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THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA
SPEAKER

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THE SENATE

Thursday, April 6, 2006

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

TRIBUTES

THE HONOURABLE JOHN BUCHANAN, P.C., Q.C.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I received a notice earlier today from the Leader of the Government in the Senate, who requests, pursuant to rule 22(10) of the *Rules of the Senate*, that the time provided for consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable Senator Buchanan, who will retire from the Senate on April 22, 2006.

I remind honourable senators that, pursuant to the rules, each senator will be allowed only three minutes and may speak only once.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, today we mark the departure from the chamber of the Honourable Senator John Buchanan. It is always sad when we say goodbye to a fellow senator, but it is especially so in this instance. For over 15 years the Senate of Canada has benefited from his wisdom, affability and good humour. These are excellent qualities for any senator to possess, but Senator Buchanan has these in abundance. We will miss him greatly. I remember when Senator Buchanan was sworn into the Senate, which I believe was on the same day as the current Speaker of the Senate, the Honourable Senator Kinsella. It was quite a day.

A proud Cape Bretoner, John Buchanan had a distinguished career as a lawyer before entering politics, and throughout that latter segment of his career he enjoyed tremendous electoral success. John Buchanan sat for 23 years as a member of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly. In addition to taking on the highest political office in his province, he held the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia for almost 20 years, a remarkable achievement. As all honourable senators are aware, for 13 years John Buchanan served as the Premier of Nova Scotia, leading not only Nova Scotians, but also all Canadians through interesting and challenging times. His tenure as Premier of Nova Scotia was marked by national events in which he played a major role, most notably the patriation of the Constitution and the Meech Lake Accord negotiations. Each of his undertakings as premier was rooted in his desire to see his province and the country move forward and to serve the people as best he could.

The desire to serve continued to be evident in Ottawa following his appointment to the Senate of Canada in 1990 by the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, then Prime Minister. Senator Buchanan's dedication to Nova Scotia was the basis for his work on several Senate committees. We witnessed his devotion

first-hand during his interventions in this chamber — and quite a devotion it is, Senator Buchanan. He has followed a long tradition of former provincial and territorial leaders who have brought their considerable talents and expertise to this chamber.

Although Senator Buchanan is leaving the Senate today, it is safe to say that he will continue to take an active role in the years to come in advancing the interests of his beloved Nova Scotia and Canada. I am sure I speak for all honourable senators in wishing Senator Buchanan a happy retirement, although the word "retirement" does not seem to suit him.

Hon. Daniel Hays (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, the man to whom we pay tribute today will retire later this month. He has been witness to and a leading political actor in some of the most important and fascinating events in Canada's recent history. A proud Canadian and devoted son of Nova Scotia, Senator Buchanan has made outstanding contributions to his province, to the Senate and to Canada over some 40 years. He was first elected Premier of Nova Scotia in 1978 and won four consecutive terms. His political accomplishments include holding the record of longest-serving Conservative premier in the province's history, exceeding that of the Right Honourable Robert Stanfield. Whether as a cabinet minister or as the premier, he attended every federal-provincial conference from 1968 to 1990. He was signatory to the accord that secured the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and brought home the Constitution in 1982.

• (1410)

In recognition of his efforts and contributions, he was made a Privy Councillor by the Right Honourable Pierre Trudeau in April of 1982. Appointed to the Senate in 1990, as was observed by Senator LeBreton, he brought the breadth of his skills and experience to our deliberations, whether it be in the chamber or in our committees.

[Translation]

I would mention in particular his considerable contribution as Deputy Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages. Last year, in fact, Senator Buchanan, in his committee, completed an in-depth study of education in francophone minority communities, including those in Nova Scotia, which proposed important recommendations to improve its management and funding.

[English]

Senator Buchanan is from Cape Breton and is renowned, as are all Cape Bretoners, for charm, eloquence and resolve. It is said of Cape Bretoners that they are persistent, determined, proud and outspoken. These qualities reflect their island's ruggedness, bold coastline and majestic scenery. Having known and admired Senator Buchanan for many years, I can say that he embodies those qualities and that the character of Cape Breton is indelibly etched into his personality.

Senator Buchanan, we will miss you, your lively mind, eloquence and sense of humour, and we wish you well in your retirement.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, Senator Buchanan will be retiring from the Senate, but knowing his energy and enthusiasm, we all expect that retirement has no place in his future.

We can all be confident that Senator Buchanan will continue to be as active in his future endeavours as he has been throughout his distinguished career. Prior to being appointed senator, he was elected Premier of Nova Scotia in 1978. He was re-elected in 1981, 1984 and 1988, becoming the third premier in the history of Nova Scotia to be elected to four consecutive terms.

Senator Buchanan: Majority terms.

Senator Comeau: As premier, Senator Buchanan was very supportive of the Acadians of Nova Scotia. He made historic decisions to advance services to the Acadians of Nova Scotia. It can be said that Senator Buchanan set the standard for all future and past premiers in this endeavour. He had three Acadians in his caucus, and he appointed all three to the cabinet. He authorized the Acadian school boards and the French language Acadian schools, the Collège de l'Acadie, and the Centre des ressources pédagogiques, and he was very supportive of Université Sainte-Anne, where he was later honoured with an honorary doctorate.

Bilingual signs were not available in Nova Scotia in those days. We had to make our way to our Acadian villages using English signs, but Senator Buchanan said, "That is not good enough. We will have Acadian signs in their home villages in Nova Scotia." In spite of the objections raised by the bureaucracy in those days, he overruled them and said it was the right thing to do.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Comeau: Finally, the Acadian areas were to receive a limited-access highway and, of all things, the community was to be divided by a highway which would not permit access. At that time, John Buchanan said, "No, I will do the right thing. The communities and families will stick together." Again, Senator Buchanan would not divide community and family, which was very much appreciated.

John and Mavis are both people persons with extremely good senses of humour. At one time, the media made the claim that Mavis would go to bed without pyjamas. With a twinkle in her eye, Mavis responded that, of course not, she always wore her jewellery to bed. "Besides," she said, "John is a jewel."

In saying "au revoir" to Mavis and John, I would like to repeat John's favourite saying.

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back;
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields, and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

[Senator Hays]

Hon. Jane Cordy: John, John, where have the years gone? Liberals in Nova Scotia have been waiting for many years for you to retire from politics. From 1978 until 1990, when you were appointed to the Senate by Brian Mulroney, you were the premier of our province. As hard as we Liberals campaigned, we could never defeat you.

Nova Scotians loved you because you talked to everyone. You remembered their names and their families. Your home phone number and address were easily accessed in the phone book. I remember a by-election in Cape Breton when you were campaigning very hard for your candidate. You stopped in Dominion at my aunt and uncle's house, long-time Liberals, and you had cake and tea with them on their deck. They never did tell me, but I often suspect that they voted Conservative in that election because the premier took time to visit with them.

John, everyone in Nova Scotia knows that your wife, Mavis, was a powerhouse behind the scenes. I heard the story of a constituent who phoned your home at about two o'clock in the morning to ask for some help on a matter. Mavis answered the phone and very nicely spoke to the gentleman. She got the answers to his questions and she got the help that he needed. The next week, she returned the phone call — at two o'clock in the morning.

John, those of us who travel to Halifax will miss the Thursday night flights when you filled the time with your stories. I am not sure, however, if the Air Canada flight attendants will miss you, because when you were at the front of the plane, it took forever to load the passengers because you would know almost everyone on the plane, and they would all stop to have a little chat before sitting down.

My best wishes to you, John, and to Mavis and your family as you begin yet another stage of your life. We all know of your love for our great Nova Scotia, and perhaps you will get to spend some time "out on the Mira on warm afternoons."

Hon. Lowell Murray: Honourable senators, it is always sad to have to note the departure of a Cape Bretoner, even one who has been masquerading as a Halagonian for so many years. I have followed Nova Scotia politics closely for all of my adult lifetime; in fact, most of my childhood, as well. In my observation, no politician in that province connected on a more personal level with more people — and connected more warmly — than did John Buchanan. He has a wonderful affection for his fellow Nova Scotians, and the feeling is mutual. As premier, his devotion to their needs and communities, large and small, is remembered in their hearts as well as on signs, plaques and photographs in numerous public facilities, which he will be glad to show you if you go on a tour of the province with him.

As premier, he worked productively with other governments, regardless of political stripe. God alone knows the full extent of the tradeoffs arrived at between Premier Buchanan and then federal minister Allan J. MacEachen in their various negotiations. We can be certain, however, that Nova Scotia never came out the loser.

I confess that when I was Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency in the Mulroney government, we were no match for Premier Buchanan. Typically, I would arrive in Nova Scotia to be greeted by an announcement he had just made of a major public investment to be launched “pending federal funding.” I would find myself answering to a battery of cameras and microphones as to whether I had the cheque in my pocket.

• (1420)

I also saw a great deal of him during the constitutional negotiations of the late 1980s and early 1990s. In that connection, I want to acknowledge with admiration the generous spirit he brought to all issues where national unity was involved. Two matters stand out in my memory: the leadership of Premier Buchanan and of his minister on Aboriginal issues, the late Edmund Morris, and a spontaneous and remarkable gesture of friendship and solidarity he gave to Premier Bourassa in Quebec at especially tense and difficult moments during constitutional negotiations. He made me proud of my Nova Scotia roots.

[Translation]

I would like to mention, as did our friend Senator Comeau, his hard work on the Official Languages Committee, on which he served as Deputy Chair. Naturally, he was concerned primarily with the interests of the Acadians in Nova Scotia and was enthusiastically involved in our recent study of the conditions they face in his province. His devotion to the Acadian people earned him, as Senator Comeau mentioned, an honorary doctorate from Université Sainte-Anne.

[English]

His lengthy experience and his knowledge of many regional and national issues has marked his interventions in the Senate and its committees. He leaves here with the abiding affection and admiration of all his colleagues.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I know that there are many other senators who wish to speak. We have found a solution. It is my understanding that, with leave, an inquiry will be presented later this day so many other senators can have an opportunity to pay tribute to our colleague.

At this time I would like to call upon Senator Buchanan.

Hon. John Buchanan: Honourable senators, I really do not know the rules that well after all these years, but I have been told I have unlimited time. I want to assure you I will not take all that time, but I might.

Where did Mike Kirby run to?

An Hon. Senator: He knew you were going to speak.

Senator Buchanan: I have something to say about Mike Kirby. Where is he? I told him I was going to say something.

An Hon. Senator: That is why he left.

Senator Buchanan: My, how the years have flown. Those words are taken from a favourite country and western song that Mavis and I love: My, how the years have flown.

Thank you for your kind words, to all of you who have spoken and to all of those who have not yet spoken. I really do not know who you were talking about when you were saying those things.

Before commenting on those words spoken about my time in this place, I wish to say that for almost 40 years in government, politics, the legislature of Nova Scotia, the premier's office, leader of the opposition and here, there is one person who ensured that it all happened, including my eight personal elections in Halifax — my wife Mavis, seated in the gallery. She has been for — listen to this now — 51 years, seven months and seven days —

An Hon. Senator: How many hours?

Senator Buchanan: Yes, I can state the hours too. It is now twelve and a half hours, Halifax time.

Over those years — as many of you who have a spouse who has worked hard on your behalf will know — Mavis has been mother and father. She ran our home. She was a support worker, as well as a political worker in my constituency for the 23 years I served in the legislature and worked throughout the province. I do not think there was ever an election when she was not on a platform with me and supporting me. I want to again publicly thank her. She is my Rock of Gibraltar and I will be with her for another 50 years.

Seated next to her is one of our five children, Nickie Morash, and next to Nickie is one of our nine grandchildren, Riley Morash.

For Senator Cordy: Nickie has been a flight attendant with Air Canada for 23 years, and the other attendants say to her from time to time what you said, “Look, would you please tell your father to stop talking to everyone so we can unload the plane.”

Senator Cordy, you are absolutely right. Nickie would agree with what you just said.

Senator Cordy is a very honest and true person. The other thing that Senator Cordy is right about is that the Liberals tried and tried and tried to defeat me but never could. However, I think her mother and father did vote for Mike Laffin.

What do you think, Senator Murray?

Senator Murray is from New Waterford too. Mike Laffin represented Dominion in those areas, and Jane knows him very well.

Thank you, Jane, for your very kind words.

When I was invited to come to this chamber, I of course spoke to the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, but the second person who called me about that appointment was none other than Senator Marjory LeBreton. Of course, Marjory was in Nova Scotia many times, at various meetings, with the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney. I remember one occasion when we had pictures taken at the Sheraton Hotel, and then the press

asked the Prime Minister, "Prime Minister, where will you be leaving for now?" Marjory intervened to say that we had a very important meeting to discuss federal-provincial relations, and we both agreed with that. The press asked me, "Well, where are you going?" We said that we were going to the Chateau Halifax Hotel, as it then was, for serious discussions on federal-provincial matters. Being the very honest people that Brian Mulroney and I are, we certainly did spend three and a half hours together discussing many matters, but three of the matters involved politics.

That did not go over as well as I thought it would.

An Hon. Senator: It is not the first time you have told us that one.

Senator Buchanan: What can I say about Senator Comeau? Gerald Comeau has not only been my colleague for 15 years in the Senate, but he and Aurore, who I believe is up there in the gallery, have been our personal friends for almost 30 years, and that is a long time. I campaigned with Gerald when he ran for the House of Commons, and he always campaigned for me, all over southwestern Nova Scotia, during those years.

Gerald, I am so pleased and happy with your appointment, and yours too, Senator LeBreton, to be the Leader of the Government in the Senate and Deputy Leader, respectively. What a great combination. I think that all of my colleagues would agree. I think that is a great combination.

