executive director of the Liberal Party of Canada in Ontario.

Although Parliament always has its challenges, as we see these days, it seemed to me that my friend had the tougher calling. I learned a lot from her during that period, which actually was a blessing when totally unexpectedly I found myself chairing our national campaign in 1993. Thank heavens for people like Isobel Finnerty. I am one of those who believe that politics is a noble cause in this country.

Although one should not reveal cabinet secrets, during a tribute to Senator Finnerty a week ago, the Prime Minister asked who had been helped by Isobel in their campaigns over the years, and it seemed that practically everyone in the room leapt to their feet and stood cheering from every corner of this country. That kind of energy and wisdom has been part of her contribution as well in the Senate.

I was astounded to note, honourable senators, that over the last six years, she has served on almost every Senate committee. I will name them — because the list is huge: National Finance; Banking, Trade and Commerce; Foreign Affairs; Transport and Communications; Agriculture and Forestry; Energy, the Environment, and Natural Resources; Legal and Constitutional Affairs; Rules, Procedures, and the Rights of Parliament; and the Standing Joint Committee of the Library of Parliament. Few of us can claim that variety, and I admire you for it, Isobel.

Clearly, this is a senator who took full advantage of her all too short time here. I will miss her dedication and her good advice, but also the humour, the kindness and the encouragement she has offered me at times when life was a bit difficult.

I say to you, my friend, keep up the good fight, but take lots of time to smell those red roses with the family who loves you.

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, my friendship, my working relationship and my admiration for Isobel Finnerty predate her membership in the Senate. It goes back to 1978, and specifically in that role as political organizer.

However, there is a Senate connection. In 1978, Prime Minister Trudeau recommended the appointment of the Member of Parliament for Parkdale, the Honourable Stanley Haidasz, to the Senate, resulting in a vacancy in the House of Commons, which later that year was one of 15 by-elections that were fought on October 15, 1978, including mine.

At that particular time, the government was not in the best of favour with a lot of citizens. We won one out of the 15 by-elections; it was in Montreal. Mine did not work out either, but I must tell you that we kept it tight and very close because of the skills and dedication of Isobel Finnerty who came onto that campaign. I have been forever grateful for all that she did. Her organizational and people skills were outstanding.

The one interesting by-product of all of this is that, even though I did not become a member of Parliament at that time, I did go on a couple of years later to become the Mayor of Toronto. That successful campaign had the support of Isobel Finnerty.

I wish to finish by congratulating Isobel for her many years of political organization and her many years of community service and service to the people of Canada through this body, the Senate of Canada.

I know she will continue to make a difference in many people's lives in this country, as she has made a difference in mine. Thank you, Isobel.

• (1400)

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise to join in paying tribute to our friend and colleague the Honourable Isobel Finnerty. At the same time, however, there is a profound sense of sadness, because the senator will certainly be missed by all at the Senate.

In her past six years of service in her Senate appointment, she has worked extremely hard on many committees and served as co-chair of national caucus. While the senator certainly has been busy during her time in the chamber, her life and her work before the Senate was every bit as busy and challenging.

Approximately 57 years ago, at the age of 19, she was appointed to the Timmins Parks and Recreation Commission, where she served as the only woman for over 20 years. Also during that time, she served as campaign manager for candidates in the Timmins area in every municipal, provincial and federal election. In fact, over the years, she has served in a management capacity or as a campaign chair in more than 40 constituency-based contests in Timmins and across the country, as well in several federal and provincial leadership races. I doubt anyone in the history of campaign management for any political party in Canada can match or equal the record of this very remarkable woman.

Among the long list of accomplishments of her career are a number of firsts. For example, she was the first woman federal executive director in Ontario for her party. She was the first organizer for a federal political party in the Eastern Arctic.

Never content to sit idle, she has given of herself to a number of worthwhile organizations outside the political arena. She has volunteered countless hours for the Stratford YMCA, the Canadian Cancer Society and the Burlington Arts Centre.

Senator Finnerty is a woman of great intuition. As has been said, she knows what to do and when to do it. She has a great deal of old fashioned common sense. Her grassroots activism and tremendous generosity of spirit set a great example for all of us in public service.

Senator Finnerty, I wish you and your husband Leslie many years of good health and happiness.

Hon. Mira Spivak: Honourable senators, much has been said here about the legendary talents of Senator Finnerty in the organization of the Liberal Party. However, I know Senator Finnerty through my work with her on the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, where she was not only my friend, but a great friend of the environment. In that capacity, I did not see a hint of partisanship. She is one of the most fair-minded, open-minded and generous people I have ever met.

She even told me that she was an observer at one of the Conservative conventions when it was still Progressive Conservative, and she said that she was bowled over by the policy.

I also had the occasion to travel with her, which was an absolute delight. At one point in Vienna, we went on a shopping tour. It was then that I realized what a wonderful grandmother she was because we had to find the perfect ballet outfit for her youngest granddaughter.

Isobel, it has been a pleasure to know you. I hope that will continue, of course, after you have left the Senate. It has been a delight to work with you on the committee. I sincerely hope that you will enjoy retirement and have as much fun in the future as you have had here all along. We have had a lot of fun with you. I wish you the best of luck, Isobel.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the time for tributes and Senators' Statements has elapsed. It is time to call on Senator Finnerty.

Before I do so, I draw to your attention the presence in the gallery of family and friends of Senator Finnerty, including her husband Les and our former colleague, the Honourable Laurier LaPierre, as well as members of her staff. Welcome to the Senate.

Hon. Isobel Finnerty: Honourable senators, I deeply appreciate the comments that several senators have made here today. They reinforce the fact that I leave here with very mixed emotions. It has been an immense honour to serve the people of Canada in this house. I am particularly grateful to have been given this opportunity.

Over the years, I have found the Senate to be rich in expertise and diversity. It has been a wonderful experience for me to have been here among so many distinguished Canadians for six years.

The media's characterization of the Senate as an inert and inactive place has its roots in the past. The reality is that today the Senate is a vibrant place. Through our work in this chamber, on committees, studying important aspects of public policy and meeting with Canadians, we are building a better understanding of one another, a prosperous economy and a great future. I also note that the more than 30 per cent representation of women in this chamber is an eloquent example for every Canadian institution to follow.

I regret very much that we have failed to get Canadians to fully appreciate the Senate as the important part of our national political life that we know it to be. I have been a political organizer since high school. My involvement in politics has been an integral part of my life ever since. I am distressed to see the growing level of disinterest in the political institutions of our country. We must work cooperatively, no matter what one's political stripe, to bolster Canadian confidence in the way our political system operates.

Politics, above everything else, is people. All the great ideas that capture our attention and seek our promotion never get implemented without people. We need to motivate people from all walks of life, from all communities, from every geographic region, to get them involved, to make a difference and to join in the common experience of Canada.

I want to acknowledge the generosity of all my colleagues, past and present, during my years here. I will retire with memories that I cherish greatly. The professionalism of the Senate staff at every level, including pages, messengers, constables, maintenance crew and everyone working in administrative capacities, is a splendid example of how to do things right. I thank each one of you.

I was fortunate to have Robin Russell as my legislative assistant and Anna Morena as my executive assistant. Robin has been associated with me in a multitude of political endeavours for almost 30 years. Anna Morena has been with me from day one. I will miss our day-to-day interaction, her professionalism, loyalty, energy, judgment, dedication and, above all, her good humour. I will miss them both.

I have been blessed also by my very close-knit, caring and loyal family. My husband, Les, has abundant patience and good humour. These qualities have sure made our marriage work. I would not have followed my career without Les and my two sons, Lorne and John. They have been particularly patient with me every time an election bell has rung. In the last 50 years, I have consistently disappeared from their daily lives because I suddenly got wrapped up in political activity doing something, somewhere, to promote the causes in which I believe. I can honestly say that my life has been very rich, indeed. Words cannot express my deep gratitude to Les and my family.

