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Tuesday, April 24, 2007



THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA
SPEAKER

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

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

Prayers.

[*Translation*]

MASTER CORPORAL ANTHONY KLUMPENHOUSER

SILENT TRIBUTE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before we begin, I would ask you to rise and observe one minute of silence in tribute to Master Corporal Anthony Klumpenhower, who was killed tragically a few days ago while serving his country in Afghanistan.

Honourable senators then stood in silent tribute.

[*English*]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I draw your attention to the gallery where we have as visitors Mr. Slobodan Mikac, Managing Director of Croatian Trade and Investment Agency and Ms. Mikac, accompanied by Her Excellency Vesela Mrden Korac, Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

CORRECTION TO RECORD

Hon. Colin Kenny: Honourable senators, I rise today to correct the record of last Thursday, April 19. In the course of debate on the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence budget, Senator Stratton asked when the committee would be traveling to Newark and Washington. I responded the third week in May, but the correct dates are June 3 to June 8.

THE LATE JUNE CALLWOOD, O.C., O.ONT.

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino: Honourable senators, on April 14, 2007, the City of Toronto, indeed all of Canada, lost an extraordinary citizen, an extraordinary daughter. June Callwood was bigger than life. Her imprint as a writer, broadcaster, activist, wife, mother and friend was broad and deep. She touched the lives of thousands with a stubborn determination and a fearless and invincible attitude. That she was unconventional is an understatement. To her, failure was not acceptable.

June Callwood left a legacy of accomplishments in numerous fields which have been widely reported. I believe she would agree that her enormous contributions to making life better for thousands of the less fortunate among us were her most valuable and rewarding public accomplishments. She broke down barriers, courageously went where others would not, and was always the first to roll up her sleeves and pitch in.

I did not know her well. She was a community pillar and an icon, and yet, the times I met her or when our paths crossed, I was awed by her gentle strength, her dignified presence and her strength of character. She inspired Canadians for three generations. She embodied the principle "if you can help, you must."

Of June Callwood's legacy we will say, "The world is a better place because of her."

• (1410)

STATE OF ISRAEL

FIFTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF ESTABLISHMENT

Hon. Yoine Goldstein: Honourable senators, Dr. Arnold Toynbee, a renowned historian, called the Jewish people a fossil of history and predicted their imminent demise. That was a good number of decades ago. He is long gone. We are here.

Today marks the fifty-ninth anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel, a Jewish homeland for those who wish to be there.

Canada, through Lester B. Pearson and many others, played a crucial role in the events leading up to the founding of the Jewish state, and Canada continued its active support of Israel when it was attacked on the day of its independence by all of its Arab neighbours. Canada has continued to play a significant role in the support of Israel throughout its many tribulations. Canada and Israel enjoy a free trade agreement, and institutional cooperation is actively pursued between Canadian and Israeli universities and scientific establishments.

Canada and Israel share fundamental common values: We both enjoy a democratically elected Parliament, an independent judiciary, gender equality and a free press, and we respect the rule of law. We are both societies ruled by laws and not by men. As a Canadian Jew, I am particularly proud of the supportive and moral role that Canada has played and continues to play in support of its sister democracy, Israel.

I am sure all honourable senators will join me in offering our very best wishes to Israel on the occasion of its fifty-ninth anniversary.

THE LATE MASTER SEAMAN ROXANNE LALONDE

Hon. Michael A. Meighen: Honourable senators, it was with great sadness mixed with considerable admiration that we learned this past weekend of the tragic events that occurred near Merrickville, Ontario, not far from Ottawa.

According to witnesses, Master Seaman Roxanne Lalonde, a 12-year naval reservist, did not think twice before jumping into the frigid waters of the Rideau River when she saw her friend struggling in the rushing current. Master Seaman Lalonde had just returned to her home in Merrickville and was awaiting a new posting in Kingston after serving for a number of years with HMCS *Scotian* in Halifax.

Although she was trained in rescue swimming, the waters proved to be too strong, and both she and Grant Galipeau, the 15-year-old boy she was attempting to save, lost their lives.

Honourable senators, this tragic event underscores the bravery and selflessness of so many members of the Canadian Armed Forces when faced with extreme conditions. Although we often hear of acts of valour by our servicemen and servicewomen abroad, these same men and women are clearly ready to respond in the same way here at home.

Master Seaman Lalonde is a shining example of that type of person, a person of the highest calibre who willingly put another's life before hers, one who leads by example, the type of person who serves in the Canadian Armed Forces. She is most certainly a hero and will be long remembered for her selfless act of courage.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I wish to express our deepest condolences to the families and friends of both Master Seaman Lalonde and Grant Galipeau during this very difficult time.

THE LATE JOCELYNE COUTURE-NOWAK

Hon. Francis William Mahovlich: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to and to celebrate the life of Jocelyne Couture-Nowak, one of the 33 people whose lives were tragically cut short by the brutal massacre that took place last week at Virginia Tech.

Jocelyne was a loving and devoted wife and mother who took pride and passion in her French heritage, as well as the environment. Originally from Montreal, Jocelyne moved to Truro, Nova Scotia, in the 1990s, where her husband was a professor at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and where she worked hard to spread her passion for the French language. In 1997, she helped to create Truro's first French-language school, called École Acadienne de Truro.

In 2001, she and her family moved to Blacksburg, Virginia, where both she and her husband took jobs with Virginia Tech. She was a French-language instructor and he was a horticulture professor.

Last Friday, over 400 people gathered in the town of Truro, Nova Scotia, to celebrate the life of this courageous and passionate woman. While her life may have had a terrible ending, her memory and love of life will live on in her two daughters and in the many people she touched in her role as a teacher. Perhaps if the troubled young man who caused this destruction had spent time with this wonderful woman, this tragedy could have been avoided.

[*Translation*]

My sincere condolences to her family, and to all those who lost someone in this tragedy.

• (1415)

[*English*]

NATIONAL ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR AWARENESS WEEK

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, yesterday at 9 a.m., Mr. Brian Ellis of Prince Edward Island began his walk across our province — a walk that he has undertaken to promote the importance of organ and tissue donation. I am sure that his choice of timing is no accident because this week marks National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week.

Brian made the same walk last year, but his personal situation was different. As a dialysis patient, he hoped to educate Islanders about kidney disease, dialysis and its impact, as well as organ donation.

Eight months ago, Brian Ellis received a gift — the gift of life. Brian is a donor recipient who now enjoys a life much different than the one he led a year ago. In order to promote the act of organ and tissue donation and to bring attention to such a worthy cause, Brian has set out again to walk across the Island.