• (1430)

I do not want to take too much time, but Gerald hit upon something I have to mention to you. We were the government of Nova Scotia for two months, and so I decided as premier that we would have one of our first cabinet meetings at Université Sainte-Anne. We went down to the university. At eleven o'clock in the morning I was scheduled to speak to the students. At 10:30 they came with a car and took me to the high school. I could not believe it; there were about 500 students in the gymnasium. I thought, my gosh, this school is not that big. They had bussed students in from other schools around the Acadian area, from Clare and Argyle.

I got up on the platform, being a brand new premier, and I was introduced by the principal. Guy LeBlanc had prepared a speech for me, a paragraph in French, which I slaughtered at the time and then reverted to English.

Finally I said, "Look, you did not come here today just to listen to me. If you have any questions, please ask them now and I will do the best I can to answer them." The first question was from a young man who asked: "Mr. Premier, why do we not have French signs in this area on our highways?" I said, "Why not?" They all burst into applause and asked whether I would do it, and I said, "Why not?"

I went back to the Université Sainte-Anne where Rollie Thornhill met me at the front door. He asked me, "What did you say? They are saying on the radio all over the French network that you agreed to put up French signs in the Acadian area." I said, "Rollie, why not?" He looked at me and said, "Why not? Let's announce it today."

[Senator Buchanan]

That is how it happened. Gerald, thank you very much.

When I was first elected to the Nova Scotia legislature in 1967, I was elected as a Stanfield candidate. We ran as Progressive Conservatives, but we were known as Stanfield candidates. In my first election, I was supposed to lose badly. They said no one knew me. A person by the name of Percy Baker, who was a very colourful county councillor, as Mike Forrestall and Don Oliver will remember, was going to beat the living you-know-what out of me. I beat him by 952 votes. I could have gotten one more vote out of Indian Harbour, but the guy was away.

I was a cabinet minister under the late Senator G.I. (Ike) Smith. In 1970, our government was defeated, but I was re-elected in Halifax. When that happened, there was a person by the name of Gerald Augustus Regan who became the Premier of Nova Scotia. He thought he was running the Province of Nova Scotia. How wrong he was. As Senator Moore will recall, it was really being run by one Michael Kirby, who is now in the Senate. He is not in the chamber to hear me say this. Mike was chief of staff.

Reminiscing, I know, is dangerous and can lead to all kinds of things that extend time, but I look back to my first day here, when I came down the aisle with my good friend Senator Lowell Murray. We walked down here, and I took the oath of office. On my other arm was one of my dear friends for many years, probably one of the greatest campaigners in Nova Scotia, Senator John M. Macdonald. He accompanied me and I took my seat.

Interestingly, Senator Murray was from New Waterford, Senator Macdonald from North Sydney and John Buchanan from Sydney. We were three Cape Bretoners coming down the aisle, and Bob Muir was applauding us all. He was from Sydney Mines. At that time, Cape Bretoners were taking over this place. We still are, with Senator Jane Cordy and the others here.

The interesting thing that I wanted to mention was that they sat me down on that day right in this very seat. Richard Hatfield was over here, Duff Roblin over there and Lowell Murray was seated right there as Leader of the Government at the time. Who was on this side of me? Senator Pat Carney.

Politics is an interesting business. When I was first elected to the legislature, I was a cabinet minister on the government side. We lost the election and moved across to the opposition side.

They say the opposition is always looking to defeat the government and the government is looking to make sure the opposition does not come back over. I moved back and forth all the time. I was over here, then over there, then over here in the legislature. In this chamber, I was sitting here, then I went over to where Senator Joyal is now sitting, and I am back over here again. What comes around goes around, even in politics.

Senator St. Germain is sitting here now, but they told me I could sit here today only because it was my seat back then.

I also want to say something about Senator Pat Carney. The trouble with politics is that one accomplishes things that are sometimes forgotten over the space of time. Senator Carney helped in a big way to negotiate the 1986 Nova Scotia and Newfoundland offshore oil and gas agreements.

Pat, you and I, Joel Matheson and others handled the agreements back then that forged the way for all the money that came to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland through the offshore agreements. I thank you publicly today because you have not been given the credit that you deserve with regard to those agreements.

Senator Carney: I noticed you still gave me second billing.

Senator Buchanan: Of course, I was the premier.

Senator Carney: I was the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Senator Buchanan: Pat, I gave you so much credit.

I want to mention someone else today. Senator Murray referred to Allan J. MacEachen. There is no doubt in my mind, and I have said this many times, that he is probably one of the best political grassroots politicians in Canada. He had a love for Nova Scotia, particularly Cape Breton, that was unmatched by anyone but myself, of course.

Allan J. and I made so many agreements together — not deals — for Nova Scotia. Another minister came on the scene by the name of Senator Pierre De Bané. He was almost a match for Senator MacEachen in the deal — or agreement — that we made on the shores of the Northwest Arm. Rollie Thornhill, Senator De Bané and I marched along the water where the agreement was struck. Allan J. said to Senator De Bané one day, “I think you are too close to Buchanan.” Senator De Bané is a dear friend of Nova Scotia and a great personal friend of mine. I remember that later I was at a big function in Halifax on one of the Italian ships. Senator De Bané was also there, and I will not name the others. I will say that I picked up 70 per cent of the Italian vote in Halifax. Senator De Bané and some of his party from Montreal were having difficulty finding a place to have dinner that evening. I asked him where he had tried to find something. He said, “Look, we have tried four restaurants.” I said, “Leave it with me.” I called one restaurant. I got him and his group the nicest table at a restaurant right on Halifax harbour. They cleared the tables for him. Is that not correct, Senator De Bané?

• (1440)

Senator De Bané: Absolutely.

Senator Buchanan: I never tell a lie. That is true.

I now want to make mention of Mike Forrestall. Mike Forrestall owes his political existence to his campaign co-managers in his election way back in the 1960s. I was campaign co-manager of Mike Forrestall's first election back then. He won it and every election from then on. He was a member of Parliament for 24 years. Mike, you are here, and you have been a member of the House of Commons, and you have been a tremendous Nova Scotian over all of those years.

I want to mention some “Mount A'ers” who are here. I was a graduate of Mount Allison University, with my science and engineering degree and with an honorary doctorate in engineering. Where is Senator Michael Meighen? He is not here,

either. Senator Meighen has his honorary doctor of laws; I have one, too. My classmate, Senator Marilyn Trenholme Counsell, MLA, cabinet minister, lieutenant-governor, senator, medical doctor and Mount Allison graduate, is right over there. I am so pleased she is over there. There is also Senator Callbeck, MLA, MP, the first female premier in Canada, the premier of Prince Edward Island and a Mount Allison graduate. Senator Bryden is also a Mount Allison graduate. Senator Day is from Mount Allison University, too, right?

Senator Day: No, my daughter.

Senator Buchanan: Oh, his daughter is a graduate.

I want to mention two other people. One of them is my dear friend, former chairman of the Official Languages Committee, Senator Corbin. I want to congratulate him on the way he ran that committee. He ran it efficiently and conducted it with aplomb. I remember when I was invited to be deputy chair of the committee and I asked, “Why me?” He simply said, “I am Acadian French; you are Scottish anglophone.” How simple the official languages of Canada. That is why I became the deputy chairman of the committee.

I have had people tell me Senator Banks is without a doubt probably the greatest musician ever in Canada.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Buchanan: Harry Currie made sure I would say that. He is a dear friend of Senator Banks and a friend of mine. Furthermore, he is a graduate of Mount Allison University.

Senator Cordy mentioned a call at two o'clock in the morning. I remember a call I received at five a.m. on a cold, snowy morning. My telephone number changed all the time, but I reached over to pick up the phone, only to hear, “Is that the premier?” I replied, “Yes, it is.” I was then asked, “Has your road been ploughed?” I said, “What?” I was asked again, “Has your road been ploughed?” I got up, crawled across the bed, looked out and returned to the phone and said, “Yes, it has.” The caller then said, “Well, my road has not been ploughed. My husband has to be at work in an hour. What are you going to do about it?” and she hung up. I haven't a clue who she was. Those types of things can happen.

Senator Hays and I have a mutual friend. He is a Liberal, unfortunately, but he is one of the greatest guys in the world. He is a Mount Allison graduate, too. His name is Robert Goss, but we called him “Gumper Goss.” Dan and I have had many talks about him. He used to sit in the bleachers of Mount Allison University. He would watch the football games. He was a great football player; unfortunately, I was not that good. I will never forget this. We were there with Doc Pullin. They called me Hunk Buchanan — I don't know why, but they did. Hunk Buchanan, Gumper Goss and Doc Pullin were sitting all together and Gumper Goss said, “Do you see that fellow out there? That's my brother. Boy, he is a great football player!” Almost as good as me. Senator Hays knows what I mean by that, and I had to throw it in.

I have had a good, long ride in politics. It may not be over, who knows? I still have energy. Maybe Mavis will divorce me if I do anything else. I have had bumps along the road, but for the most part it was smooth. Do you know why politics can be smooth, wonderful and delightful and so enjoyable? It is because of people like you, my friends and my colleagues all along the way who have made it a great run for me. I thank you. May the road rise up to you, may the wind be always at your back, may the gentle rains fall upon your fields, may the sun shine bright on your countenance and may the good Lord hold all members of the Senate in the palm of his hand forever. Au revoir.

[Translation]

THE LATE CORPORAL ROBERT COSTALL

TRIBUTE

Hon. Lucie Pépin: Honourable senators, the funeral service for Corporal Robert Costall took place today. His remains, however, were returned to Canada on Saturday. I was very moved during the ceremony by the dignity with which his 20-year-old wife, Chrissy Costall, received the coffin of our fellow Canadian who died in combat in Afghanistan.

I was really tempted to tell this young woman — just 20 years old — that she can be proud of her man. He gave his life to bring peace to a country looking for a way out. She will be able to tell their one-year-old son that his father died for a noble cause, that of ensuring world peace.

[English]

I wish to tell Chrissy Costall that we recognize that she and all other soldiers' spouses are heroes, just as our soldiers are heroes. We do not say much about these women when we talk about the Canadian Forces, but they are there, always at their spouses' side. These women are equally dedicated to the Canadian Forces. Their lives, too, are shaped by the military, with its frequent moves and a lifestyle a world apart from that of civilians. These women and their children live in unique circumstances and often face financial, professional, personal and emotional challenges.

• (1450)

[Translation]

Over the past few years, I have seen their remarkable courage, especially when their spouses are posted abroad. During these times, they cope with the daily anxiety of knowing that their spouses are in a dangerous place. They quietly tolerate this pressure and all the comments, debates and rumours surrounding the deployment of their spouses abroad.

I invite you, honourable senators, to show your support to the spouses and children of our soldiers every chance you get. Their daily lives offer us many reasons to express our support.

I want to express my utmost gratitude to the members of the Canadian Forces for their determination. The growing danger of their missions has not affected their resolve to fulfill their duty at the expense of the ultimate sacrifice. Rest in peace; rest in peace, Corporal Robert Costall.

[Senator Buchanan]

[English]

OUTSTANDING YOUNG FARMERS' PROGRAM

CONGRATULATIONS TO 2005 AWARD RECIPIENTS STEVE REEVES AND JESSICA FRANCIS

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, in this age of high technology and urban post-industrial enterprise, agriculture is sometimes looked upon as a backward, unsophisticated way of making a living — not at all the preferred career path for ambitious, educated young Canadians. It is unfortunate that today so few have the opportunity or the desire to farm, to choose agriculture as a profession and lifestyle. The reasons for this are many. In spite of common perception, farming is a sophisticated profession requiring specialized skills and knowledge. New farmers often face huge start-up costs and the financial rewards are modest and unpredictable.

Notwithstanding all of this, the family farm continues to be a proud Canadian institution, and I am pleased to say that many young men and women, against all odds, still choose farming. Prince Edward Island has a rich farming tradition, and agriculture remains our leading industry. At its annual conference in Halifax last November, Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers' Program named Steve Reeves and Jessica Francis of Freetown, Prince Edward Island as the 2005 award recipients. This is the third time in three years that a farm couple from Atlantic Canada has been recognized in such a manner.

Reeves and Francis operate Brookhill Holsteins and Reeves Farms Inc. in partnership with Steve's father. From a herd of 30 unregistered cows with low milk yields, Steve and Jessica, along with their six-year-old son Luke, have worked to reach purebred herd status with milk production rising dramatically every year.

These outstanding young farmers are committed to building their farming operation to change with the industry, especially the need to be responsive to consumer demands for quality and environmental stewardship. "We fenced off a lot of streams and ponds on our 250-acre farm," said Steve, "but that was something we wanted to do. My son likes to fish in the same pond his grandfather used to fish as a boy and we want to keep that going for future generations."

The president of Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers' Program, Mr. Gary Meier, had this to say about Steve's and Jessica's achievement:

Family has long been a vital ingredient in Canada's successful farming operations...and this year's winners show us how valuable these partnerships are to a sustainable business. Farming has always been about innovation, and this couple balances the wisdom of their parents with their own ideas and vision for the future...

Honourable senators, I know you will join with me in offering congratulations to Steve Reeves and Jessica Francis, two of Canada's outstanding young farmers.

SUPPORT FOR TRAUMATIZED WOMEN AND GIRLS

Hon. Nancy Ruth: Honourable senators, on April 17 we mark the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Canada Act, 1982 and its schedule, the Constitution Act of 1928. We also mark the twenty-first anniversary of the commencement of constitutional equality rights in Canada. They constitute the supreme law of the land and they have a very long shelf life.

Canadians consistently say that these two acts represent our values and our aspirations for our country and for all who live here, whatever their circumstances.

The Constitution Act, 1982 places positive obligations on lawmakers — on us. These obligations are part of our job description and our responsibility.

In the Persons case, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council said:

The British North America Act planted in Canada a living tree capable of growth and expansion within its natural limits.

I want that living tree to provide shelter for the historically disadvantaged and dispossessed, particularly women and families who live in poverty and live with violence.