Honourable senators, I will be following your deliberations from wherever I am. It has been a great privilege to have been among you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

- (1410)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

STUDY OF ISSUES DEALING WITH RATE OF PRODUCTIVITY

REPORT OF BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE TABLED

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the fifteenth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce concerning the special study on issues dealing with productivity entitled *Falling Behind: Answering the Wakeup Call — What Can be Done to Improve Canada's Productivity Performance?*

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

QUESTION PERIOD

THE SENATE

KARLA HOMOLKA—COMMENTS BY SENATOR

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, my question concerns comments made by one of our colleagues in regard to Karla Homolka, one of the most notorious criminals in the history of our country.

The Liberal senator in question has been quoted in the media as saying, "I have to say I have sympathy for her." He also said that the conditions placed upon Ms. Homolka upon her release are "unjustified." The senator has compared the use of section 810.2 of the Criminal Code to restrict her movements as, "the kind of law used in totalitarian regimes." He also compared her prison romance with a man convicted of murdering his girlfriend to a boarding school crush.

Could the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell us if the Prime Minister has asked the Liberal senator in question to withdraw his remarks and apologize?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the Prime Minister has no role to play in the comments on public policy of any senator in this chamber.

Senator Tkachuk: Unfortunately, the statements that have been attributed to the senator in question have caused pain to the families of Ms. Homolka's victims. The senator's comments have also reflected badly upon this chamber as a whole.

Mr. Tim Danson, a lawyer who represents the victims' families, has said, "I find it disconcerting because senators come from a very particular and unique office which carries with it an aura of integrity and prestige."

Does the Leader of the Government in the Senate agree that the words of this particular senator have inflicted pain on the victims' families and that an apology is required by the senator in question?

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, it is not the role of the Leader of the Government in the Senate to comment on and reflect on public policy statements of any other senator. I report for the government.

Whether or not senators in this chamber concur with the particular senator's point of view, that senator has the right to pursue public policy as that senator believes it correct to do. I happen not to agree with that point of view, but I do want to affirm that I would never discourage the courage of any senator to speak against the dominant paradigm.

Senator Tkachuk: Will the government and the Liberal caucus, then, disassociate itself from the senator's remarks?

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, this series of questions comes very close to impropriety, so far as I am personally concerned. I will not answer any further questions on this matter. I believe I have answered fully.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

ETHICS COMMISSIONER— REPORT ON MEMBER FOR YORK WEST

Hon. Marjory LeBreton: Honourable senators, the Ethics Commissioner in the other place, Mr. Bernard Shapiro, has released his long-awaited report into allegations of wrongdoing involving the former Minister of Immigration, Judy Sgro. Mr. Shapiro found that, during last year's election campaign, 74 of 76 temporary residence permits issued at the request of a member of the other place were supported by Liberal members, while the other two were supported by Conservative members. Twenty-four of the permits were directly tied to Ms. Sgro, and 19 of them were approved by her over a three-day period during the last week of the election campaign. The report states that they mostly went to relatives or associates of her campaign workers.

The Ethics Commissioner found these actions to be a clear violation of principle 7 of the Conflict of Interest Code for Public Office Holders, which prohibits such a person from using his or her position to help a private entity or individual receive preferential treatment.

In the wake of this report, could the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell us what his government is doing to address the blatant use of patronage in our immigration system?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, it is the custom of Senator LeBreton to read long, partisan political preambles to short politically partisan questions.

Senator Stratton: This is corruption again. Rotten to the core!

Senator Austin: I will answer the question this way: Under the rules of the other place, the Ethics Commissioner was asked to provide and has provided his view. That ends the matter.

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, Ms. Sgro is no longer a minister of the government. The Department of Immigration is a major department in the Government of Canada for which I think the government must answer. What I read was not a long, partisan preamble, but a report that came directly from Mr. Shapiro.

My supplementary, honourable senators, is based on the fact that the report also notes that the minister's policy of avoiding partisanship and limiting use of these permits, "...essentially collapsed during the final weeks and days of the election campaign. TRPs" — temporary residence permits — "were suddenly very much more available." That is a quotation, not my statement.

What measures are being taken to ensure that ministers stick to proper procedures and policies, especially during the upcoming election campaign?

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, the issue vis-à-vis the government and the Prime Minister is one that is resolved by former Minister Sgro having left the cabinet. The question is then one that is retrospective — it looks at past behaviour and makes a judgment with respect to past behaviour.

The Ethics Commissioner was clear that what he found took place on the part of the minister's staff was improper and inappropriate. Therefore, we can conclude that that behaviour is not to be repeated and will not be tolerated.

• (1420)

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: My question is a supplementary one to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Where does ministerial responsibility begin and end, or have the rules changed? When I was a minister of the Crown, I was responsible for what my staff did. We have had Shawinigate, the sponsorship scandal and now the Minister of Immigration situation. Have the rules changed such that ministers are no longer responsible for anything that happens in their department and the staff is to be blamed? The government leader made reference to the staff having committed egregious errors. Does the responsibility for that not lie on the shoulders of the minister?

Is the government leader telling us — and it appears that he is — that, if his staff, or the staff of another minister, were to do something blatantly wrong, the minister bears no responsibility?

Could the government leader clarify that for Canadians and for the Senate?

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, the doctrine of ministerial responsibility exists, and ministers are responsible for inappropriate things happening within their statutory responsibilities. However, in Canadian practice, it has been noted repeatedly that ministers need not necessarily resign, if they have taken appropriate steps in the arrangement of the management of their portfolios, if they have used due diligence in the appointment of people and if the matter in question was not drawn to their attention but was dealt with at a level beyond their awareness.

There are events that do take place under ministerial responsibility and are not reported to the minister. The

questions that must be asked are these: Is the management system appropriate? Have the people in the minister's office been chosen according to appropriate skills? Has due diligence been applied with respect to their integrity? Having all that, if something undue happens and it cannot be shown to have been within the awareness of the minister, then the question of resignation is not necessarily appropriate.

Of course, we saw during the Mulroney era many ministers accused and defended by such able people as the then House leader Deputy Prime Minister Erik Nielsen. There are lots of examples of accusations. Some ministers resigned; some ministers did not resign for a very long time; some ministers did not have to resign.

The issues have to be judged against a set of criteria to which I have referred.

Senator St. Germain: Honourable senators, the record should show that, from 1984 to 1988 — when I was caucus chairman and, later in that mandate, a minister — an individual under scrutiny basically resigned, from what I recall. That is a known fact. That is why there were so many resignations. When something did come up, individuals had the honour of respecting the position and resigned.

However, in the case of the former Minister of Immigration, Ms. Sgro, I am puzzled as to how she could be absolved, given that she had to sign the respective permits, or were the minister's staff signing the visitor permits that were issued? Ms. Sgro would obviously have to have known what was going on, to have been signing them in such numbers as was pointed out by Senator LeBreton. I do not understand what the minister is talking about.

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, the latter sentence by Senator St. Germain may be true, in many cases. However, with respect to the rest of his question, I shall not go beyond the report on the facts by the Ethics Commissioner. That stands on its own.

All of this debate is more or less hypothetical. The minister resigned when the first issue became public. The minister took appropriate steps in the circumstances at the time and should be well appreciated for what she did.

Senator St. Germain: She did not resign, sir, immediately.

Senator Austin: She did so.

INDUSTRY

TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIPS CANADA— FUNDING TRANSPARENCY

Hon. Donald H. Oliver: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. *The Globe and Mail* reports that last August the federal government expanded its secret audit into payments made through Technology Partnerships Canada, a controversial fund for corporate investment, after it was revealed that \$2 million in commissions was paid to consultants by three high-tech companies who received funding through the program. In order to prevent

kickbacks or bribes, the rules of Industry Canada prohibit paying commissions or contingency fees to obtain financing from Technology Partnerships Canada.