According to the Canadian Association of Transplantation, there were more than 4,000 individuals on the waiting list for organ donation last year. Unfortunately, because of a lack of organs, doctors were able to perform only 1,803 transplants and, most sadly, nearly 200 of those Canadians on the list lost their lives while waiting — about four people per week. Despite incredible strides in medical procedures in recent years, the sad truth is that without increasing the number of organ donors, our medical advances mean little to those who wait for the transplant that never comes.

In addition to organ donation, many Canadians are unaware of the possibility of tissue donation such as corneas, heart valves, bones and skin. Almost everyone can donate tissues within certain time limits and regardless of age or medical history. In fact, I have experienced this type of donation first-hand: The corneas of a relative have given someone else the gift of sight, greatly improving that person's quality of life.

Honourable senators, a full donation by one person has the potential to save up to eight lives through the donation of vital organs. That full donation can also improve the health and quality of the lives of another 50 people through the donation of tissues.

I would like to encourage all Canadians who are considering the gift of life to learn more about the requirements in their home province and to urge them to make certain that their families are fully informed of their wishes. I would also like to thank those Canadians who have already made the necessary arrangements to become organ and tissue donors. Their compassion, goodwill and remarkable generosity will offer hope to the thousands of their fellow Canadians who are waiting for transplants.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL

2006 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the 2006 annual report of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal entitled, *To ensure that Canadians have equal access to the opportunities that exist in our society through the fair and equitable adjudication of human rights cases that are brought before the Tribunal*, in accordance with subsection 61(4) of the Canadian Human Rights Act.

[English]

STUDY ON OPERATION OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT AND RELEVANT REGULATIONS, DIRECTIVES AND REPORTS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO REPORT OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES COMMITTEE TABLED

Hon. David Tkachuk (Acting Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Government Response to the Second Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages entitled, *Understanding the Reality and Meeting the Challenges of Living in French in Nova Scotia*.

[Translation]

STUDY ON VETERANS' SERVICES AND BENEFITS, COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITIES AND CHARTER

REPORT OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE COMMITTEE TABLED

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the fourteenth report of the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence regarding the subcommittee's attendance at the ninetieth anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

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

• (1420)

QUESTION PERIOD

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT POLLING— APPOINTMENT OF DANIEL PAILLÉ

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would like to begin by congratulating the minister responsible for the Old Port on his announcement in

Montreal in support of a site that will be the pride and joy of Montrealers and Quebecers. This project in response to the increasing use of these facilities was developed in collaboration with various museums by the previous government. I would like to congratulate the minister on taking this step.

Honourable senators, my question is for the Minister of Public Works and Government Services. In light of other decisions that I have not been pleased with, my question is about the polling review decision. Canada's Auditor General has already reviewed the public opinion polling contracts and, in her February 2004 report she said:

[English]

We found that the government managed its public opinion research activities adequately.

[Translation]

We all know — especially we Liberals — that Ms. Fraser does not usually mince words. Despite the review conducted by an experienced and independent office that is the only entity with the legitimacy, authority and impartiality required for this type of institutional audit, the minister decided to appoint Daniel Paillé to conduct a review of his own — which is a first — to reach conclusions different from those of the Auditor General. The minister has emphasized that this individual is an independent consultant.

We know that Mr. Paillé, a Quebecer, officially supported Ms. Marois during the Parti Québécois leadership race in the fall of 2005. If the sovereignists, who would dearly love to see Quebec separate, changed sides in less than a year, it would not go unnoticed. According to the minister, Mr. Paillé is now a federalist who cares deeply about the interests of Canadians.

We agree that Mr. Paillé has some academic knowledge. This is not necessarily a prerogative of the federalists, and it certainly provides no guarantee of an enlightened assessment of the Government of Canada's administration. Mr. Paillé has, at times, committed errors in judgment. For instance, he had to apologize before the National Assembly of Quebec for having used departmental letterhead to write a letter in which he objected to the opening of a child care centre near his home, claiming that it would affect the value of this property.

In light of these facts, it seems to me that the minister probably showed a lack of diligence in placing his trust in that individual. Perhaps he was influenced a little too much by the political issues in Quebec.

How can the minister now try to reassure us that Mr. Paillé will provide an objective report, in the best interest of all Canadians, and that this million dollars has not been awarded for purely partisan purposes?

• (1425)

Hon. Michael Fortier (Minister of Public Works and Government Services): I thank the honourable senator for her question. The senator's absence was noticed last week — her presence was greatly missed — and, had she been here, she would have witnessed some interesting debates on this matter, among others.

Before responding to the question I would also like, if I may, to talk about last Friday's announcement. The senator is assigning me responsibilities that are simply not mine. I am not the minister responsible for the Old Port of Montreal. That would be Mr. Lawrence Cannon, but I was very pleased to make the announcement. Furthermore, Senator Fox was my special guest at the head table and he appeared very proud of the announcement. I would also like to congratulate him — as I did in May of last year — for he submitted, with Mr. Lucien Bouchard, a report on the Société du Havre de Montréal, of which Mr. Cannon and I have made use. Thank you for showering me with praise, but I am pleased to share them with our colleague Senator Fox.

To return to the question, I would not call this a counter-inquiry. I will simply recall the facts. We talked about it during the last election campaign. After carefully reading the Auditor General's report, we believed, as a political party, that more than a sample of contracts needed to be reviewed as the Auditor General did.

I reminded Senator Tardif of that last week. Mr. Paillé's review will cover the period from 1990 to 2003. He will review all polling contracts awarded by the Government of Canada, not just a sample. I would like to remind you that the sample studied by Ms. Fraser led her to raise serious questions about the practices adopted.

We have kept an election promise. Mr. Paillé is very qualified. I would like to remind you that *La Presse* editorial writer André Pratte confirmed that Mr. Paillé had all the qualifications to carry out the task. I feel very reassured by our government's choice, as should honourable senators.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: I was not questioning his professional qualifications. Rather, I was questioning the choice of an individual who does not believe in Canada. That is the choice of someone who, while a member of the Quebec government, intervened and withdrew a public tender issued by the Société immobilière du Québec in order to ensure that a Quebec labour ministry office be located in Saint-Jérôme; that is to say, close to his political interests, rather than in Saint-Antoine. The people there remember that as a purely partisan move.

We are not questioning his professional qualifications, but rather, whether or not he can be impartial, and whether an individual who does not believe in this country and who will be preparing a report — paid for by Canadian taxpayers and costing \$1 million — can be objective. We believe that this individual is definitely not capable of preparing such a report in an objective manner.

Senator Fortier: I will give the same answer I gave last week. I think that Quebec — and I would like to draw the attention of honourable senators to the results of the election on March 26 — is no longer dealing with the same battle between separatists and federalists that we had back in Jean Chrétien's day. Quebec has evolved. You have people who are evolving with you, people like Mr. Lapierre, who has been a Bloc member and a minister of the Crown in the other place. I do not recall ever hearing the honourable senator say that he was a man who wanted Quebec to separate and should therefore not have his place.