Last spring, this Senate passed the New Veterans Charter to encourage wellness and to help traumatized veterans achieve independence. We can and we should be doing the same for traumatized women and girls. In 2000, 27,000 sexual offences, mostly sexual assault, were reported in Canada; that is 70 women a day, three an hour, and most under the age of 18. Women are overwhelmingly the victims of stalking and spousal homicides. More than 95,000 traumatized women and children were admitted to shelters last year; that is 360 a day. However, shelters cannot meet the day-to-day need. Perhaps a women's charter might.

The benefits we gave veterans we should give to women and girls suffering from society's violence. Think about the justness and the unjustness we have done in passing the New Veterans Charter in terms of women and girls.

Honourable senators, think about it.

ENCOUNTERS WITH CANADA PROGRAM

LOSS OF FUNDING

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, I rise on this occasion to bring your attention to some discouraging news. The decision by the Conservative government to cut funding to the non-partisan Canadian Unity Council will scrap valuable programs such as Encounters with Canada and the Summer Work Student Exchange.

Today I wish to focus on Encounters with Canada, a program geared toward teaching youth from diverse backgrounds about this country. As many honourable senators already know, Encounters with Canada is a one-week program with Canadian

studies held at the Terry Fox Canadian Youth Centre in Ottawa from mid-September to early December and from late January to early May. More than 138 high school students aged 14 to 17 come from across the country to our national capital for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

As a senator, I have met the students of Encounters with Canada, as have many of you from both sides of this chamber. Think about how much enjoyment we have had with these young people. This program taught — past tense — young Canadians about the diversity of this land, about the many different people that make up our country and about the importance of this diversity for the strength of our economic and social fabric.

I wish to share a quote from one Encounters with Canada participant in February 2005:

Wow! Where to start? This has definitely been the best week of my life! I'm going to encourage everyone I meet from now on to sign up for this. I met so many new people that I know are going to be life-long friends. I drastically improved my second language, and I got an opportunity to learn about different parts of our amazing country. If every kid experienced this, the world would be a better place. You guys are amazing! Thanks a billion for a great week!

Honourable senators, seeing this kind of enthusiasm for our country is worth every cent that we put into this program. Where else could students from Campbellton or Bathurst, New Brunswick exchange their vision for this country with their peers from Powell River, British Columbia in such an open and inclusive way?

I am disappointed that our young citizens are being forgotten. The Harper government's agenda ignores this country's future — our children.

I urge all honourable senators to put pressure on the Prime Minister and cabinet ministers, including the cabinet minister here today, to keep this program. This is an important program. A country as vast and diverse as ours needs these programs in order to grow. Our future depends on an informed and engaged youth, young people who care about Canada and about all things in Canada. Encounters is a program that does just that. We need Encounters. As parliamentarians, we need to act to save it.

• (1500)

THE LATE CORETTA SCOTT KING

Hon. Donald H. Oliver: Honourable senators, Coretta Scott King, the widow of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and a renowned champion of human rights and racial harmony, passed away on January 30 at the age of 78.

Ms. King was born in rural Alabama, but rose to become an international symbol of the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1960s. She tirelessly advocated for women's rights, the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and other social and political issues.

It was 1954 when Ms. King first became involved in the civil rights movement. Her husband Dr. Martin Luther King had become a key figure in the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott, an event which propelled the Kings into national prominence.

After her husband's assassination, Ms. King took over his leadership role in the movement. As a leader, she quickly developed her own style and found some of her own causes. She began to speak of gender as well as race; she wanted women to "unite and form a solid bloc of women power to fight the three great evils of racism, poverty and war."

Ms. King went on to lead the effort to establish a national holiday in her husband's honour and founded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta, an institution with a proud history of both scholarship and activism.

Ms. King became a director of the National Organization for Women and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. She supported a cross-section of international human rights issues, including the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

In addition to such accomplishments, Ms. King successfully raised four children, who were still young at the time of their father's death.

Ms. King was a truly inspirational figure. Her tireless work to create equality for people of colour and for women, and to end apartheid and the war in Vietnam, has given thousands the resolve to carry on the work to which she and her husband were so devoted.

The world will miss her.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL

2005 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the annual report of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal for 2005, pursuant to subsection 61(4) of the Canadian Human Rights Act.

[English]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

FIRST REPORT OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Terry Stratton, Chair of the Committee of Selection, presented the following report:

[Senator Oliver]

Thursday, April 6, 2006

The Committee of Selection has the honour to present its

FIRST REPORT

Pursuant to Rule 85(1)(a) and 85(2) of the *Rules of the Senate*, your Committee wishes to inform the Senate that it nominates the Honourable Senator Losier-Cool as Speaker *pro tempore*.

Respectfully submitted,

TERRY STRATTON
Chair

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

Senator Stratton: Honourable senators, with leave, later this day.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

On motion of Senator Stratton, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(g), report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration later this day.

SECOND REPORT OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Terry Stratton, Chair of the Committee of Selection, presented the following report:

Thursday, April 6, 2006

The Committee of Selection has the honour to present its

SECOND REPORT

Pursuant to Rule 85(1)(b) of the *Rules of the Senate*, your Committee submits herewith the list of Senators nominated by it to serve on the following committees:

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

The Honourable Senators Campbell, Dyck, Gill, Gustafson, Hubley, Lovelace Nicholas, Peterson, Segal, Sibbeston, St. Germain, P.C., Watt and Zimmer

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

The Honourable Senators Callbeck, Christensen, Fairbairn, P.C., Gustafson, Mahovlich, Mercer, Mitchell, Oliver, Pénin, Peterson, Segal and Tkachuk

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

The Honourable Senators Angus, Biron, Eyton, Fitzpatrick, Goldstein, Grafstein, Harb, Hervieux-Payette, P.C., Massicotte, Meighen, Moore and Tkachuk

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY,
THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Honourable Senators Angus, Banks, Carney, P.C.,
Cochrane, Fox, P.C., Hervieux-Payette, P.C., Lavigne,
Milne, Peterson, Sibbeston, Spivak and Tardif

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE
ON FISHERIES AND OCEANS

The Honourable Senators Adams, Baker, P.C., Campbell,
Comeau, Cowan, Forrestall, Gill, Hubley, Johnson,
Meighen, Rompkey, P.C. and Watt

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE
ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Honourable Senators Andreychuk, Corbin, Dawson,
De Bané, P.C., Di Nino, Downe, Mahovlich, Merchant,
Segal, St. Germain, P.C., Smith, P.C. and Stollery

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE
ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The Honourable Senators Andreychuk, Carstairs, P.C.,
Dallaire, Lovelace Nicholas, Kinsella, Munson,
Nancy Ruth, Pénin and Poy

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE
ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

The Honourable Senators Andreychuk, Baker, P.C.,
Bryden, Cools, Furey, Jaffer, Joyal, P.C., Milne,
Nolin, Oliver, Rivest and Ringuette

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE
ON THE LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

The Honourable Senators Johnson, Lapointe, Oliver,
Poy and Trenholme Counsell

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE
ON NATIONAL FINANCE

The Honourable Senators Biron, Cools, Cowan, Day,
Eggleton, P.C., Fox, P.C., Mitchell, Murray, P.C., Nancy
Ruth, Ringuette, Rompkey, P.C. and Stratton

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE
ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

The Honourable Senators Atkins, Banks, Campbell, Day,
Forrestall, Kenny, Meighen, Poulin and Watt

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE
ON OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The Honourable Senators Champagne, P.C., Chaput,
Comeau, Jaffer, Losier-Cool, Plamondon, Robichaud, P.C.,
Tardif and Trenholme Counsell

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES, PROCEDURES
AND THE RIGHTS OF PARLIAMENT

The Honourable Senators Andreychuk, Bryden,
Carstairs, P.C., Cools, Corbin, Cordy, Di Nino, Joyal, P.C.,
Losier-Cool, McCoy, Mitchell, Robichaud, P.C.,
Smith, P.C., Stratton and Tardif

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE FOR
THE SCRUTINY OF REGULATIONS

The Honourable Senators Biron, Bryden, De Bané, P.C.,
Eyton, Harb, Moore, Nolin and St. Germain, P.C.

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE
ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY

The Honourable Senators Callbeck, Champagne, P.C.,
Cochrane, Cook, Cordy, Eggleton, P.C., Fairbairn, P.C.,
Forrestall, Keon, Kirby, Pénin and Trenholme Counsell

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT
AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Honourable Senators Adams, Bacon, Carney, P.C.,
Dawson, Eyton, Johnson, Mercer, Merchant,
Munson, Phalen, Tkachuk and Zimmer

Pursuant to Rule 87, the Honourable Senator Hays
(or Fraser) and the Honourable Senator LeBreton, P.C.
(or Comeau) are members ex officio of each select
committee.

Respectfully submitted,

TERRY STRATTON
Chair

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

Senator Stratton: Honourable senators, with leave, later
this day.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

On motion of Senator Stratton, with leave of the Senate and
notwithstanding rule 58(1)(g), report placed on the Orders of the
Day for consideration later this day.

DRINKING WATER SOURCES BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein presented Bill S-208, to require the
Minister of the Environment to establish, in cooperation with the
provinces, an agency with the power to identify and protect
Canada's watersheds that will constitute sources of drinking
water in the future.

Bill read first time.

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

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

**CANADA-UNITED STATES
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP**

ANNUAL SUMMIT OF PACIFIC NORTHWEST
ECONOMIC REGION, JULY 14-18, 2005—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation to the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group's fifteenth annual summit on the Pacific Northwest Economic Region held in Seattle, Washington, from July 14 to 18, 2005.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL
MEETING, JULY 15-18, 2005—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation to the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group's annual meeting of the National Governors Association held in Des Moines, Iowa, from July 15 to 18, 2005.

COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS
EASTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE, JULY 25-28, 2005—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation to the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group's forty-fifth annual meeting and regional policy forum on the Council of State Governments Eastern Regional Conference held in Montville, Connecticut, from July 25 to 28, 2005.

ANNUAL MEETING,
SEPTEMBER 30 TO OCTOBER 3, 2005—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation to the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group's forty-sixth annual meeting held in St. Andrews-by-the-Sea, New Brunswick, from September 30 to October 3, 2005.

• (1510)

[Translation]

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO ACCOMMODATE
SENATORS SPEAKING ANCESTRAL LANGUAGES

Hon. Eymard G. Corbin: Honourable senators, I give notice that, on Tuesday, April 25, I will move:

That, the Senate should recognize the inalienable right of the first inhabitants of the land now known as Canada to use their ancestral language to communicate for any purpose; and

That, to facilitate the expression of this right, the Senate should immediately take the necessary administrative and technical measures so that senators wishing to use their ancestral language may do so.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO URGE GOVERNMENT
TO STUDY IMPACT OF LEGISLATION
ON REGIONS AND MINORITIES

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: Honourable senators, I give notice under rule 57(1) that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Senate urge the government to accompany all government bills by a social and economical impact study on regions and minorities in accordance to the Senate's role of representation and protection of minorities and regions.

[English]

THE HONOURABLE JOHN BUCHANAN, P.C., Q.C.

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 57(2), I give notice that later this day I will call the attention of honourable senators to the contributions to the Senate made by Senator John Buchanan, who will retire on April 22, 2006.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

QUESTION PERIOD

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

FARM INCOME CRISIS AND DISASTER RELIEF

Hon. Daniel Hays (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would like to return today to the subject of agriculture, in recognition of the continuing demonstration by farmers that we see on the Hill. My question is to the minister responsible for everything in this place other than Public Works, the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

I believe I understand the answers she gave yesterday to specific questions on the development of programs. We will look forward to those programs as they unfold and return to them as that happens and, of course, return to them if that does not happen, to draw attention to the importance of the government proceeding with its new programs.

There was an announcement yesterday, however, by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Strahl and, I gather, on behalf of the Minister of the Environment as well, Ms. Ambrose, with regard to ethanol. It highlights one of the ways in which farmers may be helped in using cereals to provide feedstock for the production of ethanol. The commitment is to have 5 per cent of motor fuels contain ethanol or a biofuel by 2010.

Is there any way, given the crisis that we are made aware of by the demonstration and by the statistics, some of which we touched on yesterday, that the time frame within which this can happen can be shortened? It is a long way from 2006 to 2010 when the sector is in crisis.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I would like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. In terms of shortening the time, I will definitely have to take this question as notice and respond at a later time.

Senator Hays: As a supplementary, the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry conducted a study in 2004 on value added and made a recommendation that the government — and I think it is as strong for this government as for the previous government — provide assistance to the producers who wish to form cooperatives, the exact name of which I have forgotten, which have been eligible for and have been given grants, although none in Canada have yet gone into operation. They are very common in the United States, but they require government assistance in terms of loan guarantees and grants.

Does the minister support this? If she does, will she take to her colleagues in cabinet the proposal from the Agriculture Committee to use grants and aid programs to assist producers who wish to produce ethanol to meet the objectives of the program that was announced yesterday?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, yes, I will commit to the Leader of the Opposition to take this request to my cabinet colleagues and, in particular, the Ministers of Agriculture and the Environment.

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn: Thank you very much, Your Honour, and congratulations to you on your new position.

I listened to Senator Segal yesterday, but I want to say congratulations to somebody who has been a friend of mine for 42 years — not 40, but 42 — since I was a young journalist and she was a young woman working with Flora MacDonald and trying to keep Mr. Diefenbaker on track as we traveled on buses across the country. That friendship has remained all these years. I think she is a very good choice for a very tough job, and I say that from past experience.

It is not surprising that my first question today involves the challenges facing our farmers across this country and very much in my own corner of southwestern Alberta.

Yesterday I stood out in the bitter cold at the rally on Parliament Hill for two hours listening to what was said. Over the past three years, public focus has been on the cattle industry, the devastation of BSE, and the closed border with the United States and many other countries; but throughout it all, disaster was also building in the grain and oilseeds parts of the industry, as we have heard repeatedly from our colleague Senator Gustafson, who is right at the heart of the sector. Yesterday's event was an outpouring of near despair from those agricultural leaders and spokespersons, who conveyed the message not of panic but

of extreme concern about the industry due to international subsidization, rising fuel prices, a high dollar and devastating weather that has swept across the Prairies with a vengeance in the past few years, with no indication that it will stop. They recognize the financial assistance from various levels of government, but they made it clear they cannot wait for budgets. They are asking for emergency funding for seeding so that they can at least have the chance to grow crops and bring in some substance for their families and have a brighter year for their next crop.