According to yesterday's *Globe and Mail*, Industry Canada has now broadened its investigation to include a random sampling of Technology Partnerships Canada's 673 approved projects. Fifty-eight projects in total were selected involving 47 firms receiving more than \$490 million from the fund.

My question for the Leader of the Government is this: Given the amount of money involved, when will the government institute a proper transparency mechanism within Technology Partnerships Canada to disclose which firms received TPC funding, how much they received, what they do with it and how much, if any, of their loans they repay?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, it was TPC's own audit processes that first identified these irregularities between companies and lobbyists. As Senator Oliver said, the Department of Industry took decisive action to deal with the abnormalities identified. External auditors were engaged, a review was undertaken, and initially four companies were found to be in default of their contribution agreements. That matter has been remedied. There is a second-phase audit under way, and it is dealing with a wide variety of TPC applications.

In answer to Senator Oliver's final question, it is the intention of the Department of Industry to make TPC's applications and the reasons for accepting them as transparent as commercial criteria will permit.

Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is a supplementary and is addressed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. During Question Period in the other place, the question was asked as to whether any funds from the technology partnership program had ever gone to the Liberal Party of Canada. The minister, in his response, dodged the question, by stating — and I quote:

All of the money that was paid to consultants who were helping clients obtain TPC funding has been returned. All of it has been returned, every cent.

Since the minister did not answer Mr. Schmidt's question, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Can the government leader assure us that funds from the technology partnerships program did not go to the Liberal Party of Canada? Yes or no?

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, if Senator Stratton has a charge to make or information to provide, we would be happy to receive it. Otherwise, his question is baseless in fact.

[Translation]

THE SENATE

ETHICS OFFICER—NOMINATIONS TO CONFLICT OF INTEREST COMMITTEE

Hon. Marcel Prud'homme: Honourable senators, the session may be coming to a close, and we have adopted a very special rule for the ethics officer. Eleven senators here have been completely left out of the loop.

[English]

It is my understanding that the Liberals have chosen Senator Carstairs and Senator Joyal and that the Conservatives have chosen, in secret ballot, Senator Angus and Senator Andreychuk.

• (1430)

As we have decided democratically, it is done, but I do not agree with it. These four senators have been elected by secret ballot, according to a rule passed by the house, with which I disagree. None of the 11 independent senators — five Progressive Conservatives, five independents, and my colleague and esteemed friend from the NDP in Saskatchewan — has a say or an understanding of what the next step will be. It is our understanding that the next step is that these four senators will get together to choose the fifth member of the committee. Do not worry, be happy; I am not running for any office. I will not put my name forward, so senators can relax. However, it does affect the 11 of us. We would like to know when the provisions of this new, nonsensical statute will come into effect. Is it now in effect or will it be in effect after the names of all five senators are officially known? How do we conduct our affairs? We do not know. The two major caucuses know more than the 11 senators I just mentioned. I do not speak on behalf of the others.

I may be misinformed when I say that Senators Andreychuk, Angus, Carstairs and Joyal have been elected by secret ballot to sit on the committee. What is the next step and when will it be taken? Do not tell me it is up to these four senators to decide. Senator Austin is the Leader of the Government; he should know what the next step will be so that we can conduct our affairs appropriately.

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, Senator Prud'homme has asked this question previously, and I doubt that I can answer any better than I answered before.

The chamber has adopted rules with which Senator Prud'homme disagrees. Those rules ask the four senators who have been elected pursuant to the rules to nominate a fifth senator. I am not aware that they have met. Therefore, I am not aware that they have made a choice. All I can tell honourable senators is that it is my responsibility, along with that of the Leader of the Opposition, to bring to this chamber a non-debatable motion advising senators of the names of the five people who will constitute the Senate Standing Committee on Conflict of Interest. Of course, I will do so when I have been formally notified who those five are.

Senator Prud'homme: Senator Austin always likes to remind us that I sometimes disagree. I am a democrat. I fight as hard as I can, and once a decision is taken democratically, I accept it. I am showing my displeasure. The decision has been taken. Please stop saying "with which I disagree." I have as much right as any other senator to disagree. I disagree, but what is done is done.

Who takes the initiative on behalf of these four members of the new committee? There must be a boss. How does the committee proceed? Are they all waiting to be called? Someone must take the initiative to bring them together. I would have thought that the leader of this house would provide some support and remind them that they should inform us as soon as possible. I am afraid that we will adjourn and not know how to conduct our affairs.

I have the card of the Senate Ethics Officer. I want to know what to do. The 11 senators do not know a thing, which is unfair. It is also unfair that not one of these 11 senators sits on the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, which has 15 members. I attend as a volunteer. The others do what they want; I do not speak for them.

I was raised to know that the word “fairness” exists, and I find the situation I have just described to be unfair. I am told to go see someone else. I am therefore putting myself in the leader’s able hands in an effort to learn a little bit more. Some of the 11 senators do not speak as forcefully as I do, but they are as interested in this situation because I consulted with them and they say that they do not know either.

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, Senator Prud’homme has made a long statement and I can provide him with a clear, short answer. He will recall, as will other senators, the insistence of this chamber and the majority of its members that the executive play no role in the matter of the administration of the code for this place. I believe that Senator Prud’homme was of the same view.

With respect to the origin of the rules and the way in which they function, Senator Prud’homme might wish to address his question to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY— POSSIBILITY OF DISEASE IN UNITED STATES COW

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, my question is to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Tests are currently being done in England to give final confirmation as to whether an older cow from the United States has mad cow disease.

An Hon. Senator: Holy cow!

Senator St. Germain: Holy cow; that is true. This one will be unholy if she is fraught with BSE.

Is the federal government of the opinion that a confirmation of an American-born case of mad cow disease would make it more or less difficult to reopen the border to live cattle from Canada, as the U.S. would then have the same disease status as Canada, in the federal government’s view? How would a positive test influence U.S. public opinion and the U.S. legal proceedings? I am playing to the leader’s legal expertise.

[Senator Prud’homme]

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, there is no legal expertise required to answer this question. It is entirely hypothetical. I will not proceed any further to deal with it on the Senate record.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Hon. Lowell Murray: Honourable senators, I would like to ask a question in two parts concerning the business of the house. Senator Prud’homme states that the session may be coming to an end. I am afraid the contrary seems to be true. Because we are not involved or particularly care to become involved in the bipartisan negotiations in this place, I have to ask the Leader of the Government whether honourable senators should count on being here for, let us say, the first two weeks of July.

The second part of my question has to do with a specific bill. I am aware of the discussion and of the speculation concerning Bill C-48 and Bill C-38. There is another interesting bill on the Order Paper of the other place and that is the bill — I am sorry I do not have the number — that deals with compensation for judges. What priority does this bill have so far as the government is concerned?

It is an interesting question in view of the fact that I understand that at least one of the opposition parties opposes that bill, so given the extra time that Parliament is apt to be sitting, will the government be bringing forward the judicial compensation bill or will judges be left to live from hand to mouth for the entire summer?

Hon. Jack Austin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, Senator Murray’s concluding words do raise a considerable level of sympathy in my legal soul.

As best as I can advise, because so many of the answers depend on the business conducted in the other place, I would expect that we could be in session until July 13 or 14. That certainly will allow this chamber to deal with a lot of work.

Honourable senators, I have said publicly several times that the government wishes to deal finally with Bill C-48 and Bill C-38 before the Senate rises for the summer break. We can only await the discharge of business in the other place regarding this legislation to know what will be required of us in terms of sitting time.

• (1440)

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, my friend did not answer my question about the bill dealing with compensation for judges. I am interested to know where that stands on the government’s list of priorities in the current parliamentary situation.