Quebecers went through two referendums in 15 years. Many people voted yes in one or the other and, in 1995, the results were very close.

People have evolved. Mr. Paillé joined me in Parliament to make an announcement, with Canadian flags behind him. His task will be purely analytical work and his report will be public. You will be able to see whether this report is objective or not, since you will have in hand not just the conclusions, but the entire report. I ask honourable senators to wait for the report instead of being afraid to be afraid.

• (1430)

Senator Hervieux-Payette: We are not going to discuss the entire political history of Quebec. I can think of other people involved in the Parti Québécois such as Minister Bachand, who publicly said that he no longer believed in this option and professed his faith in Canada. Will the minister ask Mr. Paillé to profess his faith in Canada?

That is what we expect from someone who is going to work in the interest of Canadians, instead of saying that his political opinions, a year later, after running in a leadership race, are personal opinions. As far as I am concerned, there is no doubt in my mind that this person does not have enough objectivity to conduct an independent investigation.

Senator Fortier: The honourable senator will understand that I disagree with her. She does have enough objectivity. The report will be public, and she will have the opportunity to look at the findings.

[English]

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, I have a supplementary question.

The minister clings to the idea that Mr. Paillé, despite contrary evidence, might be capable of conducting this investigation. He did not answer my question the other day as to whether he could possibly do it better than the Auditor General, Sheila Fraser.

Could the minister indicate what part of this investigation that he believes the Auditor General could not do less expensively, equally or better, and could not do far more objectively without any of the questions about the bias of a separatist getting \$1 million from the Government of Canada?

Senator Fortier: I thank the honourable senator for his question.

The Auditor General published the report in 2003. She has since, as the honourable senator knows, followed with another report where she said that looking forward after 2003, she is satisfied that the rules for this particular aspect of contracting have been followed. As far as we are concerned, and as far as she is concerned, that is the end of it with regard to spending more time on this subject.

I bring the honourable senator back to the 2005-06 election. This is not a surprise; it was part of our platform. I am surprised that he is surprised, to be honest. It is not as though we have come out from the broom closet with something. We said we would do this if we were elected and we were elected. I think it is more the fact of Mr. Paillé's involvement than anything else.

If the Liberal Party and the folks who were around even back to 1990 during the Mulroney years have nothing to fear, then they have nothing to fear from this report or from Mr. Paillé.

Senator Mitchell: Neo-conservative governments always say that they understand smaller government and always work towards it.

Why would the minister continue in this way to create more bureaucracy to do something that the Auditor General has in place, has already done the background work on, is perfectly efficient and capable of doing, and could just as easily be asked to do as Mr. Paillé?

Senator Fortier: Honourable senators, as I just said, the Auditor General has dealt with this issue. She gave us a hint in 2003 when she said that she was concerned with some items in the report. We read that report and agreed with her concern. We made it clear in our 2005-06 platform that if elected we would look into the Auditor General's concerns. We have gone back to 1990.

Canadians want to know what happened. The people that we talked to say, "Let us figure out what is going on and let us see whether the contracting rules were followed; if they were, that is fine; if not, we want to know exactly what took place."

Senator Tkachuk: That is why Prime Minister Paul Martin established the Gomery Commission.

Senator Mitchell: The defence is that the government kept a promise. I am sure Danny Williams would love to hear that defence with regard to his program.

This minister stood in this house and was very derogatory about the people who sit in the Senate. When I hear this kind of political partisan approach to issues, all I can say is that for one who said that, the minister has certainly lowered the bar.

Senator Tkachuk: Please, at least, we know who we are.

AWARDING OF CONTRACT TO CGI GROUP INC.— POSSIBLE CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Hon. Grant Mitchell: I have to say that it is very hard, honourable senators, to take seriously the neo-conservative government's advocacy of accountability.

First, Bill C-2 had to be rushed through, and months later still has not been proclaimed. Bill C-2, the centrepiece of "accountability," still has not been proclaimed.

• (1435)

Second, the Prime Minister hires a stylist — God knows he needs one — but will not reveal to the people of Canada what that stylist costs. Now we see the Fortier fiasco as it builds. First, the CGI friend gets a \$400-million contract. Second, Mr. Paillé must be a friend; otherwise, why else would he give that kind of money to a separatist?

Does the minister honestly expect that Canadians could possibly be satisfied with the explanation that the decision on the \$400-million CIG contract was made by departmental officials and that Minister Fortier himself had absolutely nothing to do with it? What does that say about accountability?

[Senator Fortier]

Hon. Michael Fortier (Minister of Public Works and Government Services): I am sorry, but I did not hear the honourable senator's question.

Senator Mitchell: Does the Minister of Public Works expect that Canadians could conceivably be satisfied with his explanation that the \$400-million CGI contract was decided upon by departmental officials alone without any involvement on his part? What does that say about accountability?

Senator Fortier: Honourable senators, I believe the honourable senator is mixing up issues. One issue is whether the minister was involved directly or indirectly in the award of this contract or any contract. The answer is no. I have said that before and I repeat it again.

I do not know what set of criteria the senator is using with regard to how a minister is or is not supposed to be involved in contracting. My government and I do not get involved. We leave this to the people at Public Works and Government Services, where there are 10,000 people looking after procurement, and they do a great job of it.

The honourable senator suggests that I am involved. If he is brave enough, he should make that statement outside. He is also insulting the people at Public Works and Government Services Canada, people who do this work on behalf of all Canadians.

I have not been involved, nor would I think of being involved, because it is not my nature. Senator Mitchell will have to accept my word with respect to this matter. Should he choose not to accept my word on the matter, I would suggest that he go outside and make that statement to reporters.

Senator Mitchell: This is like high school; we have to go outside.

Did Minister Fortier, who claims to have had absolutely nothing to do with this contract, sign the submission that went to Treasury Board and ultimately to cabinet for approval?

Senator Fortier: We do not comment on the status of contracts. Senator Mitchell should know that, having been here for a while.

Senator Tkachuk: He was never in government.

Senator LeBreton: He was the leader of the opposition in Alberta.

Senator Fortier: Oh, he has never been in power. That is true.

The department will make public the information with respect to who has won this contract when it is ready to do so.

Senator Mitchell: Honourable senators, could the minister confirm, on the record, that he did not meet with CGI officials, in person or by phone, either recently, before or during the tendering process leading up to the decision to give the contract to CGI? Could he confirm that he did not meet with CGI officials in any way on that process?

Senator Fortier: I have never met with them at all to discuss this contract.

Senator Mitchell: Could the minister please confirm what role he played in rewriting the terms of reference of the contract so that it specifically precluded a number of CGI's competitors?