Could the minister indicate if a special effort is being considered to bring that assistance to farmers, who are very close to seeding? Farmers are the heart and strength of agriculture and are in a drastic situation.

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I thank my honourable colleague for her question. I thought I would be hearing a question on the subject of literacy. Normally, Senator Fairbairn bends my ear about literacy every chance she gets. I appreciate the concerns of the honourable senator and I will try to find the answer.

• (1520)

As I said yesterday, on the very day we were sworn into government, the government sped up the payment of \$750 million in emergency income support. We are committed to adding \$0.5 billion per year to income support totalling \$2.5 billion over the next five years.

Mr. Strahl, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, met with the farm leadership yesterday and, as has been pointed out, Senator Gustafson has made great representations. I commit that this government will do everything possible to speed up assistance to farmers. Also at issue is the potential flooding in Manitoba, as reported in the news.

Senator Fairbairn: I thank the honourable leader for her response. In absolute fairness, the farmers are appreciative of efforts that have been made over recent years to put substantial sums of money into a variety of programs, but one question remains at the forefront of their concerns. Although it seems early in Ottawa to begin seeding, would the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food consider some way to provide seeding assistance to farmers quickly so that they might produce a viable crop this summer, barring climatic disasters? There is an understanding of the current system and what has been discussed in the past, but what lies ahead in the future? Could a seeding program be developed quickly, in conjunction with the provinces, to give farmers that chance?

Senator LeBreton: I heard Minister Strahl when he addressed the farmers and I know that they appreciated the \$750 million that was sent immediately after February 6. Many members of Parliament in our government represent rural communities. The most important message that those members, Minister Strahl and I can send to the farmers is that this government truly appreciates them and will work hard with them to speed up the process to provide them with the funds they need to get their crops in the fields.

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

FUNDING OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

Hon. Tommy Banks: Honourable senators, my question is for the Honourable Minister of Public Works and Government Services, whom I have not yet welcomed to the Senate but would take this opportunity to do so.

Public Works and Government Services, being one of the largest departments, spends approximately \$13 billion per year on the acquisition and provision of goods and services to other departments. In the interests of sustainable development, Public Works and Government Services, Environment Canada and Natural Resources Canada have become the three co-champions of the greening of government operations by way of setting an example for the rest of the country. With the leadership of these departments, the government has made considerable progress in respect of the greening of government operations over the past few years.

Public Works and Government Services Canada has had four stated goals: first, to green the department's operations as a custodian and provider of facilities and common-use office space to federal departments; second, to green the services that are provided to federal departments and agencies as a common service agent; third, to green the department's internal operations; and, fourth, to provide national and international leadership in the greening of government operations.

Would the minister undertake to the Senate and to Canada that full funding to continue these programs will exist in his department under his government?

Hon. Michael Fortier (Minister of Public Works and Government Services): I thank the honourable senator for his kind words of welcome and his question.

Frankly, it would be irresponsible for the government and the country, given the amount of money spent on procurement, to not think about greening efforts and to not focus on those issues. The program, which began before I was sworn in as minister, will continue. For example, on the real estate side, the program includes saving energy and, when replacing automobiles, ensuring that hybrid automobiles are considered before any other automobiles. These efforts will continue, as they should, given the amount of money that government spends on the purchase of assets each year in Canada.

Senator Banks: I do not know whether the minister is familiar with an initiative called Federal House in Order, which was a quasi-organization. There was also a council of deputy ministers or assistant deputy ministers from various government departments to try to coordinate these efforts. That council was led by the honourable minister's department and the other two named earlier. Will those initiatives continue?

Senator Fortier: I am not aware of the initiative, but I will undertake to consult departmental officials to provide me with that information. As I said earlier, anything in respect of greening is important to me, as an individual, and to my department.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
COMPASSIONATE CARE BENEFIT

Hon. Sharon Carstairs: Honourable senators, I congratulate the new Leader of the Government in the Senate. Having sat in that seat, I know how onerous the duties can be, and I wish her well. I would also welcome the Honourable Senator Fortier.

My question is for the Leader of the Government. On January 4, 2004, the new Compassionate Care Benefit came into effect under the Employment Insurance program. I was delighted that it received support from both sides of the chamber. I know that the honourable senator opposite supported that initiative. However, it is not working as effectively as it should work. The number of weeks are too few and, more important, the definition of "family member" is too narrow.

On December 3, the previous government gazetted changes to the definition of "family member" so that the patient could determine who would be the care giver. However, that change has not been proclaimed yet. Could the honourable leader tell me when the government intends to proclaim this provision?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): The honourable senator is quite right. In September 2004, first ministers agreed to give Canadians better access to home palliative care services. The government is committed to working with the provinces and territories to improve Canadians' access to quality palliative and end-of-life care.

As the honourable senator is aware, federal and provincial governments are making great progress on identifying the services that will be paid for by provincial and territorial insurance plans, and all of these plans are expected to be reported by the end of 2006.

I will take as notice and report back to the Senate on the honourable senator's question in respect of the item gazetted on December 3.

Senator Carstairs: I thank the honourable leader for taking my question as notice. A change is needed and would be welcomed by the 220,000 Canadians who die each year and who require palliative and end-of-life care by family members or by those they designate as caregivers. An additional 30,000 Canadians die a sudden death each year.

• (1530)

My supplementary question is to the Minister of Public Works who, because he sits on the Treasury Board, could push this forward and make it a certain change for the people of Canada. Will he lobby for this change?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, in fairness to Senator Fortier, I will take that question. There is no doubt that Senator Carstairs is very passionate about this issue, and so she should be. My own mother, at 96 years old, is in this situation and has, for four years now, required very good quality care, which fortunately she is able to get through a wonderful organization

here in Ottawa at St. Patrick's Home.

On behalf of my colleague and other members of the cabinet, I will commit to the honourable senator that we will determine what has happened to the item that was gazetted on December 3.

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

COMMITMENT TO LINGUISTIC DUALITY

Hon. Claudette Tardif: Honourable senators, during the election campaign, the government promised that it would create a francophone secretariat within Canadian Heritage. In its Speech from the Throne, the government failed to recognize linguistic duality as a fundamental Canadian value. It is making no promise to promote linguistic duality and is not talking about creating the francophone secretariat or transferring the responsibilities from the Privy Council to Canadian Heritage.

My question for the minister is as follows: Is the government saying to Canadians and the francophone and Acadian communities that linguistic duality is no longer a Canadian value and that it does not intend to make official languages a priority of the Prime Minister and the Privy Council?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I thank Senator Tardif for her question. The short answer is that we are not in any way taking measures not to recognize the linguistic duality of the country. As a matter of fact, if the honourable senator had been following the Prime Minister during the recent election campaign — which obviously she was not — and since that time, she would know that his commitment to francophone communities not only in the Province of Quebec but elsewhere in the country is absolutely paramount. As an anglophone who did not have the opportunity to learn a second language, I am extremely proud that this Ontario-born, western Prime Minister, in almost every instance, starts off his statements and his press conferences by speaking in the French language.

[Translation]

TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITY TO DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Claudette Tardif: I have another question. I want to thank the minister for her assurances. I am well aware that the Prime Minister speaks French and I am quite proud of that. However, my question is as follows: If linguistic duality is still a priority of the government and of the Prime Minister, why did you transfer this responsibility from the Privy Council, which is the central agency supporting the Prime Minister and cabinet, to Canadian Heritage? What are the roles and responsibilities of Minister Josée Verner vis-à-vis the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Beverley J. Oda?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): The answer to the question about whether linguistic duality is a priority of the government is yes. In terms of the ministers who

are responsible, I know both Minister Oda and Minister Verner will be very diligent in promoting linguistic duality in this country.

THE CABINET

REPRESENTATION OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, before asking my question of the Leader of the Government in the Senate, I should like to congratulate her on her new duties.

The Prime Minister named his cabinet on January 23 and every province is represented in that cabinet, with the exception of Prince Edward Island.

Some Hon. Senators: Shame!

Senator Callbeck: This means that P.E.I. is the only province in Canada that does not have a direct voice at the cabinet table. To represent Montrealers, the Prime Minister appointed the Minister of Public Works and Government Services. Given that there is a vacancy for P.E.I. in the Senate, why did the Prime Minister not also appoint a Prince Edward Island senator to serve in cabinet?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I thank Senator Callbeck for her question and her congratulations. If there was one statement that she made with which I agree, it is that it is a shame that we did not elect a Conservative in Prince Edward Island.

With regard to appointing a senator from Prince Edward Island, the honourable senator will know that Premier Binns is very vocal on all issues regarding Prince Edward Island, as is Minister MacKay, who, in addition to his responsibilities at Foreign Affairs, is also the Minister responsible for ACOA. Premier Binns has discussed the possibility of a province-wide, federally-run election to elect a member from Prince Edward Island.

Senator Callbeck: Honourable senators, the fact is that there is a vacancy here right now. That fact is that Prince Edward Island does not have a voice at the cabinet table. The Prime Minister chose to appoint the Minister of Public Works and Government Services to represent Montrealers, so why has he not chosen to appoint a senator from Prince Edward Island to represent us at the cabinet table?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I appreciate the senator's interest in having appointed senators, but actually we are looking at another model. I can say that Prince Edward Island, although we unfortunately did not have success in any one of the four seats, is extremely well represented in the cabinet by Minister MacKay.

Senator Callbeck: Honourable senators, I thank the minister for her response, but how long does Prince Edward Island have to go without a representative at that cabinet table? She mentioned the member from Central Nova representing our interests. That is not good enough. That minister is the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. He is the political minister for Nova Scotia. He has a constituency and other responsibilities. He has very little time to devote to the

interests and the concerns of the people of Prince Edward Island. Why has the government not recognized that they made a mistake and immediately appoint a Prince Edward Island senator to represent the province at the cabinet table?

• (1540)

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I agree that it is very unfortunate that Prince Edward Island did not elect a Conservative member and therefore has —

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh!

Senator LeBreton: I love Prince Edward Island. Perhaps I should represent Prince Edward Island, since I love it so much.

I will express to the Prime Minister the great concern of Senator Callbeck that Prince Edward Island does not have representation in the cabinet.

Hon. Tommy Banks: Honourable senators, I have a supplementary question. I have been advised by friends who are legally trained never to ask a question to which you do not know the answer — it is possible to have friends who are legally trained.

The Leader of the Government has said that the problem of non-representation of Prince Edward Island will be solved, in some reasonably foreseeable term, I presume, perhaps by the device of an election. If a member of a party other than the government party finds success in that election and Prince Edward Island still has no representation at the cabinet table, what then would be the government's plan?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I do not think I said the issue would be resolved shortly. As Senator Banks would appreciate, I do not answer hypothetical questions.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Champagne, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Segal, for an Address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her Speech from the Throne at the Opening of the First Session of the Thirty-ninth Parliament.—(*1st day of resuming debate*)

Hon. John G. Bryden: Honourable senators, on behalf of the official opposition in the Senate I would like to extend our very best wishes to Her Excellency as she continues so very capably and admirably to conduct the important work of her office.

[Senator Callbeck]

Yesterday, congratulations were offered to our new office-holders in the Senate, and I add my voice to those congratulations. In the interests of time, I will not repeat them.

I do want to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion relating to the Speech from the Throne. Their vigorous, informative and entertaining speeches were much appreciated and proved once again that no matter how hard one tries one cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

I would like to speak about two items that have some substance. Those items are child care and tax cuts.

First, on the matter of child care, let us be clear what is at stake. There are approximately 2 million children under the age of six in this country. Of these children, 1.3 million have mothers in the paid workforce, but only one in five of these 2 million young children have access to regulated early learning and child care spaces.

After years of work at both the federal and provincial levels, the Government of Canada concluded agreements with each of the 10 provinces based on a nationally shared vision for early learning and child care. The agreements identify principles and goals for early learning and child care, establish clear and measurable objectives, detail eligible areas for investment and funding levels, ensure accountability, identify how governments would report to Canadians, and commit governments to collaborating on knowledge and best practices. As long as the universal goals of quality, inclusion, accessibility and development are maintained, provinces have the flexibility to implement programs that address their specific needs and objectives.

Prime Minister Harper has served notice that his government will trash these agreements next March 31. Instead of the Harper government continuing to work with the 10 provinces to build upon and fund this hard-earned initiative between the Government of Canada and the 10 provinces of Canada, the Harper government proposes, first, \$1,200 each year to families for each child under the age of six and, second, a system of tax credits to encourage the private sector to create child care spaces in the workplace and in the community.

The Caledon Institute of Social Policy, a highly respected social policy think tank here in Ottawa, studied the Conservative plan and found that, while the face value of the child care allowance is \$1,200, the scheme's true value would be considerably less. By increasing the taxable income of families, the payments would trigger reductions in income-tested benefits and increases in taxes.

The overwhelming majority of Canadian families would end up with a Child Care Allowance worth considerably less than \$1,200 per child. The biggest losers would be modest-income families earning in the \$30,000-\$40,000 range.

The Child Care Allowance is unfair because it would pay working poor and modest income families smaller benefits than middle and upper income families. It is doubly unfair because it would favour one-earner families (where daddy works and mom stays home) —

— or mom works and daddy stays at home —

— over single-parent families and two-earner parent families.

Honourable senators, I will be very clear about this. I will use as examples three families that each earn \$50,000. The family with one earner out of two parents would receive \$1,049 per year of the promised \$1,200. The family with two earners would receive only \$827 of the \$1,200. The one-parent family would receive the least — \$802 out of the promised \$1,200. None would receive the full \$1,200. In addition, the amount each would receive is almost the inverse of what I would have thought each needs. Two-earner couples and single-parent families absolutely require child care. It is the single-earner families that usually have the option of having one parent stay at home and care for the child or children.