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, having introduced the bill, the government obviously seeks its passage. With respect to its place on the list of priorities, I will have to consult the Leader of the Government in the other place and advise Senator Murray further. I hope that he will not have to wait too long for the answer.

Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question relates to a bill of which we can speak with certitude in the Senate, namely, Bill C-43, the main budget bill. That bill is in committee, and I understand that this evening the Minister of Finance will be appearing on it.

In light of what is happening in the other place and the possibility of a vote on Bill C-48 tomorrow evening, Conservative senators are offering to the government that after the minister appears this evening clause-by-clause study be conducted on that bill, as will be done this afternoon in the Social Affairs Committee on Bill C-22. A different minister will then appear before that committee on Bill C-23, after which the committee will conduct clause-by-clause consideration on that bill.

I am offering to the government that, after the appearance of the Minister of Finance before the National Finance Committee tonight on Bill C-43, the committee conduct clause-by-clause consideration of the bill in order that the committee can report that bill tomorrow. In that case, we would offer leave to proceed with third reading so that Bill C-43, which contains the Atlantic accord, which is of great concern to all Atlantic Canadian senators, can be given Royal Assent tomorrow afternoon at four o'clock. Will the honourable minister accept that offer?

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, I thank Senator Kinsella for that special consideration. However, if Senator Lynch-Staunton or Senator Banks were here, they would remind Senator Kinsella that it is the Senate practice, as we have been reminded quite recently, not to conduct clause-by-clause consideration at the same meeting as a witness has been heard. I think we had better follow that practice. It is very good practice and, as I have said, we will be sitting next week and can give the bill third reading then. We have adequate time to deal with this legislation.

Of course, this bill could have been passed some time ago but for the efforts of the opposition in the other place. I understand that the opposition wants to pick and choose its time. It is the role of the opposition to seek its best advantage. I have been in opposition, and it was not a time I particularly enjoyed. We took that same approach when Senator Murray was the Leader of the Government representing the Progressive Conservative Party.

[Later]

Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, it is my understanding that two bills are being studied in committee today with ministers present and that after presentations by the ministers the committees will proceed to clause-by-clause consideration. That is my clear understanding.

Senator Kinsella: Bills C-22 and C-23, which are currently before the Social Affairs Committee.

Senator Stratton: Honourable senators, if the Social Affairs Committee is prepared and willing to follow that procedure with regard to those two bills, I fail to see why, when this side has offered to proceed to clause-by-clause consideration after the

presentation by the minister, in order to ensure that a bill passes so that Atlantic Canada will get what it needs and deserves, the government would refuse to do so.

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, I am sure that the Chairman of the Social Affairs Committee and the chairman of every other committee are aware of the practice so long argued for and followed in this place with respect to clause-by-clause consideration. Senator Lynch-Staunton, Senator Banks and others believe that it is best practice not to proceed immediately to clause-by-clause but rather, to paraphrase the argument we have heard here, to respect the evidence of the witnesses who have been heard by giving some thought to the significance of it.

Honourable senators, as I have said in response to Senator Murray, we expect to be here for up to three more weeks. Therefore, there is adequate time to deal with this legislation.

Senator Comeau: Atlantic Canadians cannot wait.

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, in the past, both sides have agreed to proceed with clause-by-clause consideration after hearing from a minister. What the Leader of the Government has said is not quite correct.

DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour of presenting the delayed answer to a question raised in the Senate on June 1, 2005, by Senator Stratton, regarding the Kyoto Protocol, management of the funding portfolio.

THE ENVIRONMENT

KYOTO PROTOCOL— MANAGEMENT OF FUNDING PORTFOLIO

(Response to question raised by Hon. Terry Stratton on June 1, 2005)

Climate change is this country's greatest environmental challenge. The Government of Canada has been investing in actions to address climate change since 1997, with funds allocated over successive budgets. While making these investments is part of the solution, they must be made prudently and responsibly. There must also be flexibility so that we can learn as we go.

The funding since 1997 has been invested across a wide range of activities aimed at increasing our knowledge base and supporting action to reduce GHG emissions. For example, they have helped to:

- uncover increasing evidence of climate change, and improve the country's understanding of the inherent challenges and risks;
- advance and transfer new technologies that reduce GHG emissions in areas such as energy efficiency, cleaner fossil fuels, and the hydrogen economy;

- encourage early action to reduce GHG emissions in major energy consuming sectors such as buildings, housing, transportation, and agriculture; also to promote strengthened standards for buildings, appliances and equipment and the development and use of renewable energy; and
- enable Canada to play a leadership role in international climate change negotiations, and strengthen our capacity for domestic policy development.

These investments, touching all sectors of the economy, were aimed at the “low hanging fruit” i.e., those measures that put us on the path to emissions reductions, often at the lowest cost.

Action Plan 2000, for example, comprises 45 measures that target key sectors accounting for 90 percent of Canada’s GHG emissions. Many of those measures broke new ground. Many that worked well received additional support through Budget 2003. These include, for example, the popular Energiguide for Houses initiative to cost share home energy audits that will recommend energy efficiency improvements as well as programs to encourage energy efficiency retrofits of existing commercial buildings.

These investments have helped to lay the groundwork for the behavioral, technological and economic changes that will be critical in placing Canada on the lower emissions trajectory that will be needed to achieve the significant cuts required over time.

These early investments provided the foundation for the 2002 Climate Change Plan for Canada, which used a broader range of tools including information, incentives, regulations and tax measures, across a number of sectors including: transportation; housing and commercial/institutional buildings; large industrial emitters; renewable energy and cleaner fossil fuels; agriculture; forestry; and landfills.

But an issue as complex as climate change cannot be solved overnight, nor should expenditures of this magnitude be made quickly. Investments must be made over many years, and we must learn and adjust as we go. That’s why the funds allocated to climate change have a spending profile that spans a number of years. Budget 2003 climate change funds, for example, have a five year spending profile.

Of the \$3.7 billion allocated between 1997 and 2003 some \$700 million from Budget 2003 was earmarked for the out years of 2006-07 and 2007-08. This would allow the Government some flexibility to allocate funds to emerging priorities, new technologies, or the continuation of programs that have performed well.

Of the remaining \$3 billion, some \$710 million represents endowments provided to foundations such as Sustainable Development Technology Canada and the Green Municipal Funds, administered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

The remaining \$2.3 billion, allocated across a range of programs and federal departments, was in most cases profiled over a five year period. Some \$1 billion of that pertains to the four fiscal years after 2003-04, a period not captured in the documents referred to by Senator Stratton. While much of that is indeed unspent, it reflects the fact that there is a “ramping” up of programs over time. In other words, time is required to establish program infrastructure and access target audiences.

For the period reported to date it is also important to recognize that, under many programs, there is a time lag between a spending commitment and the actual expenditure. For example, under the Wind Power Production Incentive, the incentive supports the first ten years of operation of a new wind farm. In another example, capital contributions committed to new ethanol plants will be provided only after the plants are built. The full implementation of these programs, and the associated expenditures, will not occur for some time to come.

The Government is working to ensure that climate change funds are used wisely. That is why the 2005 Climate Change Plan states that investments under the Plan will be closely evaluated on an annual basis to ensure value for money, and a continuous focus on actions that result in real and verifiable GHG emission reductions.

In the 2005 Budget and Climate Change Plan, the Government committed to re-assessing and re-directing climate change funding to those measures that best meet the principles of balance, competitiveness, partnership, innovation and cost effectiveness. The result of this review of all climate change programming will be a re-allocation of previously committed monies to better performing or alternatively delivered measures. Officials are in the process of putting the review in place, with the intent that the results support funding decisions for the 2006-07 fiscal year.

The funds committed to climate change are very much needed if we are to achieve our Kyoto commitments. While the 2005 Climate Change Plan put forth a \$10 billion figure, it is important to remember that investments under the Plan are about more than climate change. They will transform our economy, boost our international competitiveness, and address smog and other health risks. Many of these investments, such as energy efficiency and East-West energy transmission, will need to be made anyway for reasons that go beyond climate change.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

LABRADOR INUIT LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government) moved third reading of Bill C-56, to give effect to the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement and the Labrador Inuit Tax Treatment Agreement.