Senator Fortier: As I indicated to the honourable senator, I have not been involved, directly or indirectly, in this or any other contract, and that includes RFPs, which are public, and on MERX. The honourable senator can visit the MERX website, if he wishes.

The tendering process is run by public servants. Ministers do not have a role to play in it. I do not know what Senator Mitchell does not understand in “we do not have a role to play.” I would ask the honourable senator to please keep that in mind.

Senator Mitchell: That certainly is not an explanation that was ever accepted from our government.

The Hon. the Speaker: I recognize Senator Trenholme Counsell.

Senator Mitchell: I have just one more question.

Why will the government not —

The Hon. the Speaker: Order. The chair has recognized the Honourable Senator Trenholme Counsell.

Senator Mitchell: Why will the government not submit the contract to an inquiry, perhaps conducted by the procurement auditor?

The Hon. the Speaker: The chair has recognized the Honourable Senator Trenholme Counsell.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

REPORT OF MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CHILD CARE SPACES INITIATIVE

Hon. Marilyn Trenholme Counsell: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. I read with much interest the report of Dr. Gordon Chong, entitled *Child Care Spaces Recommendations. Supporting Canadian Children & Families: Addressing the Gap Between The Supply and Demand for High Quality Child Care*.

• (1440)

In this report, reference is made to the establishment of a “national child care spaces investment fund” to be administered by a third party to which federal funding for new child care spaces would be deposited annually. However, in reports of Minister Solberg’s comments regarding new child care spaces, there is no reference to such a fund. Rather, an interview with the minister indicated that the dollars allocated from the federal government annually for new child care spaces would be included in the Canada Social Transfer to provinces and territories. Will the money, after year one, be placed in a fund as recommended in the report, designed specifically for child care spaces; or will it be lumped into the Canada Social Transfer without absolute assurance that this additional money will be marked exclusively and totally for child care?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I saw the report that Mr. Gordon Chong, a very qualified and eminent Canadian, has submitted. Budget 2006 established the Universal Child Care Benefit, which as of July 1, 2006, has been providing assistance to families. Budget 2006 also set aside \$250 million per

quarter for the new child care spaces initiative beginning in 2007-08. Bill C-52 would legislate this program by providing \$250 million for the creation of child care spaces distributed to the provinces and the territories on an equal, per capita basis. This funding will flow through the CST beginning in 2008-09.

Senator Trenholme Counsell: I guess, then, the recommendation on page 13 of the report regarding the establishment of a national child care spaces investment fund will not happen. Rather, I conclude from the honourable senator’s remarks that the money will go into the Canada Social Transfer, which is a large basket. The money is directed to many places. I would like to know why — perhaps in a delayed answer — this fund is not being established.

I was pleased that the word “quality” was used several times in this report, but in the recommendations regarding measurement and evaluation, there was no mention of quality, which I believe is a serious oversight.

While quality child care was included in the report, there was absolutely no mention of early childhood care, except in Appendix V, which refers to current federal government programs. In other words, there is no ongoing emphasis on early childhood development.

The criteria for the measurement and evaluation of new spaces recommended in the report were these: number of spaces, degree of innovation and employer involvement in the provision of these spaces.

Would the honourable leader agree that the standard of quality child care should have been included in the list of recommendations to measure the success of future child care spaces? It was commendable that the word “quality” appeared throughout the report, yet when one reads the recommendations for evaluation of this ongoing program for new spaces, the report only talks about numbers, innovation and the involvement of employers.

Senator LeBreton: I would suggest that no government would embark on the issue of child care without insisting that it be quality child care. That much is obvious.

As I said previously, Budget 2006 commits \$250 million a year to the provinces and territories to support the creation of flexible child care spaces beginning in 2007-08. This amount is in addition to \$500 million for early childhood development and \$350 million for early learning and child care through the Canada Social Transfer.

In addition, the budget provides a 25 per cent investment tax credit to encourage businesses to create new licensed child care spaces, providing up to \$10,000 of assistance for each space provided or created.

• (1445)

The government takes this issue very seriously. We realize the country is diverse and that child care needs vary from location to location. There are quite different needs in smaller and rural centres as opposed to large urban centres. The government is committed to quality child care spaces, and I believe the measures we have taken in Budget 2006 and Budget 2007 go a long way to addressing these needs and concerns.

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

CREATION OF WORKPLACE CHILD CARE SPACES IN FEDERAL BUILDINGS

Hon. Joan Fraser: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Last November 23, I put a question to Senator Fortier. Unfortunately, he was not present at the time, so Senator LeBreton took the question. The answer to that question was received last week, and I can see why it took so long to produce. It is pretty embarrassing stuff.

The question was:

... is it the policy of the federal government to have day care centres in all federal buildings or workplaces?

— that is, as it is encouraging the private sector to do, sort of, I add:

If so, can we know the costs of them, both capital and operating, and how many places exist?

Well, coast to coast to coast, this government, which is one of the largest employers across the country — maybe the largest — has a grand total of 11 daycare centres. Five of those centres are here in Ottawa, leaving only six for the whole rest of the country.

The total rent subsidy, which is the only dollar figure provided, is a grand total of \$1.3 million a year, which is probably less than the coffee budget for a single ministry. The policy portion of the answer reads, in part — and I quote:

It is Treasury Board policy to provide departments with the authority to establish workplace day care centres when it can be demonstrated that they are financially viable and self-supporting with a proven and sustained demand.

Anyone who has done any work in this area knows that, when the employer does not have a daycare centre, parents who work for that employer are obliged to make other child care arrangements. Having made other child care arrangements, it is quite disruptive to move one's toddler out of that daycare centre and into the lovely new one the government will provide. However, anyone involved with this area also knows that if you build it, they will come.

Hence, I shall repeat my question to the government leader: Is the Government of Canada prepared to do as it is urging private employers to do; that is, to create a proper network of high quality daycare centres in its workplaces across this country?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I wish to thank the Honourable Senator Fraser for that question. As the honourable senator knows, when she asked that question, I took it as notice. I am surprised at how long it took the answer to be forthcoming. However, I am doubly surprised that the honourable senator would choose to read the answer into the record. We have been the government for just a little over a

year; her government was in power from 1993 to 2006. When I read that delayed answer, I said, "Oh, well, another example of they did not get it done."

The current government has taken a lot of initiatives in the budget to provide child care spaces. I do not know of any specific plan regarding incentives for child care spaces provided in the various government offices; perhaps I shall ask specifically whether this government intends to do a better job than the previous government in providing the spaces.

Senator Fraser: The previous government, as the minister knows, had negotiated for the first time in Canadian history a very elaborate and well-funded daycare program to cover the whole country, a program that all the provinces had signed on to. This government chose to go another route; hence, I was asking whether the government would put its money where its mouth is, which is not where the previous government's policy was leading.