It is a fact that most single parents work. However, you cannot work if you do not have child care. You cannot go to school, whether to finish high school, to get a college degree, or to retrain or upgrade your skills unless you have child care. Child care is essential for poor families who are struggling to climb the welfare wall. Yet, these are the families that would receive the least under the proposed system. This is wrong, honourable senators. This is bad public policy.

• (1550)

Single mothers have the highest poverty rates of all types of families in Canada. We worked hard over the past decade to change this, with significant success. In 1996, 52.7 per cent of single mothers were considered low income. This figure dropped to 38.8 per cent in 2003 and then dropped even more, to 35.6 per cent in 2004. The reason? Single mothers were becoming more successful at finding jobs. However, honourable senators, a single mother cannot hold a job without access to good quality, affordable child care. Instead of building on this success and working to further improve the position of single mothers and their children, the Conservative government, by its childcare “policy,” could well undo the significant gains enjoyed by those Canadian families in the greatest need.

The amounts that would be paid under the proposed policy are patently inadequate to cover the costs of child care. According to the Caledon study, based on available statistics up to 2004, the parent fees for full-time, centre-based daycare for infants range from \$6,000 to \$12,000 a year and, for toddlers and preschoolers, from \$5,000 to \$8,000. In fact, this money — that is, the \$1,200 for those who get it — is not a child care allowance; it is what used to be called a baby bonus. It is a return to the old family allowance, a throwback to a policy introduced in Canada in the 1940s and, ironically, repealed by the Conservative government of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in 1993. In other words, honourable senators, those of us who suspected this government wanted to turn back the clock on women in the workforce and families were right. This policy is structured to encourage two-parent families, with one parent in the workforce and the other at home. They are the ones who benefit the most at the expense of those families, those children, who need the money the most. I guess we should not be surprised that this Prime Minister would look to the 1940s and 1950s to find a suitable social policy vehicle for the 21st century.

Before I leave this issue, let me also address the part of the plan that supposedly would create much-needed child care spaces. The Conservative plan proposes a system of tax credits to encourage employers to create child care spaces in the workplace or in the community. Last Sunday, the *Ottawa Citizen* devoted a special report to the Conservative child care plan. It noted:

The tax incentive approach proved a failure when Mike Harris tried it in Ontario; child care advocates claimed not a single space was created as a result.

I repeat, “not a single space.”

There is another aspect, however, to this issue that causes me concern. This government has stated its intention to cancel agreements concluded between the federal government and each of the 10 provinces. These were not political deals, hurriedly concluded during an election campaign or signed under questionable circumstances. This was not like the agreement signed by then Conservative Prime Minister Kim Campbell during the 1993 election to privatize Pearson International Airport and have it operated by the friends of former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. These were a series of federal-provincial negotiations resulting in agreements concluded between the federal Government of Canada and the governments of each province, of all political stripes. There was no impropriety nor has any been alleged; indeed, provinces have protested and continue to protest the planned cancellation of these agreements.

Honourable senators, the provinces have relied upon these agreements and encouraged social agencies and others to set up child care agencies. To quote again from the Caledon study:

The Conservative promise —

— to cancel the agreements —

— means that the provinces would once again get the rug pulled out from under their feet, leaving them to pay the full cost alone.

Maybe this does not matter in revenue-rich Alberta. But in provinces such as Manitoba and the Atlantic provinces, it would be a big cost that they can ill afford. It would really mean that poorer provinces would now have no fiscal room for any other social initiatives. The provinces cannot just start and stop programs on a whim. Why should the provinces believe that any future federal-provincial deals will be honoured? We cannot run a federalist country in this manner: Close and ongoing cooperation between the two orders of government is essential to a strong federation.

I would add this: Why should other nations believe that any future agreement signed with the Government of Canada will be honoured? If we will not honour agreements concluded with our own provinces — agreements signed with all our provinces, which the provinces want upheld — why would the government not be equally prepared to cancel agreements with foreign countries? What credibility will we have on the international stage, honourable senators? A much reduced credibility.

I should not be surprised that this government's agenda is focused primarily on helping the rich get richer, without caring about the concerns of ordinary Canadians.

On the tax cut issue, this government proposes to reduce the GST by one percentage point, down to 6 per cent, with a further reduction by another point, to 5 per cent, over five years. In order to pay for this, however, they will cancel the tax cuts introduced by the previous government and passed by this Parliament — tax cuts that are now in place and reducing the taxes being paid by Canadians, especially lower-income Canadians. In particular, the former government increased the personal tax exemption by \$500. They also lowered the lowest personal income tax rate to 15 per cent from 16 per cent. These measures are now providing individual taxpayers with immediate personal tax savings of up to \$325 this year.

Honourable senators, these tax cuts are being cancelled by Prime Minister Harper. He has said that tax cuts do not help all Canadians, as they do not help those Canadians whose income falls below the tax-paying threshold. In fact, by raising the personal tax exemption, many lower-income Canadians are being significantly helped. Prime Minister Harper's argument is that all Canadians benefit from the GST reduction.

Honourable senators, I think Prime Minister Harper is a little out of touch with the reality of day-to-day living. It is true that all Canadians will see a reduction in the cost of many things they buy if a 1 per cent GST cut is passed. However, in most cases that reduction is so minimal as to be almost meaningless — pennies and loose change, literally — and certainly its value to Canadians pales in contrast to the increase in personal income taxes that the Conservatives will be imposing to pay for this silly promise.

Large purchases will see significant savings, it is true. I have read that particular individuals are postponing purchasing \$30,000 plasma TV sets, Porsches and other high-cost items. A 1 per cent GST cut will indeed result in significant savings to these Canadians.

• (1600)

Honourable senators, maybe this is the difference between Liberals and Conservatives. Saving people money on big-ticket items is not something that keeps me awake at night. It is nice, of course, but not a priority.

The Hon. the Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt, but I must advise the honourable senator that his time has expired.

I am sure that if he sought permission from the house for a little extension —

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): We on this side would agree to an extension of five minutes.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Bryden: That seems pretty fair from the other side since they got an extra 15 minutes yesterday.

Senator Tkachuk: The opposition wanted to ask questions.

Senator Bryden: I would give you a chance to ask questions, but you are using up my extra time.

Honourable senators, saving money on big ticket items is nice, of course, but not when you have to pay for those savings by increasing the taxes paid by people at the other end of the income spectrum, people who struggle to buy milk, bread and other food items for their kids. By the way, these items do not get the GST break because GST is not charged on them.

Ordinary families do not have many \$30,000 luxury items to purchase, such as plasma TVs or fancy sports cars. Ordinary families do not buy Rolex watches for \$5,000; they buy Timex watches for \$19.88. A GST savings of 1 per cent saves those Canadians the princely sum of 19 cents. Ordinary families do not buy Gucci shoes; they buy Levi's blue jeans that cost them \$42. The GST savings on a \$42 pair of blue jeans is 42 cents.

Ordinary families buy school supplies for their kids. I bought a package of Canadiana pencils the other day. They cost \$1.43. The total GST was 10 cents. A family buying those pencils would save a penny with the Prime Minister's GST reduction.

Honourable senators, do not misunderstand. Every penny helps, I know that. However, making good policy also demands good choices. The same family that would save one penny here and 19 cents there with a 1 per cent GST cut could save hundreds of dollars by keeping the tax reduction that is currently in place.

Under the tax cuts that are presently in place and that people are currently benefitting from, a typical two-earner family with two children, earning \$60,000 a year, would save \$435 for 2005 and an additional \$499 in 2006, for a total of \$934. A typical single person earning \$40,000 would save \$320 for 2005 and \$359 for 2006, for a total of \$679.

In the Speech from the Throne the government said that cutting the GST is the best way to lower taxes for all Canadians, including low-income Canadians who need it most. That is simply not true.

The proposed 1 per cent GST cut is a skewed policy to help the wealthy few at the expense, literally, of poorer and middle-income Canadian families. This is not good public policy, it is not good social policy and it is not good economic policy.

Prime Minister Harper's own Minister of Finance, the Honourable Jim Flaherty, when he was a member of the Ontario legislature, in 2001, said that it would be a mistake to cut the GST. He said that is a short-term hit with no long-term positive gain for the economy. He said that he was not interested in such "short-term, knee-jerk actions."

An Honourable Senator: Say it isn't so.

Senator Bryden: I guess he did not know back then to clear his statements first with Mr. Harper, or perhaps his thinking has evolved.

The experts are pretty much all in agreement, honourable senators, that a GST cut is terrible economics. It does not provide any incentive for individuals to save or invest in things like further education or training. It does not promote growth or productivity. Other tax cuts, like the ones already in place, are the way to go, definitely not the GST.

Honourable senators, there is no guarantee — and this is very important — that Canadians would ever see the 1 per cent cut in taxes. Earlier this week, the press was reporting that François Legault, known as a key member of the Parti Québécois caucus, wants to offset any reduction in the —

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, we are well beyond the five more minutes. Order.

Hon. Terry Stratton: How much longer does Senator Bryden plan to continue? Perhaps he could be specific.

Senator Bryden: Yes, I will be specific. Honourable senators will miss the best stuff, and I apologize for that. I do want to finish this. The real zingers are yet to come. I have two pages to finish and then I will stop. It will take perhaps two minutes.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it agreed, honourable senators, that Senator Bryden have two more minutes?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Bryden: I say this for my fans on this side and for those on the other side: I will take the two minutes, but I will not waste the zingers in a hurry. I will keep them and bring them back later.

Honourable senators, François Legault, known as a key member of the Parti Québécois caucus, wants to offset any reduction in the GST with an increase in the Quebec Sales Tax to pay the province's debt and invest in education. He is reported to have some prominent supporters for this idea, including former PQ premiers Lucien Bouchard and Bernard Landry, along with the heads of the University of Montreal, the University of Quebec at Montreal, former provincial Liberal cabinet minister — how did he get out of the pen? — Claude Castonguay, and the head of the province's business community.

Honourable senators, I only have a minute. Pay attention.

The 1 per cent GST cut, derided by experts, is the only economic element of this government's policy plan for Canada.

What about productivity and growth, innovation, research and development? What about the investment in training and education? We are facing competition from emerging giants like India and China. What is Prime Minister Harper's plan to position Canada to succeed in this new world? A 1 per cent cut in our domestic GST, after having increased our income taxes, will not do it, honourable senators.

What is the plan to enable us to compete in the global marketplace or for skilled immigrants to be integrated into our communities? What is the plan to help young people afford to

obtain the education and training that they need to seize their potential? Where is the plan to position our colleges and universities to continue to attract the best and brightest faculty and students?

Honourable senators, I am so proud that the Liberal government of the past decade put in place policies like the Canada Research Chairs. These policies have been working. Policy wonks all over the world are writing about Canada and its brain gain instead of its brain drain. Where is the plan to build on this foundation, to continue to position this nation for success?

I could go on and on, senators.

Some Hon. Senators: No!

Senator Bryden: Let me finish my sentence.

Senator LeBreton: You have 30 seconds left.

• (1610)

Senator Bryden: I have this written down and there are still some things to address, but being conscious of the time and your sensibilities, I will end my statement.

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, I welcome the opportunity to offer my comments on the Speech from the Throne.

I am honoured to acknowledge Senator Kinsella and to congratulate my esteemed colleague on his appointment as Speaker. I am confident that, as our new presiding officer, he will execute with due diligence the responsibilities of interpreting almost 1,000 years of parliamentary procedure in what may be a rather short Parliament.

I also want to acknowledge and congratulate all other senators who have assumed new roles in our hallowed chamber, especially our new government officials: Senators LeBreton, Stratton and Comeau. I am confident this will be a lively session, and I look forward to it.

Honourable senators, the Senate of Canada is a place of enormous talent and diversity. From time to time, distinguished members of this chamber have been chosen to be ministers of the Crown and to head important government departments.

In recent memory, we can recall the ministerial expertise of those serving as senators and ministers concurrently: Senators Austin, Olson and Perrault in the Trudeau years; Senators Carstairs and Fairbairn in the Chrétien years; and, of course, our favourite Progressive Conservative, Senator Murray in the Mulroney cabinet.

It is one thing to summon an individual to be a senator and to be the government leader at the same time, as was the case with my friend Senator Boudreau not long ago, but it is entirely another matter to suddenly whisk someone into this place to head a government department of such enormous importance. This is particularly important when that department has been the subject of controversy since the very beginning of Confederation.

The great wonder surrounding the unprecedented rise of the Minister of Public Works to this place, ostensibly to represent the city of Montreal, is that there are already two eminently qualified senators from Montreal who were overlooked when the Prime Minister was cabinet-making. They were cast aside unceremoniously. Their loyalty, expertise and eminent record of public service were totally irrelevant.

The Senate experience of the two gentlemen of whom I speak is certainly sufficient for them to understand the important nuances of the current issues of Canadian public affairs. I am certain there is no doubt about their considerable knowledge of the business of government and their high level of good judgment, requirements sufficient enough for the services as a minister of the Crown.

Honourable senators will know that I am speaking of our distinguished colleagues, the Honourable Senators Angus and Nolin. These gentlemen have been properly and appropriately silent. What is more noteworthy is their grace in being overlooked and rejected in such an inelegant fashion by the Prime Minister. I am quite certain that their unspoken response may give us an important clue as to the reason for their current status as outcasts. Simply, they are far too sophisticated and decent to be included among the gang surrounding the current Prime Minister.

I draw your attention to the very short agenda provided by the new government in the pamphlet from the Speech from the Throne. Certainly, the needs of Nova Scotians have been ignored, but what about the needs of Quebec and Montreal? The two Montreal senators are both bilingual lawyers, have extensive business and political experience, have eminent association with significant national philanthropic organizations, and their loyalty to their parties is impeccable. Also, as an important qualification for their roles as ministers, they are both superb communicators and downright decent folk.