He said: Honourable senators, I do not want to prolong debate on this bill, but I do want to put a few thoughts on the record. I first want to thank all honourable senators for their contributions, particularly Senator Cochrane. I want to thank Senator St. Germain for his participation, both here and in committee, and for the support that he has given and I know will continue to give. I want to thank senators on this side as well.

I wish to use this occasion to put some thoughts on the record. Members of the executive of the Labrador Inuit Association are in the gallery again today, as is Wally Andersen, the Member of the House of Assembly for Torngat Mountains in northern Labrador, the provincial riding in question. I salute him, congratulate him and thank him for the work and time he has put into this cause. He is a dedicated member of the provincial House of Assembly. He is an Inuk himself, and I want to put on the record of Parliament his contribution to this process.

• (1450)

I also want to use the occasion to remember some of the elders who, as William Andersen said in committee, passed away over this 30-year period. We should remember them today because they made a contribution. They put much of their lives into this agreement.

I want to remember particularly the other presidents of the Labrador Inuit Association, starting with Sam Andersen, then Bill Edmunds, who was a strong leader for the Labrador Inuit, and Fran Williams, who was the first but perhaps not last female president of the Labrador Inuit Association, who now still continues to give great service to northern Labrador with the OKalaKatiget Society, the communications arm of the Labrador Inuit in Nain.

I want to remember elders who have passed on but who made a significant contribution. I want to remember Jerry Sillett from Nain, who had a great deal of respect in northern Labrador and who contributed a lot from his life into this agreement.

I want to remember Bill Andersen from Makkovik. His son Toby is with us today. Bill was the chief land claims negotiator for the Labrador Inuit; he put much of his time and effort into forging an agreement that is creative and unique and yet strong enough to protect his people. I want to pay tribute to him today, as he is with us here in the gallery.

I want to remember Chesley Flowers from Hopedale, who also made a significant contribution to this agreement.

I particularly want to remember Beatrice Watts. Beatrice was a Ford, originally from Nain. She made an outstanding contribution to northern Labrador. She was part of the land claims team, but her contribution was in education in particular. For her contribution to education on the Labrador coast, protecting the language and culture of northern Labrador, Beatrice was awarded the Order of Canada and also an honorary degree from Memorial University. I want to put her name on the record today and to remember her contribution to this process.

I wish to make two further points, one being related to something Senator Cochrane mentioned in her remarks the other day, that is, the aspect of this agreement that concerns the territorial sea. The agreement includes provisions to give the Labrador Inuit some say, not perhaps total say, but a great deal of say, and a great deal of influence in what goes on in that sea, that territory off their coasts. The Labrador Inuit are people of the sea. They are people of the seal. The seal has been the source of substance for the Labrador Inuit, as it has been for others, for centuries.

It is very important that the Labrador Inuit have control over marine resources, especially when the time comes that oil and gas off the Labrador coast are developed. That control will assure for them an important and a strong role in the development of those resources; it will ensure that they are the primary beneficiaries of it. This agreement establishes that there must be an impact and benefits agreement if development is to proceed. I think it is fair to say that development will not happen in that marine territory unless the Inuit agree, as was the case in the Voisey's Bay nickel mine.

The second point I want to make is one that was mentioned yesterday in committee, and that is the whole role of the Government of Nunatsiavut in education. That particular area of social activity will be most important to us. All the resources in the world come to no good if people are unskilled and cannot take advantage of the jobs available. Even if the Labrador Inuit were guaranteed priority in jobs, without the skills and the education they will not be able to go as far as they should.

I was interested yesterday in committee to hear William say that, once this agreement in place, the Inuit in Labrador can begin consultations with Inuit in other parts of Canada — Inuit in Nunavut, Inuit in Nunavik, and the Inuvialuit. In that way, all of the Inuit in Canada can come together to focus on what they want to do with education in their territory and how they want to provide a meaningful and useful education system for their people, to ensure that they take advantage of it.

These are important points to be noted, and I wanted to note them today.

However, I do not want to go on at length. I wish to conclude by underlining something William Andersen said in committee yesterday, something worth putting on the parliamentary record as well.

He said that, fundamentally, this agreement is about hope, that the Inuit have experienced despair. We should not hide the fact that despair has been there with far too great a presence. We have seen the effects of alcohol. We have seen the effects of dependency. We have seen the effects of despair. There is a higher suicide rate in some of our communities, as there is in Aboriginal communities all across this country. That is the evidence of the despair.

Let me share one particular ironic example. In Nain, about three years ago, a young man killed himself by jumping off the CBC tower. The CBC tower should be a symbol of communications in this country, of reaching out, of how we talk to each other as Canadians, a symbol for the future. It was from that tower that he chose to commit suicide.

Honourable senators, we should not underestimate or hide the despair. William said yesterday that this agreement is about hope and about a way of overcoming that despair and moving on and creating a new future. I think it is important to underline that, and this agreement will give the Labrador Inuit that ability.

I would simply underline that by quoting Alexander Pope:

Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never is, but always to be blest:

I hope that will be the case, and I believe it will be with the Inuit.

I simply want to leave them with one phrase from *Desiderata*, to say that I hope this applies to them, and I am sure it will.

You are a child of the universe,
no less than the trees and stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, I too should like to rise to say a few words in regard to Bill C-56, this historic agreement that will definitely improve the plight of our Aboriginal peoples in the eastern Maritime region. I do not have the same background history of the riding as the senator who has just spoken, but I do have a little bit of experience, in that I spent some time with the Royal Canadian Air Force flying the area from Greenland along the Labrador Coast — an area known as iceberg alley. Interestingly, yesterday, William Andersen said that when the two-kilometre-long icebergs hit the bottom of the ocean, they scrape 10 to 12 inches off the granite floor, for two kilometres. I am not sure of the exact numbers, but it was scary. In flying over this beautiful region, one cannot understand the immensity and the impact of these icebergs.

The fact that water is part of the agreement will be significant in allowing the Inuit people of Labrador to reach the full potential economically.

Senator Austin is leaving. However, before he leaves, I should like to point out to him that, under the superb leadership of Senator Sibbeston yesterday, right after the parliamentary secretary gave evidence, we started our clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. It puts what was going on before into perspective. I have no regrets. Senator Sibbeston and Senator Rompkey were in attendance at the time. It was important to deal with it expeditiously.

[Senator Rompkey]

• (1500)

We want to be able to expedite these agreements so that our Aboriginal people can get on with their lives, get on with economic development, and take control of their own destinies as far as education is concerned. Two Es are important: expedite and educate.

I have been a strong proponent of the idea that education is the only true value that will assist our Aboriginal peoples in finding their rightful place in society and bringing the fairness that has been denied them for so many years. I look forward to working on other bills of this nature.

I should like to take a moment to make mention of my colleague in the other place. I have worked with the minister and with Sue Barnes, but it is Jim Prentice who brings expertise to this task. The Alberta member of Parliament, who is the lead critic in the other place, has tremendous understanding of the needs of our Aboriginal peoples. He has worked on Aboriginal files and agreements of this nature across Canada for the last 15 or 20 years.

It was under his leadership that we, the other place and now this place, are unanimously approving this particular initiative.

I should also like to make mention of Minister Tom Rideout. I know the Rideout family. His brother worked for me when I was a minister. I know how capable they both are as individuals. Under the leadership of the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, Danny Williams, their cooperation should be noted on the record here today.

We heard from my friend William Andersen from the Labrador Inuit Association.

Yesterday Senator Adams expressed the concern that he has regarding the fishery in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, where he resides. I hope that our witnesses from Labrador will be able to have better control of the destiny of the fishery in their particular region.