However, let me put a supplementary question to the Minister of Public Works.

• (1450)

This government's policy is apparently to privatize federal buildings at a galloping rate. Is the minister prepared to make it standard policy that, in negotiating contracts for those privatizations, he builds in requirements for the inclusion of daycare centres paid for by the new proprietors?

Hon. Michael Fortier (Minister of Public Works and Government Services): Honourable senators, the honourable senator knows that the process for disposing of these buildings has just begun. We are hoping, if the transaction turns out right and we get an interesting offer from a party or several parties, that we turn ownership over to them.

If there are any initiatives involving daycare facilities in those buildings, I think it should come from an effort on the part of the departments that are in those buildings and the proprietor. I think it is best that the tenants and the landlords come to an agreement on this issue rather than imposing daycare facilities in the process of the disposal of the buildings.

[*Translation*]

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

REFORM OF EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

Hon. Jean-Claude Rivest: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. A week or so ago, all political parties in the House of Commons urged the government to amend the Employment Insurance Act. In addition to this demand from the opposition parties in the House of Commons, a large number of Canadians have found very serious problems with the employment insurance program. Seasonal workers such as fishers and those from other important sectors in different regions, as well as self-employed workers, will be affected by this reform.

Does the government intend to follow up on the recommendations that were made on employment insurance reform, considering that the employment insurance surpluses were financed by Canadian workers, who are entitled to receive a fair return on their investment?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): I wish to thank the honourable senator for his question. The EI system strikes a balance between temporary income support for Canadians while they find employment, and keeping people in the workplace. There are some areas in the country where there is still high unemployment.

The minister is taking into account these high unemployment areas. The report of the committee in the other place has been referred to the minister. This is a very important question because of the diversity of the Canadian workforce. In some areas of the country the unemployment levels are very low, while in other parts of the country where there is seasonal employment, the levels are very high.

I will attempt to obtain from the honourable senator a definitive answer from the minister as to how he intends to respond to the recommendations of the committee.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of the participants of the Spring 2007 Parliamentary Officers' Study Program.

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

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. David Tkachuk (Acting Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answers to three oral questions asked by the Honourable Senator Carstairs, on March 20, 2007, regarding Budget 2007 tax credits to families; the Honourable Senator Milne, on March 28, 2007, regarding heritage preservation and the demolition of buildings at the Pickering land site; and the Honourable Senator Carstairs, on March 29, 2007, regarding the Budget 2007 proportion of gross domestic product allocated to foreign aid.

BUDGET 2007

TAX CREDIT TO FAMILIES

(Response to question raised by Hon. Sharon Carstairs on March 20, 2007)

Canada's Conservative Government has taken decisive and substantial measures to assist those Canadians in need. Even a brief examination of Budgets 2006 and 2007 would clearly show how we're helping hard-working Canadians.

Indeed, in our first two budgets we have introduced a number of tax relief measures with tax savings totalling nearly \$38 billion — which have completely eliminated 885,000 low-income Canadians from the tax rolls.

Among the myriad of tax-measures we've introduced include the Working Families Tax Plan proposed in Budget 2007, and Budget 2006 measures such as the Canada

Employment Credit, increases to the Basic Personal Amount and the reduction in the lowest personal income tax rate.

It should be noted that Budget 2006 and 2007 also introduced several measures benefiting those Canadians with income too low to pay personal income tax — such as the Working Income Tax Benefit, the one-point rate reduction in the GST and the Universal Child Care Benefit, which helps all families with young children by providing \$1,200 per year per child under age six.

These measures are in addition to the existing support for low-income families provided through the GST credit, the Canada Child Tax Benefit and the National Child Benefit Supplement.

As mentioned, our Government announced the new Working Families Tax Plan in Budget 2007. In its entirety, the Working Families Tax Plan removes 230,000 low-income Canadians from the tax rolls. Furthermore, over one-half of the tax relief provided by Budget 2007 will go to Canadians with incomes under \$37,178 — the bottom personal income tax bracket threshold.

This plan includes a child tax credit, providing up to \$310 in tax relief for each child under 18, and an increase in the spousal and other amounts to the same level as the Basic Personal Amount — providing up to \$209 of tax relief in 2007 for single earner families.

Another major positive development was the Working Income Tax Benefit proposed in Budget 2007, a benefit that will help people over the 'welfare wall' into a better, more prosperous life for themselves and their families.

The WITB will help make employment more rewarding and attractive for more than 1.2 million low-income workers, including single parents and those employed on a part-time or temporary basis. It will provide couples and single parents earning between \$3,000 and \$21,167 up to \$1,000 annually. There is an additional supplement of up to \$250 for those eligible for the Disability Tax Credit.

This particular measure has been roundly applauded from all corners. The Canadian Labour Congress said the WITB "initiative is worthy of support." The Retail Council of Canada said it "should help to reduce the disincentive for some individuals to leave welfare to find paid work." The Canadian Association for Community Living congratulated the government for its introduction, saying it would "assist people with disabilities over the welfare wall." Even the NDP finance critic called it "an important program that goes in the right direction."

As we move forward, Canada's Conservative Government is further committed to reducing personal income taxes. This commitment is supported by the Government's Tax-Back Guarantee, which means interest savings from national debt repayment will go to personal income tax reductions so that Canadians can take home more of their hard-earned pay.

TRANSPORT

CANADA LANDS COMPANY—DEMOLITION OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE BUILDINGS AT PICKERING AIRPORT

(Response to question raised by Hon. Lorna Milne on March 28, 2007)

Regarding the demolition of three vacant residential dwellings on the Markham portion of the Pickering Lands site, Transport Canada was legally committed to follow through with the demolition as this was the ground for issuing Notices of Termination to the tenants under the Ontario *Tenant Protection Act* several years ago. The first inaugural meeting of the Transport Canada Heritage Advisory Committee was held after the three tenants in Markham were notified of Transport Canada's intent to terminate their tenancies for the purpose of demolition.

All properties on the Pickering Lands Site are subject to review by the Federal Heritage Building Review Office for federal heritage significance. Transport Canada has also been working with the municipalities on their local heritage plans. As referenced by the Honourable Lorna Milne in the Senate on March 28, 2007, Transport Canada offers municipalities the opportunity to bring forward their local heritage plans prior to demolitions. Despite a number of prompts from Transport Canada, no such local heritage plans were received from the Town of Markham.

The Department will call a Transport Canada Heritage Advisory Committee meeting shortly depending on the progress of local heritage evaluations as well as clarification of other related matters.