Honourable senators, another matter of great importance is the attitude of the current Prime Minister toward the city of Toronto. Is there a cabinet ban on Toronto? Are Montreal and Toronto not comparable centres of culture and commerce? While the Prime Minister moved very quickly to include Vancouver representation in cabinet, let us ask ourselves, why not Toronto? The last time there was a ban on cabinet representation from Toronto was in the 1940s and the early 1950s. Is Toronto being punished for rejecting the current Conservative Party, the party that has been negatively viewed by Torontonians as they watched the boiling of the Alliance/Reform recipe in the period of neo-Conservative gestation?

An Hon. Senator: Say that again!

Senator Mercer: Since 1957, Toronto has always had representation, regardless of the colour of the party in power, in recognition of its importance to the nation. Shall I point out that there are three eminently qualified Conservative senators from Toronto who could have brought distinguished representation to cabinet?

Of course, honourable senators, I speak of Senators Eyton and Di Nino, who have been with us in this chamber for 16 years. They are also senators with business experience, particularly

in the field of banking in Toronto, where commercial banking interests are very important. They have stellar philanthropic records in universities and benevolent organizations, and they have the expertise that would be very useful to the cabinet, indeed the nation.

Then there is Senator Cools. Also from Toronto, she is in a rare class all by herself. A veteran of 22 years in the Senate, she is a natural wit, an authority on parliamentary procedure and sundry other matters, and a well-known defender of all sorts of causes. However, Senator Anne Clare Cools has had, it appears, absolutely no recognition from the new old boys in the Langevin Block. This indeed is surprising given the enthusiastic welcome the Prime Minister gave this famous Senate floor crosser when she joined the Conservative Party. On June 8, 2004, when he lured her across the floor, the Prime Minister said:

Senator Cools has an impressive record of public service...in the Senate, she has elevated the level of debate...she has persisted in holding the government accountable...she has long earned my respect and now my support in joining the Conservative caucus in the Senate.

What a mouthful. Do you find that Senator Cools' omission from the cabinet is passing strange? I do.

I can imagine the flurry of activity currently in the offices of these three Toronto senators and the enormous pressures on their limited Senate staff and limited Senate resources each day in the unforgivable climate of pressure that they have because there is no cabinet representation for the city of Toronto. Their offices must be filled with endless correspondence and an unrelenting parade of those seeking favours. The absence of cabinet representation for Toronto is a truly scurrilous way to treat a city of several million people.

Perhaps we should advertise to the people of Toronto that there are senators who are mandated to help them. We should make certain that everyone in Toronto has their telephone numbers, since no office has been advertised or declared as the focal point for the federal care and feeding of those good people of Toronto who are currently being neglected by this Prime Minister. Since Senator Cools in particular has designated herself the senator from Toronto Centre-York, the over-arching onus may be on her to be the Toronto minister. When one chooses a Toronto designation, it is assumed one has mandated oneself to serve the people of Toronto. Perhaps we should give out that phone number. There is a 1-800 number to reach us all, and it is 1-800-267-7362. If anyone wants to get a hold of those three senators, they can call that number.

It is said that the Prime Minister tries to get around this Toronto problem by ordering one of his ministers from far-away Whitby, a little community in Eastern Ontario, to drive into Toronto from time to time to see if everything there is all right. This is both insulting and demeaning to the people of Toronto. I am sure, given her increasingly high profile in this matter, the people of Toronto would prefer to contact Torontonian senators such as Senator Cools or Senate Di Nino or Senator Eyton.

Finally, honourable senators, there is the Prince Edward Island issue. Wait; this is hardly just a P.E.I. issue; it is an issue for all Atlantic Canada. The fact that there is currently no cabinet representation for Prince Edward Island is equally as troublesome and unacceptable as the lack of cabinet representation from Toronto, but for different reasons.

• (1620)

Prince Edward Island is the cradle of our Confederation. It is where critical negotiations took place that led to the birth of our nation. It has full provincial status and everything that that status would give it. Does it not deserve and require the dignity of cabinet representation?

Since 1873 Prince Edward Island has had 17 ministers of the Crown representing its interests in Ottawa. What is more, there is currently a vacancy in this chamber from that province, so there is absolutely no excuse for the Prime Minister to refuse to include cabinet representation for Prince Edward Island, especially when Montreal's cabinet representation was appointed in a similar manner to fill that exact role. What a bunch of hypocrites.

To suggest that a minister from another province should be responsible for the people of Prince Edward Island is a gratuitous insult to its citizens. My province of Nova Scotia must endure a minister who represents many portfolios. Peter MacKay is the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister responsible for ACOA, Minister responsible for Nova Scotia, and now Minister responsible for Prince Edward Island. That is another mouthful.

Perhaps in his free time Minister MacKay would like to visit my family at the cottage at Caribou River from where at least you can see Prince Edward Island on a clear day.

Honourable senators, the overarching disaster is that Atlantic Canada cabinet representation has been slashed by 25 per cent. The "Reform-A-Tories" never achieved any meaningful traction in Atlantic Canada. Their vision of our home is dramatically different from that of the rest of our nation.

To reinforce the lack of resonance of this party in Atlantic Canada, the present Prime Minister, in May 2003, scornfully declared that the entire region's political landscape was a culture of defeat. Is it any wonder that we rejected the Harper gang? I have already called upon the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance to assure Atlantic Canadians that the important deals on offshore gas and oil that were signed by the previous government will be honoured. We need appropriate assurances. Unfortunately, we are still waiting for them. They were absent from the Speech from the Throne.

As indicated on Tuesday, the present government has turned a new leaf, but what is under that leaf? What is next; cutbacks to ACOA? The new government has already slashed funding for the Canadian Unity Council, effectively killing programs such as Encounters with Canada, as my colleague Senator Munson said earlier.

Is the government prepared to visit the students of my old high school, St. Patrick's High School in downtown Halifax, and tell those students that they cannot experience what thousands of other students have in the past?

What can be said about the Prime Minister's rhetoric on his intention to do government business in a new way? What can be said about his instant coronation of a certain Vancouver floor-croser cabinet minister when, at the same time, he stomps on the dignity of the people of Toronto and Prince Edward Island by excluding them from the centre of national power?

Tory times are hard times. Unfortunately, Canadians are left with confusion, disappointment and even disgust.

Honourable senators, I expected to see something in this Speech from the Throne on the need to continue the development of a highly skilled work force to meet the demands of labour in provinces like Nova Scotia. I expected to see funding and policy for post-secondary education and productivity, especially in Halifax where we have a high percentage of universities and community colleges. However, I saw nothing.

Honourable senators, I am disappointed by the lack of vision by this new Conservative government. Canada is a model for the world at a time when the economy is extremely strong and our fiscal situation has never been better, thanks in large part to former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and his Finance Minister, Paul Martin.

Honourable senators, I sincerely hope that, during what I hope is a vigorous debate on many issues, this government does the right thing, that it honours its commitments to Canadians and also that it does not destroy what it took us so long to achieve.

On motion of Senator Comeau, debate adjourned.

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

MOTION TO CHANGE COMMENCEMENT TIME ON WEDNESDAYS AND THURSDAYS AND TO EFFECT WEDNESDAY ADJOURNMENTS ADOPTED

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government), pursuant to notice of April 5, 2006, moved:

That, for the remainder of the current session,

- (a) when the Senate sits on a Wednesday or a Thursday, it shall sit at 1:30 p.m. notwithstanding rule (5)(1)(a);
- (b) when the Senate sits on a Wednesday, it stand adjourned at 4 p.m., unless it has been suspended for the purpose of taking a deferred vote or has earlier adjourned; and
- (c) where a vote is deferred until 5:30 p.m. on a Wednesday, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings, immediately prior to any adjournment but no later than 4 p.m., to suspend the sitting until 5:30 p.m. for the taking of the deferred vote, and that committees be authorized to meet during the period that the sitting is suspended.

Motion agreed to.

[English]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

FIRST REPORT OF COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the first report of the Senate Committee of Selection (Speaker *pro tempore*), presented in the Senate on April 6, 2006.

Hon. Terry Stratton moved the adoption of the report.

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

Motion agreed to and report adopted.

SECOND REPORT OF COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the second report of the Senate Committee of Selection (nomination of Senators to serve on Select Committees), presented in the Senate on April 6, 2006.

Hon. Terry Stratton moved the adoption of the report.

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

Motion agreed to and report adopted.

THE HONOURABLE JOHN BUCHANAN, P.C., Q.C.

INQUIRY DEBATED

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck rose pursuant to notice of earlier this day:

That she will call the attention of honourable senators to the contributions to the Senate made by Senator John Buchanan, who will retire on April 22, 2006.

She said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to pay tribute to a friend and a colleague, the Honourable Senator Buchanan. Although we belong to different political parties, Senator Buchanan and I have much in common. We are both proud to have been born on an island, he on Cape Breton and I on Prince Edward Island. As Senator Buchanan has mentioned, we went to the same university, Mount Allison. We were both members of provincial legislatures, and became premiers of our respective Provinces of Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, and we have both served our common region of Atlantic Canada in the Senate. It has been a great privilege and pleasure for me to serve in the Senate alongside someone who has served with such great distinction.

Throughout his political life, Senator Buchanan has made a truly outstanding contribution to his province, his region and his country. I speak from experience in saying that it is no easy task to lead a province in a region such as Atlantic Canada which faces significant economic and social changes. I know that Senator Buchanan served his province with a great deal of dedication and commitment to the well-being of his fellow citizens. Since his

appointment to the Senate he has continued to take an active role in his long-standing interests in areas such as energy, the environment, natural resources, and legal and constitutional affairs. He has always remained true to his roots in Cape Breton. Even today he can be prevailed upon to render a fine rendition of *Out On The Mira*.

Senator Buchanan, your friendship and your outstanding contributions have earned you a special place in the hearts of your colleagues. I wish you and Mavis a long and happy life.

• (1630)

Hon. J. Michael Forrestall: Honourable senators, I do not know where to begin to pay tribute to John Buchanan. He is a youngster, was not elected as often as I and has not been around nearly as long, but we started together. I will be here a little while longer.

John is the only man I know in public life who, at the age of 75, still works the bus every morning and every afternoon. He says hello to everybody. He is the only man I know who can go into a room of 200 people and meet every single person in that room, know most of them on the way in and say good-bye to them on the way out 15 or 20 minutes later. What is remarkable about that is that every one of those individuals thought for a moment or two that he and John Buchanan were the only two people in the room. That is a gift from God. We know he was first elected in 1970.

Senator Buchanan: 1967.

Senator Forrestall: I have to be corrected — 1967, and again in 1970, 1974, 1978, 1981, 1984, 1988; a long, long career. Each time, he had huge majorities. He never had the 20,000 or 22,000 majorities that I had. He did just as well. He was first appointed to the cabinet in Nova Scotia, and I am surprised someone did not mention this today, by a former colleague in this chamber, the Honourable George Isaac Smith, who, of course, was the premier of our great province.

John became the leader of the party in 1971 and the leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. He was elected premier in 1978, and fondly, with a significant amount of devotion and hard work by Mavis and by hundreds and hundreds of people from Yarmouth to Meat Cove.

It has been said here this afternoon that Senator Buchanan was instrumental in a number of important factors in the development of our province. He brought the Nova Scotia Progressive Conservative Party back together at a time when there could have been a wide split. He did it through his personal popularity and his unbelievable capacity for work in the field of politics. He made it truly the party that Stanfield had started, that John Hamm has just passed on to young Rodney MacDonald, another Cape Bretoner. They cannot get rid of them.

As a point of fact, most of the major changes in Nova Scotia and in Halifax came on John Buchanan's watch, whether it was constitutional change, the offshore projects, or the development of our magnificent waterfront. Nova Scotia owes its offshore oil and gas revenues to his hard work and to several John Buchanan governments. No city is as beautiful, or has as handsome a waterline or skyline, as Halifax and Dartmouth.

Senator Buchanan has been a tireless ambassador for Nova Scotia and will forever be remembered for his work in establishing the Nova Scotia International Tattoo, getting it off the ground and nurturing its development to become one of the finest military tattoos in the Commonwealth.

As we have heard today, John played a large part in constitutional patriation as a member of what one could call the Gang of Eight, and he was one of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's top allies during the Meech Lake Accord negotiations.

Honourable senators, I conclude with this thought: I can remember in 1997, when the NDP was on an upswing in Nova Scotia, how they decried Dr. Savage's government for lack of action on child poverty, and how they longed for the days previous when Nova Scotia enjoyed the third-lowest child poverty rate in Canada. What the NDP did not say was that it was under the caring guidance of Premier John Buchanan that social services and health care were brought front and centre in our great province. It was under John's watch that Nova Scotia had the third-lowest child poverty rate in all of Canada.

There is no better tribute to the man than good words about great accomplishments. Even in 1997, honourable senators, for very apparent reasons to those who know him, after leaving the premiership for the Senate, polls taken in the province showed that John Buchanan was still the favourite choice for premier by 65 or 70 per cent of the people in Nova Scotia. Perhaps they knew he was not going to come back. To John and his beloved wife, Mavis, and the children, you have been front and centre in so many of our lives for so many years. It is good to see you here.

John, before you leave this chamber today, I have two requests; one I must insist upon. I want the refrain and the chorus from *Out on the Mira*. That is how it would be to be with them again.

Honourable senators, I conclude by asking leave of the chamber that tributes paid to Senator Buchanan at this stage be included with those made earlier in the day in their appearance in today's Hansard.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: Leave is granted.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre De Bané: Honourable senators, I too would like to pay tribute to my friend, Senator Buchanan. Politics is a job that, ideally, requires many qualities in its practitioners. The most important is, beyond a doubt, a love of people, of our fellow citizens.