Mr. Toby Andersen did an excellent job in negotiating this agreement, especially as it relates to the future of the fishery and the potential that the ocean can bring to his people.

I would congratulate Mr. Toby Andersen and thank him for coming to my office to discuss this file so that I understood it better.

I do not profess to be an expert in Aboriginal affairs in spite of the fact that my colleagues have decided that I should be a member of the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples for my entire career in the Senate. Having said that, one of these days I will most likely understand all of these files. By that time, I will most likely be ready to retire.

As you go forward, we will be here to assist. As a Metis from Manitoba, I bring an Aboriginal perspective to this debate. I try to understand your situation. I think your challenges are different as compared to those of many of our Aboriginal peoples in the West. However, in certain ways, they are similar. We all seek fairness, and I think fairness will be served with Royal Assent tomorrow.

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 2, 2005-06

THIRD READING

Hon. Bill Rompkey (Deputy Leader of the Government) moved third reading of Bill C-58, for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 2006.

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

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

**CANADA SHIPPING ACT
CANADA SHIPPING ACT, 2001
CANADA NATIONAL
MARINE CONSERVATION AREAS ACT
OCEANS ACT**

BILL TO AMEND—THIRD READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Rompkey, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Robichaud, P.C., for the third reading of Bill C-3, to amend the Canada Shipping Act, the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, the Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act and the Oceans Act.

Hon. W. David Angus: Honourable senators, I wish to offer a few comments at third reading debate on Bill C-3, to amend the Canada Shipping Act, the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, the Canadian National Marine Conservation Areas Act and the Oceans Act.

After a rather brief examination, this bill was reported to the Senate on June 9 by the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications. The committee reported the bill without amendment, but did append to its report certain important observations. In particular, it acknowledged serious concerns expressed by witnesses engaged in transporting goods by water to northern Canadian communities.

I share these concerns, which relate to two key aspects of Canadian marine policy. The first concern relates to the unchecked authority of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to set marine navigation service fees, and the second relates to the levying of marine navigation service fees against ship operators carrying goods through northern waters.

At committee, the Minister of Transport, the Honourable Jean Lapierre, took special note of these concerns, which he said were not directly within his jurisdiction. However, he undertook to discuss the matter and seek a resolution of the outstanding issues with the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and to report back with the results of these discussions to the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications with the shortest possible delay.

Honourable senators, I look forward to the committee's further advice to this chamber on the results of these promised ministerial discussions, particularly since the issues go directly to the possibility of reducing the costs and expenses involved in providing food and other necessary supplies to the good citizens of Canada's remote northern communities. These exorbitant costs are passed on to these citizens and they are difficult to absorb. Given our recent experience with interdepartmental turf wars in marine-related matters in Canada, I am sceptical as to a successful outcome.

At second reading of this bill on April 14 of this year, I concluded my remarks by stating:

...I earnestly hope that Bill C-3 is given more than a cursory study in committee so that before giving it third reading in this chamber we can be assured that the bill is indeed policy neutral and appropriate in both form and substance so that it can accomplish its intended results.

Unfortunately, honourable senators, having carefully studied the testimony given at committee on Bill C-3, as well as the testimony before the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources during the study of Bill C-15, I am left with a profound concern about the apparent confusion surrounding the current roles, mandates, and areas of jurisdictions and authorities allocated to at least three departments insofar as marine policy and operations are concerned. These three departments include: Transport Canada; Fisheries and Oceans Canada; and Environment Canada.

In my respectful submission, honourable senators, it is unfortunate that, even though the government purports to be cleaning up certain jurisdictional overlap and confusion concerning the operations of the Canadian Coast Guard with Bill C-3, it has woefully failed to do so.

• (1510)

To make my point, I will cite just one example from a meeting of the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications. The Honourable Senator Hubley, who in recent months was the government sponsor in the matter of the controversial Bill C-15, asked the following question to Mr. Gerald A. McDonald, Director General of Marine Safety for Transport Canada. He appeared before the committee on June 8 with Transport Minister Jean C. Lapierre. The transcript of the proceedings reads as follows:

Senator Hubley: Did the minister say that Transport Canada is now solely responsible for the policing of marine pollution?

Mr. McDonald: Yes, that is correct. We are responsible for the approval of the oil handling facilities for the organizations that are responsible for the cleanup of pollution. We also assumed responsibility for the National Aerial Surveillance Program, which obviously surveys for pollution incidents.

Honourable senators, I dare say Senator Hubley may have been rather surprised or even dismayed to hear Mr. McDonald's answer, given the testimony she had heard from Environment Canada officials as to their responsibilities for pollution cleanup during the hearings on Bill C-15, which lasted more than three months.

Not surprisingly, Senator Hubley then went on to question Mr. McDonald further.

Senator Hubley: Environmental legislation appears in many departments. Is this being coordinated now?

Mr. McDonald: Yes, it is coordinated. You are probably aware of Bill C-15, which was recently passed, which had some oil pollution response provisions in it. Our primary pieces of legislation are the Canada Shipping Act and the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act. We work in a coordinated fashion with the Department of the Environment and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Given the new provisions in Bill C-15, we are in the process of negotiating an actual enforcement memorandum of understanding with these two departments on how we will interface in that regard.

Honourable senators, the reality is that great confusion exists within the very important marine and maritime sector in Canada as to just who has responsibility for what. I receive complaints from marine sector stakeholders, including from officials within Transport Canada, on an almost daily basis. These key players cannot fathom why this government will not restore to Transport Canada full, complete and clear authority for all matters maritime at both the policy and the operational levels. They have the manpower and the expertise to do the job as they once did, proudly and in an internationally renowned fashion.

Honourable senators, I am given to understand that the truth is that ongoing petty, costly and dilatory turf battles are causing great difficulties in concluding even a simple memorandum of understanding such as the one referred to by Mr. McDonald in his response to Senator Hubley.

Canada's once proud Coast Guard, now a separate government agency and a shadow of its former self, at the end of the day is now "owned" by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, not Transport Canada or Environment Canada. Our marine pollution detection and enforcement is notoriously weak and could well be rendered even more so by Bill C-15 and Bill C-3.

Bill C-15 came into being after a jurisdictional battle between Transport Canada and Environment Canada and was designed to strengthen Canada's marine pollution prevention and enforcement capacities. It has already been dubbed by the international marine community as a joke. It will surely be challenged, likely successfully, in the courts if and when Environment Canada attempts to invoke its provisions following a major pollution incident. This could allow the culprits to get off scot-free yet again, as in the *Tecam Sea* case, to which I referred in detail in my second reading speech.

[Senator Angus]

My point here, honourable senators, is that the marine and maritime sector, and maritime matters generally in Canada, are critical elements of this country's economy, of its environmental integrity and of its national security. There is an urgent need for a complete review of all legislation involving marine and maritime policy and operation, especially concerning the role and jurisdiction of the once proud Canadian Coast Guard. Canadians, our neighbours and trading partners deserve better than the existing mish-mash of conflicting, contradictory and overlapping rules, regulations and framework legislation.

Honourable senators, there is strong support for these views in a recent report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence. The Honourable Senator Kenny will have more to say on this subject shortly.

At the outset, we were told by the government that Bill C-3 was a simple housekeeping bill to implement a poorly thought-out Order-in-Council passed without fanfare or serious public scrutiny on December 12, 2003. This bill may well in fact add to rather than disperse the confusion.

However, as I stated at second reading, the bill appears at least to be on the right track. The problem is that it does not go far enough, and it conflicts with a vast array of related laws and regulations.

In conclusion, honourable senators, I urge the government to conduct a comprehensive legislative review post-haste and to then come up with a completely new set of marine and maritime laws and regulations, including those relating to the Coast Guard, the whole under the direction and control of Transport Canada and the umbrella of the Canada Shipping Act. This matter is critical and urgent.