BUDGET 2007

PROPORTION OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT ALLOCATED TO FOREIGN AID

(Response to question raised by Hon. Sharon Carstairs on March 29, 2007)

The Government has consistently increased the International Assistance Envelope. Budget 2007 reconfirms the government's commitment to grow by 8 per cent per year, so as to double international assistance by 2010-11 from 2001-02 levels. This means that international assistance will grow to approximately \$4.4 billion in 2008-09.

In addition to the 8 per cent growth, the budget provides \$315 million in new money (\$200 million in further development assistance to Afghanistan and \$115 million to support the Advanced Market Commitment).

While the quantity of aid Canada provides is important, its quality is just as important. Budget 2007 provides clear direction on improving aid effectiveness by strengthening focus, improving efficiency and increasing accountability of Canada's international assistance programs.

• (1455)

POINT OF ORDER

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before proceeding to Government Business, I wish to present the ruling on the point of order raised concerning extensions of the time limit on speeches.

Honourable senators, on Tuesday, March 27, 2007, Senator Murray participated in the debate on the motion to amend the second reading motion of Bill C-288, dealing with the Kyoto Protocol. At the end of the 15 minutes allotted to him for debate, the senator agreed to ask for an extension of his speaking time in response to a request by Senator Fraser to pose a question. Leave was granted with the condition that the extension be for no more than five minutes.

Following the exchange between Senator Fraser and Senator Murray, Senator Cools rose to put a question to Senator Murray. However, as the agreed extension of five minutes had expired, as Speaker I informed Senator Cools of that fact and indicated that she was being recognized for debate. While acknowledging that Senator Murray's time had by agreement been extended for only five minutes, Senator Cools objected to this limitation on debate and proceeded to put a question to Senator Murray, which was duly answered. Senator Cools then continued with some comments that led to a request for a further response from Senator Murray.

I then recognized Senator Joyal, who asked whether Senator Murray's time had been extended so that he could ask him a question. I answered by stating that the debate had passed to Senator Cools. This led Senator Cools to state that she had thought she had "asked the chamber if we could extend Senator Murray's time. Senator Murray stood up and spoke and I was answering him."

After some additional exchanges with several senators about what had actually happened, debate on Bill C-288 was adjourned and Senator Cools rose on a point of order to challenge the practice of granting leave to extend a senator's debate for a five-minute period of time. According to the senator, this practice is "unfair" because it denies senators the right to express themselves on important issues that require further debate.

[Translation]

Intervening to speak to the point of order, Senator Fraser reminded those present that the Senate is master of its own proceedings and suggested that the Senate should perhaps reconsider the practice of automatically giving five additional minutes each time leave is sought to extend debate. Senator Comeau was of the opinion that the practice of granting leave for five minutes had created the equivalent of a Senate convention or practice, which serves everyone's interests fairly. It was his opinion that the five minutes was originally a courtesy period given to allow the orator to wrap up a speech. He added that, if the Senate wanted to change the practice of granting an extension of only five minutes, the senator requesting leave to extend debate should indicate how much additional time was needed.

Senator Cools rose again to stress the importance of taking advantage of the immediacy of questions and comments following a senator's intervention. In her opinion, a comment or question does not carry the same weight when it takes place after the fact and senators should be able to put comments or questions directly to the senator involved. In closing, Senator Cools repeated that she had thought she had asked for an extension of Senator Murray's time and that was how she believed that she had participated in the debate on Bill C-288.

[English]

I wish to thank, as always, those senators who contributed to the discussion on the point of order. At the time, I decided to take the issue under advisement. While the Senate was adjourned, I reviewed the *Debates of the Senate, Rules of the Senate of Canada*, precedents and relevant authorities and am now prepared to give my ruling.

First, I would like to point out that rule 37(4), which deals with the time limit on senators' speeches, is quite categorical. It states:

. . . no Senator shall speak for more than fifteen minutes, inclusive of any question or comments from other Senators which the Senator may permit in the course of his or her remarks.

This time limit on debate was incorporated into the *Rules of the Senate* in 1991, together with numerous other rules that were drawn up to more clearly structure the Senate's sitting day and to better assure the ability of the government to transact its business.

• (1500)

Despite these mandated time limits on debate, it remains possible to extend the time for an individual senator's debate through leave. Originally, such requests were without any restriction. This then led to objections that too much time was being monopolized when leave was granted. Speaker Molgat acknowledged this situation in a ruling made on May 11, 2000, when he addressed a point of order similar to this one. Referring to rule 37(4), Speaker Molgat recognized that:

There is no doubt that the current rule is restrictive. With growing frequency, requests are being made to extend the time for debate and the question and comment period that can follow a speech. Only rarely are these requests denied. This practice, in turn, may now be giving rise to a sense of frustration. This appears to be evident based on the objections that have occasionally been raised by some Senators who find the process too open-ended.

[Translation]

Speaker Molgat went on to state that, through rule 3, it is procedurally acceptable to suspend rule 37 strictly limiting the time available for debate and, at the same time, impose specified conditions or limits of time to a request to extend the time for debate. As Speaker Molgat explained in his ruling:

. . . I do not find it procedurally objectionable to have a request for leave to suspend the rules limiting the time for debate combined with a proposal to fix the time of the extension. Indeed, following the model of the House of Lords . . . it might be useful and advantageous to the

Senator, who is requesting more time, to indicate how much time is needed in order to improve the likelihood of a favourable response. Moreover, such an approach would, I think, be in keeping with the intent of rule 3 regarding the suspension of any particular rule. According to this rule, the purpose of any proposed suspension should be "distinctly stated." As much as possible, I have usually permitted an explanation so long as it did not involve any prolonged discussion. This I think is a sensible approach that could serve the Senate well until the rules of debate are revised.

[English]

I concur with Speaker Molgat's assessment and I accept his ruling, which was not appealed. In addition, I have found that *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, by Marleau and Montpetit, supports this position. It states on page 498 that — and I quote:

During debate, unanimous consent has been sought to extend briefly the length of speeches or the length of the questions and comments period following speeches.

I believe it is perfectly in order to set a specific time limit when requesting an extension of a senator's time in debate. Indeed, there is nothing prohibiting the inclusion of any condition in a request for leave to suspend a rule.

At the same time, I should note that, in reviewing the precedents, there have been numerous instances since Speaker Molgat's ruling when rule 37(4) was suspended in order to give leave for a few additional minutes of debate. As mentioned by Senator Comeau, it would seem that the Senate does generally give leave for no more than five minutes, probably because it is usually sufficient to allow senators to wrap up their speech or to answer a few questions. This is not to say that it has become a convention or practice. In fact, no rule or precedent is ever created through the use of leave. However, I should add that there is nothing that binds the Senate to a particular limit, if any, in extending the time for a particular senator in debate. Indeed, in my study of precedents, I identified a number of instances where the Senate gave leave to extend debate by more than five minutes. I have examples when the Senate granted an additional 10 minutes, 15 minutes and even as much as 30 minutes.