[English]

Senator Buchanan's speech today was the best proof of those human qualities that he has. He is such a humane and generous person. I have served in Parliament for 38 years, being elected in 1968, and I have seldom met others who relate to ordinary citizens

in the way that he does. He finds genuine fulfillment in helping other people. I understand well why Mavis fell in love with the man who has such a big heart and is so generous. I have known him for over 25 years and his human touch and ability to pay attention to everyone have impressed me a great deal. I have not met many others who are so sensitive to the aspirations and needs of Canadians.

• (1640)

When I was Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, I met regularly in Ottawa or in Nova Scotia with then Premier Buchanan. I seldom worked with someone who could make work such a pleasure while remaining so highly devoted to improving the economic situation of all Nova Scotians in all regions of his province. Of course, it was natural and easy for me to bring my modest contribution to his endeavours. When I served in cabinet, Allan J. MacEachen, the elder statesman and senior member of that government, once told me that I was getting too close with Premier Buchanan. Of course, I confided this to Mr. Buchanan.

It is not surprising that Senator Buchanan, after his first election to the legislature in 1967, was re-elected year after year after year. In that first year, he was Minister of Public Works and three years later he became leader of his party. In 1978 he was elected Premier of Nova Scotia and in 1990 he accepted his appointment to the Senate by then Prime Minister Mulroney.

Knowing Senator Buchanan has meant a great deal to me — he has been a great inspiration. I have watched a man who genuinely cares for other people. Given his academic background in law and engineering, one could easily have expected him to hold a more theoretical view of the world, but no, he was close to everyone.

I express my affection and thanks to you, Senator Buchanan, to Mavis and to your five children.

Hon. Marilyn Trenholme Counsell: Honourable senators, I thank dear Senator Buchanan for the very kind words that he offered on my behalf; I was touched. As a former minister of the family, I was far more touched by the magnificent tribute that he paid to his wife. That has moved me most today.

When I think of the Honourable Senator Buchanan, I think of the class of 1954 at Mount Allison University. In offering this tribute, I trust, dear John, that I am reflecting the sentiments of all your Mount Allison classmates, near and far. We feel an immense love for you. After all, you gave us nothing but smiles, hugs, good wishes and genuine friendship. Your good nature touched us when we were happy and sad, and, yes, all of us girls thought of you as a "hunk." I think Mavis did, too. She knows more about that than we do.

Outwardly, you did not take life too seriously, but inwardly, you had a strong and wise instinct for friendship that has served your whole life well. Life has taken us in many directions, but we all knew about your remarkable premiership of Nova Scotia. You connected with people over and over again, and they rewarded you with their support in four successive majority governments. Under your leadership, Nova Scotia grew and all of Atlantic Canada benefited because you made your province a leader nationally and internationally.

In this chamber, I have listened only a few times to your charming portrayal of your beloved province. More often, our heart-to-heart chats have told me that your passion is still alive and well for the little people and the big ideas — the essentials of any successful career in politics — and that defines you more than anything else I could say.

Dear Senator Buchanan, may you enjoy wellness and life to the fullest in the years ahead. Who knows what will come next? God bless you, Mavis and your family.

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, coming from Saskatchewan, one might wonder why I would be getting up to give a tribute to John Buchanan because, after all, I never voted for him.

Politicians often get a bad rap. It is said that they only follow the polls and do what is popular. However, in the 1980s John Buchanan and Grant Devine, then my premier, became good friends because, at great political risk to themselves, they supported the Meech Lake Accord. Mr. Devine took quite a beating for that but was steadfast, never moving from that position of support; and he admired Premier Buchanan for doing the same.

I will quote from a newspaper article:

When the ballots were counted, the Conservative party, headed by Premier John Buchanan, won the election handily, with 42 of 52 seats. The Liberals captured six seats and the NDP won three...

The 1984 election was Buchanan's third consecutive victory as [Conservative] leader, and he would go on to win a fourth in the next election in 1988.

Four consecutive victories, the third one with a greater than 80 per cent majority. That is no mean feat under any circumstances. In fact, only 18 premiers across 10 provinces, and two prime ministers over nearly 140 years, have been able to match that feat. In modern times it is exceedingly rare. John belongs to an exclusive group.

John Buchanan is the quintessential Maritimer and, in that capacity, an inveterate storyteller. In John's case, as he gets older, it is often the same story.

• (1650)

My friend and John's, Grant Devine, whose rhetoric often soared much like his and who prided himself always on the number of people he knew, was amazed on his first trip to Nova Scotia, as it seemed John knew everyone in his province. He told me that, at the airport, he could not believe that John knew everyone by their first name.

As Premier of Nova Scotia, John made it his business to revitalize the economy of that province, focusing efforts on Sysco. John also moved to control energy costs and to increase coal production. He opened new mines. He developed offshore

mineral resources and, not least, successfully supported the Annapolis Basin tidal project, which was the first step in harnessing the Fundy tides.

Honourable senators, I do not think I need to elaborate further on Senator Buchanan's accomplishments. I am sure most of you know them well. He landed here, and the Senate has been a better place for it, as has the Conservative Party of Canada. In all your time here, John, we have never sat on a committee together, which is unfortunate. I have always lamented that; I am sure you did, too. I missed the opportunity for you to tell me the same old story.

Good luck, John. You will be sorely missed in this chamber. I, for one, will miss your considerable wit, your generous spirit to me, and your incomparable political antenna and acumen. I trust that you will continue to make all three available to the Conservative caucus for years to come.

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: John Buchanan, John Buchanan, John Buchanan. As co-chair of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group, John and I, and at times Mavis, have travelled from Alaska to the far corners of North America, to the deep South, and from the East Coast to the West Coast. Wherever I go, if John is there, the first thing I hear is always, "Hello, John." It is from either a friend, a cousin, a relative, a former resident of Nova Scotia or from someone from somewhere in Canada who is directly related or connected to John Buchanan. I pride myself in knowing more senators, more governors and more state legislators than most, except John Buchanan. John Buchanan, John Buchanan. The name taunts me and the name haunts me.

I want to say this, both to you and to Mavis: The one thing I have discovered, as we have travelled to the four corners of North America together, is that when we talked about Canada to our colleagues to the south, we spoke with one voice. We never took partisan positions; we spoke with one voice. John Buchanan spoke for Canada as did I, no matter what side of this chamber we were on. I always respected him for that.

John was a pioneer in Canada-U.S. relations. He was the one who first organized and stimulated the governors and premiers of his region of the country, in the East, to get together and form a common bond and regional approach to issues that go a long way to solving the problems back and forth across the border. In that respect, he was a pioneer in this important effort that continues to this day.

John, I was down in Mobile, Alabama, and a great senator stood up and said to another senator, just a few months ago, "There is only one way to characterize this senator: Everything is made for love." John, everything you have done was made with love and with generosity.

I want to conclude with some rabbinic advice. I was in New York several years ago and a great rabbinic leader looked me in the eyes and said, "Now, senator, there is something troubling you." I said, "I am getting old and I do not think I have accomplished everything I wanted with my life." He stood up, slammed his desk — he was 88 years old — and herded everyone

else out of the room. He slammed the door and then he said, "Old age is a corruption and it is obscene, and I want to tell you why." I asked, "Rabbi, why?" He said, "Moses, our great law giver, how old was he when he started his first and greatest career?" I said, "Let's see. Moses led the people of Israel for 40 years. He did not get into the Promised Land — 40, minus 80. He died at 120. Eighty years old." The Rabi replied, "Yes, he was 80 years old when he started his first career." You have not even come close to starting your first career, John. Think new, think ahead.

Now, I want to give some advice to the government — and this will help great, glorious and patient Mavis. John has too much energy to retire. We have 22 to 28 consulships across the United States of America. Make John Buchanan a consul general in any region of the country, and he will continue to be firm and strong and powerful in the name of Canada wherever he goes.

John, do not give up. Get to work! Give him a job!

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, I have known John Buchanan for a long time. Those of us in the Liberal caucus know that we just elected a new chair of our caucus, Ray Bonin, from Northern Ontario. He is famous for coming to our caucus and giving us the campaign tip of the week, where he would come up with some new idea.

I learned one of the best campaign tips of my political life from John Buchanan. My wife, Ellen, lived in John's riding for a long time. We would stop by the Dominion Store on Herring Cove Road. Any Friday night you wanted to go into the store, you would see John Buchanan in there. John would be pushing a cart and in the cart would be groceries. However, none of them would be perishable, if you took note. John would be walking around the grocery store. He said he was shopping — and Mavis can tell us later whether or not that was actually true. He would stop and talk to absolutely everyone in the store. This was the biggest grocery store in Halifax. Everyone was there. If you went by at six o'clock, John was there; if you went by at nine o'clock, he was still there. At the end of the night, I think John walked to the front door, dropped the cart, got in the car and drove home without anything, save for the quart of milk that Mavis had sent him to buy in the first place. It was a great lesson. He would stop and talk to me. He knew who I was. I was the organizer of the Liberal Party and at one time the youth director and executive assistant in the former government that he defeated.

I want to remind you, John, that you did not win all the elections. You did not win the election of 1974. I want everyone to understand that his record was not unblemished. I was there and I took part in that election.

I would watch John talk to people in the store. He would stop me and take time to talk to me. I asked him why he stopped to talk to me and he said, "I have time to talk to everyone else. I will be here for a while." John, I want to thank you for that lesson.

I also want to thank John for his friendship over the years. When I left the government in 1978, at John's hands — he defeated the government — I went to work for the Kidney Foundation and did some fundraising. Eventually, I went to work for St. John Ambulance, Nova Scotia Council. I ran a capital

campaign for them in Nova Scotia. They wanted to get the provincial government to help pay for a new building they were buying in Dartmouth and refurbishing for a necessary training facility. I said we should go to see Premier Buchanan. Admiral Fulton was the chairman of our campaign. They said, "Should you go on this call? You are the former executive director of the Liberal Party." I said, "Listen, I will go on this call to see John Buchanan. I do not have any worries." We went to see the premier and sat in his office. Of course, you do not talk much business with John. You usually hear about some stories first, and then he will ask, "What are you here for?" We told him, and in five seconds the answer was, "Certainly. Done. The money is yours." Admiral Fulton looked at me with a good deal of surprise and I told him, "You have to understand that John Buchanan is like that. If it is a good deal, he will take it," and he did.

I also want to relate a famous story about Mavis Buchanan. Around Spryfield, Nova Scotia this story has been told for many years. I had not had much opportunity to meet Mavis, but on this past Labour Day weekend a number of us who were members of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group found ourselves in St. Andrews, New Brunswick. John arrived with Mavis. My wife and I enjoyed an evening getting to know Mavis at a reception at the hotel.

John, you are one lucky guy. I now know why you are so successful.

Mavis, you made him look good.

John, all the best in your retirement. Keep in touch.

• (1700)

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, I would like to say a few words in tribute to my friend, Senator John M. Buchanan, Q.C. I do not think it was mentioned earlier today that his political career began as an officer of the Liberal Club at Dalhousie University. From there, of course, his hard work led to the office of the premier of our province. While he was there, he was kind enough to give me a certificate of Queen's Counsel, which my family and I deeply appreciated.

Senator Jane Cordy mentioned the travelling back and forth to Ottawa. The seat next to the former premier was always a prime spot among fellow travellers because of the many stories he would share.

I often sat in that seat. I can tell you that upon boarding the plane, Senator Buchanan often greeted the flight crew and asked if any of them knew of his two daughters who served in the industry and of whom he is so very proud. Most of them did. From that strong connection, he would take his seat.

I tell you, everyone getting on that plane heading homeward knew him or he knew them. He had a huge recognition factor and was very kind and courteous to everybody aboard the plane. I often wonder whether or not, John, you were thinking of mounting another run for the premier's office. I think Senator Forrestall mentioned that John never stopped working the bus; nor did he stop working the airplane.

I served with Senator Buchanan for a number of years on the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. It did not matter what bill we were dealing with, or the nature of

it; somewhere and somehow, John Buchanan managed to weave into his remarks a glowing diatribe — call it what you will — usually a heartfelt intervention with respect to Nova Scotia. It did not matter what the nature of the bill was that we had before us. He did so in his own irrepressible style, often trying the patience of the chairs. Nevertheless, he prevailed, we all enjoyed it and some were educated by it.

I shall miss you, John, not only your engaging verbosity, but also your many kindnesses to me and your unabashed expressions of loyalty to Nova Scotia. I wish you and Mavis and your family the very best for the years ahead.

[Translation]

Hon. Marcel Prud'homme: Honourable senators, I have come to know Senator Buchanan very well.

[English]

I agree with everything good that has been said about Senator Buchanan as well as everything else that could be said.

I pay homage to him for three points I learned from him in giving me his friendship for many years. First, I got to know his wife, and I am very honoured to salute Mavis. I am very happy to say hello to their daughter Nickie and to see their grandson. Not to worry, I promised him yesterday that it is on its way this afternoon.

One thing one will learn from Senator Buchanan is that we all have histories and stories. I will provide an example.

The Right Honourable Prime Minister Trudeau once visited Nova Scotia. Senator Buchanan was not Liberal, but he greeted Mr. Trudeau nonetheless. Mr. Trudeau asked him where he was going. Senator Buchanan responded, "I am going to the same place you are." "How are you getting there?" "I will find a way, but it will be very difficult with security." Mr. Trudeau said, "Jump in with me." He was received by Allan MacEachen, who opened the door and asked, "How the hell did you ever get into this motorcade?" This is the type of thing you can learn from him.

As a second example, we all know that Senator Buchanan is and will stay Treasurer of the Canada-Russia Parliamentary Group created by some of us at the request of Senator Molgat following the visit of their Speaker who spoke in our chamber. That is unique in the world. This is a suggestion for you, sir. Someday I think we should change the rules and allow great leaders to speak here in the Senate.

The Speaker from the main Russian chamber spoke in this chamber because our Speaker, Senator Molgat, spoke in theirs. On that occasion, we created the Canada-Russia Parliamentary Group. The best way to honour Senator Buchanan would be for the honourable senator to join that parliamentary group because he will be Treasurer until April 22.