The Hon. the Speaker: I see no other senator rising. 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 and bill read third time and passed.

• (1520)

NEED FOR INTEGRATED DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Andreychuk calling the attention of the Senate to the need for a strong integrated Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the need to strengthen and support the Foreign Service of Canada, in order to ensure that Canada's international obligations are met and that Canada's opportunities and interests are maximized.—(Honourable Senator Andreychuk)

Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, this inquiry has reached day 15. Although Senator Andreychuk is very much interested in speaking to this inquiry, she is, unfortunately, not available to speak to it today. I would therefore ask on her behalf for the clock to be rewound.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it agreed that this matter return to day zero and stand?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

On motion of Senator Stratton, for Senator Andreychuk, debate adjourned.

CHANGES TO BUDGET 2005

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Comeau calling the attention of the Senate to the NDP budget announced in the media by the Prime Minister on April 26, 2005; the ruination and destruction of the Liberal budget; the compromised integrity of the Minister of Finance whose previous position was that such measures were fiscally irresponsible; and the irresponsibility of the Liberal government in attempting to shore up its fading support through reckless new spending announcements.
—(Honourable Senator Stratton)

Hon. Terry Stratton (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I assure you that we will have speakers coming up on this issue. I would ask, again, if we could rewind the clock on this item.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, is it agreed that this matter return to day zero and stand?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

On motion of Senator Stratton, debate adjourned.

STATE OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

INQUIRY

Hon. Wilbert J. Keon rose pursuant to notice of June 15, 2005:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the state of international health services.

He said: Honourable senators, two weeks ago, I had the great privilege of attending a global health summit in Seattle, a summit whose theme was “Science Innovation and the Future of Health: Building Partnerships to Transform Healthcare.”

This afternoon, I should like to tell you about the ideas surrounding international health services that were discussed at the summit, as well as some of my own thoughts on the subject.

I apologize in advance if some of the things I will tell you are somewhat technical in nature, but I feel it is important to raise

them so that we may open our minds and embrace new ideas and solutions to health care problems around the world and in our own backyard.

The global health summit considered four major themes — namely, the promise of science; the impact of science and public health; the impact of science on health systems and personal health; and, finally, the impact of science and health on economic growth.

The main question the summit addressed was how to create an improved health care model for the 21st century. This model will have to be much more geographically and socially inclusive. It must also combine international efforts to control or eliminate the large pool of human suffering in developing countries, suffering that threatens the global community with massive pandemic disease.

Participants at the summit agreed that the 21st century will experience a health care revolution and will be led by information, that most mobile and educative of all technologies. In the not-too-distant future, powerful new technology tools will discover and address the causes of poor health, such as lifestyles, environment or genetics. These tools will address the causes at the level of the individual before leading to debilitating and expensive illness.

There are essentially five powerful tools that will drive progress in this area: first, genomics; second, informatics; third, patient care through communications technology; fourth, nanotechnology; and, fifth, bioengineering.

The first three areas I have mentioned deal with the building blocks of biology, bytes and broadband. Nanotechnology and bioengineering from gene chips to stem cells will help to bring about solutions to some of our most pressing health care problems.

Honourable senators, to illustrate what I mean by this, let us briefly consider gene chips, which are small pieces of glass imprinted with thousands of a person’s genes. Today, these chips are mostly used to conduct basic genetic research, but it is widely hoped that they will one day be used to tailor medicine to an individual’s genetic makeup.

The combination of biology, bytes and broadband is not only the heart of modern health care, but also it is at the centre of the development of our overall environment, economy and education. Technological barriers have become less relevant as we can now access even the most remote of settlements. Today, the transfer of information is global and instant. By the same token, the accessibility and power of the best diagnostics tools, critical to an early health care strategy, have improved exponentially. We all have a stake in maximizing the potential that technology affords us.

We must engage in digitalization of diagnostics and biomarkers and in molecular diagnostics and therapeutics. We must begin the utilization of nanotechnology and the digitalization of medicine. Developing tools for health risk assessment and therapeutic evaluation will lead to early diagnostics and therapy. Some of our more optimistic scientists tell us that it is not inconceivable that,

using the chemistry and technology available at this point in time, diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes may virtually be eliminated within 10 years. What an incredible thought. This would leave us room to deal with the horrendous problems caused by mental illness and other conditions that have not received nearly enough of our attention.

We must move to personalize health care delivery by embracing information technology and alleviating or eliminating the related fears of privacy invasion. Information technology holds the potential for the improved management of diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's with the management systems that embrace computerized assisted-living, information technology and robotics. This technology can also help to restore the patient's independence and allow families to monitor their loved ones regardless of distance.

I point to the example of technology currently available to Alzheimer's patients. When the door bell or telephone rings in their home, a profile of the person calling is displayed, helping to eliminate some of the embarrassment and apprehension that the Alzheimer's patient frequently encounters at this time.

Honourable senators, the global health summit also considered the cost profile of health models. An early health model may be less expensive than building and maintaining a health system focussed on late-stage disease. By shifting the current health care model, the majority of resources used to treat illness can eventually be relocated to provide practical tools to help and motivate the individual to understand and maintain their own health before they become sick. This early health model is a tremendous opportunity for all health care contributors to unite in the design and collaborative delivery of vital new programs.

Many times before in this chamber, I have drawn attention to the need for a greater investment in primary health care, which pays close attention to lifestyle, environment, early diagnosis and intervention. Primary care also involves electronic health records, remote real-time monitoring and early screening programs, all tailored to the individual.

Why should a physician's office simply be a place that people visit when sick? An obvious step forward would be the creation of a centre for health, fitness and diagnostic resources that interacts with the broader community.

In my opinion, primary care stands the best chance of limiting the advance of late-stage diseases that are both debilitating and expensive. As a consequence of this focus on primary care, we will make greater investments in community-based services centred on the patient and fewer investments in tertiary hospital institutions. In other words, I believe that an immediate shift is needed away from institutional care toward community-based primary care.

Health care delivery needs to move from being our greatest modern cost to becoming our greatest modern asset. It is the number one economic activity in the world and our goal should be to capitalize on the opportunities it affords.

• (1530)

Where does this leave us in Canada? It is important that we question the path we are on, as our current health care system is not sustainable over the long term. We must join the global initiative to design a new and better model for health care. This model must be cost-effective and based upon prevention and early detection. Improvements in productivity will also make the system more cost-effective.

Illogically, we have frequently approached this issue from the point of view of gatekeeping. The result of this mindset has been long waiting lists and incredibly expensive treatment of advanced disease.

Our health care system fares particularly badly when we compare it to 24 other OECD countries. With the exception of United States and Switzerland, our expenditures are the greatest. However, Switzerland, which currently spends slightly more than Canada, ranks number one in overall performance. We rank thirteenth. Switzerland ranks third in health outcomes. We rank twentieth.

In Switzerland, health care is funded by health insurance which has three components: Compulsory basic social insurance; supplementary insurance; and, sickness, old age and disability insurance. In Canada, 70 per cent of all services are covered by the government — the single payer — and 30 per cent are privately covered.

Honourable senators, science and health should be instruments of economic growth. The accumulation of clinical and biomedical information is a powerful and beneficial economic activity in itself. As well, the appropriate application of health care knowledge and wisdom leads to healthier and more economically engaged populations.

We should invest heavily in the development of vaccines to deal with the ever present threat of serious global pandemics. We must create definitive and safe ways to control insects that carry and spread disease.

I would particularly stress that the level of debate surrounding health care must be significantly elevated. The debate must dare to look at the best options worldwide and adapt them to our own system in carefully measured steps. We must target the major diseases such as cancer, heart disease, mental illness and diabetes and work to eliminate or control them. We must join the global effort to eradicate poverty, pestilence and disease to ease or eliminate the risk of global pandemics.