[Translation]

In addition, there is nothing preventing an additional request for an extension of time in debate when the original extension is exhausted. This is what I think Senator Cools thought had happened on March 27. However, as the *Debates of the Senate* show, the request was not actually put to the Senate and there is no indication that the Senate had agreed to the extension of additional time to Senator Murray beyond the five minutes. This, in turn, led to some confusion about whether Senator Cools was participating in debate on her own time or asking Senator Murray a question, prompting Senator Cools to raise her point of order.

[English]

In summary, it is my ruling that a request seeking leave to extend debate is procedurally acceptable. Equally, it is competent for the senator requesting leave, or any other senator, to specify

the length of time for that extension. In all such cases, however, the leave of the Senate is required to suspend the limits of debate established by our rules.

[Translation]

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: Honourable senators, I rise on a point of order. I would note that it is the responsibility of the Honourable the Speaker, as the Speaker for our debates, to maintain order and decorum in this chamber pursuant to rule 18. Rule 18(5) is very clear:

When the Speaker rises, all other Senators shall remain seated or shall resume their seats.

Honourable senators, I presume that this rule is as simple and easy to understand in French as it is in English. I would like all of my colleagues to respect this rule. I have been sitting in the Senate for 14 years and, for 14 years, I have been tempted to remind my colleagues of this rule.

Today, honourable senators, I have had enough. Allow me to speak frankly and say: please; I know that, during Question Period, we have some difficulty maintaining decorum in this chamber, but when the Speaker rises to speak, the least we can do is respect the rule we ourselves devised and sit down.

Honourable senators, I would add that while I realize that the rules do not apply to Senate staff, I am also directing my remark to the clerk in the hope that the clerk will ensure that Senate staff also strive to respect this rule, please.

The Hon. the Speaker: Are there other senators who wish to comment? I am ready to rule on this point of order.

[English]

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Honourable senators, I should like to concur with Senator Nolin on this. He specifically mentioned Question Period. Unfortunately, I was out of the house for most of Question Period, but I wish to support Senator Nolin in this point of order. I would also say that sometimes, in the rough and tumble of this place, there is a little bit more excitement, senators are oblivious or forget or overlook the fact that they should observe certain practices.

Senator Nolin made a profound point that the rules also apply to the table officers. It is not unusual for there to be distractions, as table officers are running back and forth toward the Speaker and the table. I should like to thank Senator Nolin for bringing forth his very important point, and I support him in that.

• (1510)

This chamber is less boisterous than is the other place and when a senator raises a point of order, he should be supported in his efforts. Time and again in this place I have said that true democracy, freedom and liberty are in the rules. It often seems that fewer and fewer in this place understand their way in and around the rules as the rules have become the purview or the preserve of the staff and table officers. I recall a time when 10 to 15 senators would be on their feet ready to speak on questions of privilege and points of order.

[The Hon. the Speaker]

Senator Nolin, when a senator rises I feel a need to give my support because speaking on a point of order is difficult. I would add that the system provides that senators are to rule this place. When I came to the Senate, the leaders and the senators actually ran this place. The Speaker of the Senate hardly ever spoke, and it was understood that he was not to speak until he was invited to do so. I hasten to say that we would do this country a great service if we were to adopt the role of all senators mastering the system. In that way, all senators would be well acquainted with it and would assist to move proceedings along.

Honourable senators, when I came to the Senate, the book on the *Rules of the Senate* was about 10 per cent of its size today. Hence, I shudder each time we make more rules. The more rules, the less some senators know them and the more senators are reliant on their staff. I was raised to believe in this system and to respect it. Senators should work hard as a group, no matter the side of the house on which they sit, to preserve the institution. That is why I was so distressed about some of Senator Fortier's comments on the Senate and the statements by the Prime Minister and by the Leader of the Government in the Senate. These parliamentary institutions are the embodiment of our liberties.

I encourage all honourable senators to take hold of it. I support Senator Nolin. His point of order is valid.

[Translation]

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would like to participate in this debate and remind honourable senators that showing courtesy and respect for everyone is one of the fundamental rules of a democracy that works. I would be very pleased to see all senators show respect when our colleagues are asking questions and to make sure that questions are asked in accordance with the *Rules of the Senate*.

Hon. Jean Lapointe: Honourable senators, on behalf of my colleagues, I would like to support the point of order raised by Senator Nolin, who is quite right. To be frank, I am disappointed by the behaviour of this senator, who has been here in this chamber for the past year or so. He is a Liberal senator, who sits rather close by and who talks. He is always talking.

You know, the fact that he is absent today will not stop me from telling him what I think. I am sure all senators know me well enough to know that I will tell him to his face. When the Leader of the Government in the Senate is trying to answer questions and the voice of that other senator is more prominent, I find it shocking. It is also important for everyone to respect the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate when she is speaking.

Once again, I would like to congratulate Senator Nolin on this point of order.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I would like to thank all senators for their input and, as Speaker, I am prepared to give my ruling on this point of order.

I agree with everything that has been said by the honorable senators. The new position of the House of Lords in Westminster states that the Speaker has the same level of responsibility as the Lord Chancellor did in the past. It was not up to the Speaker to rule; rather, it was up to the Lords.

Things here in the Senate of Canada are not the same as in the other place. As Senator Cools very clearly indicated, it is the senators who are responsible for the running of this honourable chamber. I would therefore like to remind all senators that, as parliamentarians, they are all responsible for respecting all the rules.

As Speaker of the Senate, I try to facilitate the full participation of all senators in the debates and during Question Period, while respecting both ethics and collegiality. That is the tradition of our chamber, although it is very different from the other place.

[English]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CANADA PENSION PLAN OLD AGE SECURITY ACT

BILL TO AMEND—THIRD READING—
DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. W. David Angus moved third reading of Bill C-36, to amend the Canada Pension Plan and the Old Age Security Act.

He said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to say a few words at third reading of Bill C-36, to amend the Canada Pension Plan and the Old Age Security Act. This bill proposes significant procedural modernizations and upgrades to Canada's Pension Plan and Old Age Security program. The Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce met last week to study the bill and I am happy to report that the committee unanimously supported it and has reported this important piece of legislation without amendment. Indeed, honourable senators, there seems to be considerable approval for and support of Bill C-36 on both sides of this chamber as well as in the other place.

Members of the committee heard from several interesting witnesses, including the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development Canada; and Mr. Jean-Claude Ménard, Chief Actuary in the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions of Canada. The committee clearly recognized that the proposed legislation will bring important improvements to the daily lives of Canadian seniors and those with long-term disabilities. The proposed administrative improvements to the Canada Pension Plan and to the Old Age Security regime result from submissions given over the past few years to the Department of Human Resources and Social Development Canada and to various federal and provincial politicians. A key intent of the bill is to resolve issues raised by seniors and by those with disabilities.