Let me explain what I learned from Senator Buchanan about being very scrupulous. The treasury is still completely intact. There has been no money paid out by Parliament. Two people

have signing authority and the money is still in the bank. Canada-Russia was very active, but all the expenses were covered by various members' budgets, such as coffee for a meeting.

One day, believe it or not, we had Mr. Putin as our guest. I tried to get my colleagues together in order to make it a great celebration. I recall when Senator Buchanan met with Mr. Putin. They looked at each other, and Senator Buchanan simply said, "Well, you are in charge now. You, young man, it is time someone put some order in Russia."

Mr. Putin looked at him, and he has eyes like Trudeau's; des yeux froids. It was the first and only time I think in all the history of Russia that I saw Mr. Putin suddenly burst into a big laugh. The meeting was one of the greatest successes that we organized, thanks to that kind of cooperation.

Senator, we will miss you. We know that you will give your power of signature to someone else who will be elected after April 26. As the outgoing chair and as a servant of the Senate, I wanted to have a great association, and we succeeded with no financing.

The best way to honour you, as I have, is to retain you in the group. You will be one of the invitees. You have received this application. These were all made at the requests of various Speakers because of various trips taken abroad.

I am sure people will remember you every time there will be an event of the Canada-Russia Parliamentary Group. They will say, "Oh, yes, it started with Buchanan and Prud'homme."

Thank you for your friendship. I want to repeat to Mavis, who has so many other stories to tell, I wish you the best.

Since our colleague Senator Grafstein was kind enough to open the door for nominations in the United States, I will lay claim to you, Senator Buchanan. I believe you would grace Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, of whom you are so proud, if you became the next Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia.

I hope I am not mistaken, but I believe one of the greatest moments in the life of Senator Buchanan is when he became a member of the Queen's Privy Council, appointed by Mr. Trudeau, in the presence and by the hand of Her Majesty the Queen in 1982. I know it touched him.

God be with you and your family. I am glad to have you as a friend, and I will continue to visit you in Halifax.

• (1710)

Hon. Tommy Banks: Honourable senators, I have been here for so short a time that I have not had the good fortune of the people who have paid tribute to Senator Buchanan today of knowing him as long as they have. However, I cannot let the opportunity pass without telling him what a privilege it has been, for however short a time it was, to work with him on the committee on which we sat.

I would say, John, that you have been given a little short shrift here, which I wish to make up. People have talked about how famous you are in Canada and how you are known from coast to coast to coast and in every one of our four corners. I want you

[Senator Moore]

to know that I and our other colleagues know that you are known throughout the universe. When we go to Paris or Vienna, into an obscure little hotel that people like us do not usually go to, before we have checked in, four people have run up to say hello to you. The same thing occurred when we went to visit OPEC in Vienna. You were greeted at the door like a long-lost brother, while the rest of us were waiting to be introduced to the doorman.

It has been a great privilege, John. God bless you.

Hon. Norman K. Atkins: Honourable senators, I always thought that Mavis was a phantom figure, but I realize now that she is a real person. Over the years, every time I ran into John Buchanan, he always used Mavis as an excuse when he wanted to get out of anything.

I do not know that John appreciates the fact that I was one of the people in the Lord Nelson hotel in 1967 when he was first elected.

Senator Buchanan: I remember it very well.

Senator Atkins: In 1967, at the leadership convention, I was chair of the convention for Robert L. Stanfield, and you were a major player from Nova Scotia during the period of that convention.

After 1971, when Ike Smith was defeated, I do not think I ran into you very often. However, you had, as one of your support staff, a classmate of mine, one of your closest friends, Freddy Dickson.

I have travelled with John on many of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group annual meetings, and I know that the Americans loved to make contact with him because they loved his stories. He will be missed there, as I know he will be missed here. God bless.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I rise to point out that if there are no further senators who wish to participate in this inquiry, the inquiry will be considered debated, although tributes to John Buchanan will continue well beyond the doors of this honourable chamber.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY STATE OF HEALTH CARE SYSTEM— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Wilbert J. Keon, pursuant to notice of April 5, 2006, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology be authorized to examine and report on issues arising from, and developments since, the tabling of its final report on the state of the health care system in Canada in October 2002. In particular, the Committee shall be authorized to examine issues concerning mental health and mental illness;

That the papers and evidence received and taken by the Committee on the study of mental health and mental illness in Canada in the Thirty-seventh and Thirty-eighth Parliaments be referred to the Committee, and

That the Committee submit its final report no later than June 30, 2006 and that the Committee retain all powers necessary to publicize the findings of the Committee until September 30, 2006.

That the Committee be permitted, notwithstanding usual practices, to deposit any report with the Clerk of the Senate, if the Senate is not then sitting; and that the report be deemed to have been tabled in the Chamber.

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

Hon. Joan Fraser (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Pursuant to the point I raised yesterday, let me say that I am not trying to block the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, but I think it is important that we observe the principles that guide us. I would like to have some clarification here. The members of the Social Affairs Committee have been named, but the committee has not yet had its organizational meeting. Therefore, is it appropriate to send a reference to a committee that does not have a chair, does not have a deputy chair and has not had an organizational meeting?

The Hon. the Speaker: I do not know the immediate answer, honourable senators, so I will have to take that question under advisement. Under that circumstance, if honourable senators want to provide advice on the appropriateness of the motion, I will hear the advice.

Senator Keon: I am afraid that, technically, Senator Fraser is correct. The Senate is about to take a two-week hiatus and we had hoped to issue our report on mental health during Mental Health Week. I had hoped to chair a meeting of the committee this evening where enough senators would be present to have quorum, appoint the officers and approve the report. I am quite aware of the fact that, technically, our committee is not constituted and we will have to have the meeting at a later date. I guess there will be a delay in the issuance of our report.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have received some technical advice to the effect that there are precedents. Indeed, the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology has done this in the past. Whether it is appropriate for us to continue that practice I will leave to honourable senators.

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Honourable senators, the fact that something has happened before does not necessarily make it a precedent that should be followed. Sometimes it may have been just bad practice, and it is important not to repeat bad practice.

It seems to me that this situation can be easily remedied. All Senator Keon would have to do is to move an amendment to his motion to include the words "when it is constituted" before the words "be authorized to examine." It is constituted? Then there is nothing wrong.

The Hon. the Speaker: Having earlier this afternoon passed the motion and adopted the second report of the Selection Committee, the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology is established.

Senator Fraser: I am a little confused, Your Honour. While I found Senator Keon's remarks most gracious in their tone, I found their substance a little muddling. The committee has not had an organizational meeting yet. He said he wanted to call a meeting of the committee and pass a report. He is not in a position to call a meeting of the committee. The clerk calls an organizational committee meeting and sends notice so that all members of the committee are aware. I do not know whether all the committee members are aware that this meeting was being planned. Certainly I was not. I believe that at least one of my colleagues who is a member of that committee was not aware of the fact that a formal committee meeting was in the works for this evening, which is a most unusual time for a committee to hold a formal meeting, let alone an organizational meeting. I am truly concerned by this process.

I find myself now not only looking for clarification from the Speaker on the appropriate nature of the technical proceeding but also deeply concerned by the substance of what appears to be the intention here.

Hon. Terry Stratton: I normally would be fully on the side of Senator Fraser. Once we establish a precedent, we have to worry, because it is there and you live with it for quite a while and fight battles with respect to it in the future. For that reason, I am against setting any kind of precedent, even though you say it has happened before.

• (1720)

We should consider the importance and timing of this study with respect to Mental Health Week. That is what we want to accomplish on behalf of the Senate. Our goal is to get the biggest bang for our buck with regard to publicity for the chamber. From what I hear, it will be a good report, so we need to find a creative way to get this report out for Mental Health Week. We can get hung up on the semantics of whether or not it abides by the rule, contravenes the rule or sets a precedent, but the magic is to have this report out for Mental Health Week.

Senator Fraser: We all know of the excellent work that has been done by the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology in the field of health, most recently in the field of mental health. We have all heard our colleagues talking about how inspiring the work on that study has been, to them personally and as senators representing the people of Canada.

I do not think, however, that attracting publicity for the work of that committee is a problem. If there is a Senate committee that gets careful and much publicized attention for its work in this land, it is the Social Affairs Committee. I am sure that Mental Health Week is a very important event for professionals in the field of mental health. I do not know what this study will say, but I am sure that it will be aimed not only at professionals in the field of mental health, but also at public policy makers and the public, because that would fit the pattern of past studies.

Therefore, I maintain my deep concern about the proceeding. Perhaps someone has a creative idea, and it would be good to hear about it if someone has, but I do not know how we can report on a committee study without having had the committee duly constituted with proper notice to all members, a proper election being held for the chair and deputy chair of that committee and for the members of the steering committee, and a reference passed in due order.

I agree that hard cases make bad law. Someone said this is a hard case. We all want to be nice to the Social Affairs Committee, but I think it is bad law and bad precedent.

Hon. Tommy Banks: I have a great deal of sympathy for the idea of getting the biggest bang for the buck that Senator Stratton talked about and for the importance of the work of Senate committees, not only in and of itself but in the value that it brings to this institution.

As senators may know, I have a similar motion in place. I do not have quite the same urgency in mine and I do not have the same case to make. However, I have a question to ask about a matter that does bother me.

I am looking at the report of the Selection Committee and I see that the people who have been appointed to the committee of which I was previously a member are quite different from the members who would have drafted a report of the committee when I was a member. I would feel uncomfortable asking a new committee, with quite a number of new people on it, to, in absentia, or with anything less than a suitable degree of study, approve a report, in effect on their behalf, to the Senate.

Are the current members of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology entirely or for the most part the same members who drafted the report in question?

Hon. Marilyn Trenholme Counsell: Honourable senators, I am worried about whether everyone knew about this meeting. I was told a very short time ago that it would take place. I have two engagements of considerable importance. While I agreed to attend the meeting, I would not want to attend if all the other members of the committee were not properly notified.

Senator Fraser: Was notice sent out properly by the clerk? If so, when?

Senator Keon: My discomfort level is rapidly rising and I do not think we should proceed with this. Due to a medical emergency, Senator Kirby will not be here tonight. He had arranged with the clerk for a meeting of the committee. He asked me to chair the meeting and to do what I have just done because he has done it successfully in the past.

From a technical point of view, I have to agree with Senator Fraser. Consequently, I think we can find another way of doing this. We may have a slight delay in the presentation of the report, but I also am not worried about the legs on the report. It is a superb report and it will get done anyway.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: Honourable senators, in an effort to find a creative solution, I propose to add “once the said committee has been duly constituted” in the first paragraph of the motion, after the words “and Technology”.

[*English*]

Senator Cools: I was just told that the committee was constituted. However, from what I am hearing now, the committee has not been constituted.

Senator Austin: It is constituted but not organized.

Senator Cools: We could have an entire discussion on at what point constituting a committee is complete. I do not know much about the committee and I am not informed of the report, but there is something unusual here and Senator Fraser has an important point. If the situation was so unusual, that fact could have been put in the motion and the unusualness of the situation could have been addressed so that senators would have known that they were dealing with a unique situation.

We do not know whether the former chairman of the committee will be the chairman again, and further, the senator acting on behalf of Senator Kirby is now saying that he is dubious about this whole process. This puts us in a very strange position.

However, it seems to me that the amendment that Senator Nolin has suggested, which is the same amendment that I suggested, would at least allow the committee to get organized in the next few days. Perhaps that would be agreeable to senators.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the chair will make a suggestion based on what the chair has heard. I understand that Senator Keon, whose original motion it is, may be on the verge of moving the adjournment of the debate on this motion.

Am I correct that Senator Keon wishes to move the adjournment of the debate?

Senator Keon: I so move.

On motion of Senator Keon, debate adjourned.

• (1730)

[*Translation*]

THE SENATE

COMMITTEES AUTHORIZED TO MEET DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government) moved:

That committees of the Senate normally scheduled to meet on Mondays be empowered, in accordance with rule 95(3), to sit on Monday, April 24, 2006, even though the Senate may then be adjourned for a period exceeding a week.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Leave having been given to revert to Government Notices of Motions:

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(h), I move:

That, when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, April 25, 2006, at 2 p.m.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, April 25, 2006, at 2 p.m.

THE SENATE OF CANADA

PROGRESS OF LEGISLATION

*(indicates the status of a bill by showing the date on which each stage has been **completed**)*

(1st Session, 39th Parliament)

Thursday, April 6, 2006

*(*Where royal assent is signified by written declaration, the Act is deemed to be assented to on the day on which the two Houses of Parliament have been notified of the declaration.)*

GOVERNMENT BILLS (SENATE)

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.

GOVERNMENT BILLS (HOUSE OF COMMONS)

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.

COMMONS PUBLIC BILLS

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.

SENATE PUBLIC BILLS

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.
S-201	An Act to amend the Public Service Employment Act (elimination of bureaucratic patronage and geographic criteria in appointment processes) (Sen. Ringuette)	06/04/05							
S-202	An Act to repeal legislation that has not come into force within ten years of receiving royal assent (Sen. Banks)	06/04/05							
S-203	An Act to amend the Public Service Employment Act (priority for appointment for veterans) (Sen. Downe)	06/04/05							
S-204	An Act respecting a National Philanthropy Day (Sen. Grafstein)	06/04/05							
S-205	An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (clean drinking water) (Sen. Grafstein)	06/04/05							
S-206	An Act to amend the Criminal Code (suicide bombings) (Sen. Grafstein)	06/04/05							

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.
S-207	An Act to amend the Criminal Code (protection of children) (Sen. Herveux-Payette, P.C.)	06/04/05							
S-208	An Act to require the Minister of the Environment to establish, in co-operation with the provinces, an agency with the power to identify and protect Canada's watersheds that will constitute sources of drinking water in the future (Sen. Grafstein)	06/04/06							

PRIVATE BILLS

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.

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