Honourable senators, in light of the recent Supreme Court of Canada decision, we must look for a process of rapid evolution of our own health care system. It is my firm belief that our system, as it stands today, is designed for the practitioner, not the patient, and we must change this. It is also my belief we must preserve the single payer system. The single payer, publicly funded system is the most efficient and equitable way to pay for health care. However, competition should be allowed in the delivery systems to improve quality and reduce costs.

Although there are many health care providers, we should think of them collectively as a monopoly provider because there is no competition among them. Most doctors do not compete on price or quality of service, and the financing system precludes competition between hospitals.

Honourable senators, we must remember that competition in health care is not an end in itself but a valuable tool. I understand that is an idea considered controversial by some, but it is perhaps the only way to drive productivity improvements that are so desperately needed. In other countries, competition between providers has been shown to improve productivity tremendously. In our own country, we have witnessed the benefits of competition in other industries.

The system could also be made more productive and efficient through better use of providers, allowing them to use their full range of skills and knowledge. Currently, scope of practice rules prohibit this. Narrow job descriptions have limited the range of tasks that health care professionals may be permitted to perform. Rigid scope of practice rules have also given hospitals little flexibility in how they deliver service. There must be a way that we can arrive at a system where the most appropriately qualified health care provider delivers a service to a patient. We must encourage ingenuity, not an unyielding adherence to the practices of the past.

I believe we have also reached the point where every Canadian deserves a health care guarantee for essential services. Honourable senators may remember that a care guarantee was one of the recommendations of the 2002 report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology.

A health care guarantee would ensure that, for every type of major procedure or treatment, a maximum waiting time would be established under which a patient would be entitled to receive care. If a service cannot be provided in a timely fashion in one particular location, the government would be legally obliged to pay for the patient to receive that service in another jurisdiction inside or outside the country. This legal commitment to care would force governments either to improve access to care and reduce wait lists or pay a penalty.

However, honourable senators, Canada's current health care system is designed for the rich and powerful. It is not just the poor and dispossessed who have little clout when it comes to timely access. It is the average Canadian. Our health care system is designed for the rich and powerful. We have to change that. By adopting a care guarantee, we would make sure everyone is treated the equally.

Honourable senators, I realize that many of the ideas I have presented to you today are unfamiliar. Some will require bold and imaginative thinking on the part of our leaders. The bottom line is that we can and we should do much better. We must look to the rest of the world and try to keep pace with them.

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, I wish to ask a question.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, Senator Keon's time has expired.

Senator Keon: May I have time to answer the question?

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted for additional time?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Cordy: I am also a member of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, and I want to go back to the issue of the care guarantee because it is extremely important. I think of the *Chaoulli* case in Quebec when Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin found that access to a waiting list is not access to the health care system. Would the honourable senator expand on his comments on the care guarantee, and how it would improve access to the health care system, not to a waiting list? What would be the ramifications if we did not have a health care guarantee?

Senator Keon: I have been a believer in a form of health care guarantee for a long time. In 1987, the Minister of Health of Ontario, Elinor Caplan, asked me to chair a committee to deal with waiting lists for cardiac surgery in Ontario at that time. Out of that came the Cardiac Care Network of Ontario, which provides a health care guarantee for cardiac surgery. The committee defined who should be on the waiting lists and who should be treated within given periods of time. It was province-wide and computerized, and if someone could not be treated in Ottawa within an appropriate length of time, he or she could be sent to Toronto. It was not long before the waiting lists for cardiac surgery came under control. Since that time, virtually everyone in the province has been treated within the appropriate time as defined by expert panels.

• (1540)

I am aware, as you are, that there have been trials and errors in other countries respecting wait time guarantees. Politics or limitations of the health care profession itself have caused the failure to meet wait time guarantees. I would suggest that, if we rely on expert panels, their findings will be objective. It is not terribly difficult to establish appropriate wait times for everyone, and it is not terribly difficult to implement a wait time guarantee.

I also believe that the controversy about allowing private delivery systems to evolve will then disappear.

Hon. Marilyn Trenholme Counsell: Honourable senators, coincidentally, I was in the process of preparing a statement for tomorrow on a similar topic.

I have collected many sheafs of news clippings of remarks made by Senator Keon and Senator Kirby. Those statements appear to convey this message: "Save medicare with a dose of competition. Make hospitals compete for patients. Let's hear it for health care premiums. Let the market forces drive medicare," and so on.

I am most concerned about all of this and, as such, I should like to know Senator Keon's opinion on the benchmarks that were recently released by the Wait Time Alliance as a reaction to the first ministers' conference last September. As honourable senators

know, the first ministers across this land are working assiduously to deal with some of the problems the senator has mentioned. I should like to know if Senator Keon is satisfied with the summary of benchmarks, by priority level, for diagnostic imaging and nuclear medicine, joint replacement, cancer care, sight restoration and cardiac care.

Senator Keon: Honourable senators, I cannot intelligently answer that question. I have not had time to study that subject, but it is my intention to do so. As you know, I have been preoccupied with the work of our committee and I attended the hearings in Montreal yesterday. I just got back last night. I am behind in my reading. I apologize that I cannot respond immediately, but I will express my opinion once I have had an opportunity to read this material.

The Hon. the Speaker: If no other senator wishes to speak, this inquiry will be considered debated.

RULES, PROCEDURES AND THE RIGHTS OF PARLIAMENT

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY PARTICIPATION OF SENATORS BY TELEPHONE OR VIDEO CONFERENCE DURING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Hon. Joan Fraser, pursuant to notice of June 21, 2005, moved:

That the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament be authorized to examine and report on the participation of senators by telephone or videoconference during public and in camera meetings of select committees.

She said: Honourable senators, this motion speaks for itself. This is a question that arises from time to time and, as is so often the case with the procedure in this place, it ends up raising enormously complex questions.

The Rules Committee, to my understanding, has examined the matter several times in the past but has not issued a formal report, recommendation or proposal for a rule change. I, and the members of the Transport Committee, wherein the question arose yesterday, thought it would be useful once and for all to have a ruling on this from the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament.

I would simply add that the motion refers to meetings of select committees, which would be both standing and special Senate

committees, but of course would not cover Committee of the Whole or joint committees, because, in both cases, those require different mechanisms to determine their procedures.

Hon. Eymard G. Corbin: Honourable senators, I have a question. Would Senator Fraser care to modify the text of her motion by adding the words "absent" before "senators" so that the motion would read "That the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament be authorized to examine and report on the participation of absent senators by telephone or videoconference..." because senators duly present at committee meetings do participate in video conferences. Who Senator Fraser is targeting here are senators who are physically absent from the Senate or its committees.

Senator Fraser: Honourable senators, obviously Senator Corbin is right. That is what we are talking about. However, I do not know if the addition of the word "absent" would not lead us into other thickets.

I am a member of the Rules Committee. We could stress in our discussion of this motion before the Rules Committee that we are targeting senators who are away. I fear that adding the word "absent" might lead us down byways that were not the object of the motion. I know the honourable senator is trying to be helpful. Would "...senators who are not physically present..." be acceptable?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton: Honourable senators, the subject matter of this motion was the basis of some discussion in the Rules Committee yesterday, although the discussion was not based on this particular motion. I suppose the motion could be referred to the committee, but the subject is already one of the items that we have pending in the Rules Committee. It is rather interesting that it was before the Transport Committee at the same time we were discussing it in the Rules Committee.

Senator Fraser: In response to that comment, I would remark that it is indeed ironic that it happened at precisely the same time, but my understanding is that the Rules Committee did not make a report yesterday. I am suggesting that this issue, which has been discussed several times, should lead to a report so that we know where we stand. Since it has been discussed several times, I doubt that it would take up a great deal of the time of the Rules Committee.

Motion agreed to.

The Senate adjourned until Thursday, June 23, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.

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