Honourable senators, seniors are a commanding force in Canada today, and their influence is far reaching. Canada's new government understands that today's seniors are healthier, wealthier and more technologically savvy than they were just 10 years ago.

They asked to be heard, and our government is listening. Through letters and formal consultations, Canadian seniors have asked for improved access to their benefits. Bill C-36 will

consequently modernize and streamline the delivery of CPP, OAS and Guaranteed Income Supplement benefits. It will allow seniors to monitor their contributions. It will enhance Canadians' access to the Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits, and it will allow seniors to review their contributions online.

• (1520)

Honourable senators, let me quickly highlight two key improvements in Bill C-36. One of the most important changes in the bill is the provision that will enable low-income seniors to apply for their GIS benefit only once, and this will remain in effect for the rest of their lives. After an initial application, their income tax information, as provided through the Canada Revenue Agency, will determine access to GIS benefits, and the senior in question will never need to reapply for the benefit regardless of fluctuations in his or her income. Seniors have been asking for this significant improvement for over 10 years.

A second key provision of this bill will make it easier for long-term contributors to the Canada Pension Plan to qualify for the Disability Benefit. Currently, a person needs to contribute to the CPP in four of the past six years to become eligible for the disability benefit even if he or she has paid into the plan for most of his or her life. Under this amendment, people with 25 or more years of contributions would only need to contribute to the CPP in three of the past six years. If they are eligible for the benefits, they will receive them for as long as they meet the medical criteria.

Honourable senators, the Chief Actuary assured us at committee that these proposed changes are actuarially sound. They reflect the recommendations made by federal, provincial and territorial ministers of finance. They reflect the observations of the Auditor General, and they reflect the opinions and representations of many Canadian seniors and disabled people.

Honourable senators, Canada has one of the best retirement income systems in the world. Bill C-36 will make it even better. I ask all honourable senators to support this bill in order for our seniors and disabled people to benefit from its improvements as soon as possible.

On motion of Senator Cordy, debate adjourned.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

BUDGET—STUDY ON ISSUES RELATING TO NEW
AND EVOLVING POLICY FRAMEWORK—
REPORT OF COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the seventh report of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, (budget—study of the Federal Government's New and Evolving Policy Framework for Managing Canada's Fisheries and Oceans), presented in the Senate on March 29, 2007. —(*Honourable Senator Rompkey, P.C.*)

Hon. Bill Rompkey: I move the motion standing in my name.

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

Hon. Senators: Question!

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

Motion agreed to and report adopted.

STUDY ON NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

INTERIM REPORT OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE COMMITTEE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the eleventh report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence entitled, *Canadian Security Guide Book 2007: An Update of Security Problems in Search of Solutions — Coasts*, tabled in the Senate on March 27, 2007.—(Honourable Senator Atkins)

Hon. Norman K. Atkins: Honourable senators, if there is no one who wishes to comment on that report, I move its adoption.

On motion of Senator Tkachuk, debate adjourned.

INTERIM REPORT OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE COMMITTEE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the ninth (interim) report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence entitled, *Canadian Security Guide Book 2007: An Update of Security Problems in Search of Solutions — Seaports*, tabled in the Senate on March 21, 2007.—(Honourable Senator Atkins)

Hon. Norman K. Atkins: Honourable senators, if no one wishes to speak on this report, I move adoption.

On motion of Senator Tkachuk, debate adjourned.

HUMAN RIGHTS

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE 2006 RESOLUTION ON ANTI-SEMITISM AND INTOLERANCE—SPEAKER'S RULING—ORDER STANDS

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Fraser, for the Honourable Senator Grafstein, seconded by the Honourable Senator Cook:

That the following Resolution on Combating Anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance which was adopted at the 15th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Association, in which Canada participated in Brussels, Belgium on July 7, 2006, be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights for consideration and that the Committee table its final report no later than March 31, 2007:

RESOLUTION ON COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM AND OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE

1. Calling attention to the resolutions on anti-Semitism adopted unanimously by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at its annual sessions in Berlin in 2002, Rotterdam in 2003, Edinburgh in 2004 and Washington in 2005,

2. Intending to raise awareness of the need to combat anti-Semitism, intolerance and discrimination against Muslims, as well as racism, xenophobia and discrimination, also focusing on the intolerance and discrimination faced by Christians and members of other religions and minorities in different societies,

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly:

3. Recognizes the steps taken by the OSCE and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to address the problems of anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, including the work of the Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Unit at the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the appointment of the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office, and the organization of expert meetings on the issue of anti-Semitism;
4. Reminds its participating States that “Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, towards Jewish community institutions and religious facilities”, this being the definition of anti-Semitism adopted by representatives of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) and ODIHR;
5. Urges its participating States to establish a legal framework for targeted measures to combat the dissemination of racist and anti-Semitic material via the Internet;
6. Urges its participating States to intensify their efforts to combat discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities;
7. Urges its participating States to present written reports, at the 2007 Annual Session, on their activities to combat anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination against Muslims;
8. Welcomes the offer of the Romanian Government to host a follow-up conference in 2007 on combating anti-Semitism and all forms of discrimination with the aim of reviewing all the decisions adopted at the OSCE conferences (Vienna, Brussels, Berlin, Córdoba, Washington), for which commitments were undertaken by the participating States, with a request for proposals on improving implementation, and calls upon participating States to agree on a decision in this regard at the forthcoming Ministerial Conference in Brussels;
9. Urges its participating States to provide the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) with regular information on the status of implementation of the 38 commitments made at the OSCE conferences (Vienna, Brussels, Berlin, Córdoba, Washington);

10. Urges its participating States to develop proposals for national action plans to combat anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination against Muslims;
11. Urges its participating States to raise awareness of the need to protect Jewish institutions and other minority institutions in the various societies;
12. Urges its participating States to appoint ombudspersons or special commissioners to present and promote national guidelines on educational work to promote tolerance and combat anti-Semitism, including Holocaust education;
13. Underlines the need for broad public support and promotion of, and cooperation with, civil society representatives involved in the collection, analysis and publication of data on anti-Semitism and racism and related violence;
14. Urges its participating States to engage with the history of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism and to analyze the role of public institutions in this context;
15. Requests its participating States to position themselves against all current forms of anti-Semitism wherever they encounter it;
16. Resolves to involve other inter-parliamentary organizations such as the IPU, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in its efforts to implement the above demands. —(*Speaker's Ruling*)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have a ruling on the point of order that was raised with reference to this item.

On Tuesday, April 17, 2007, Senator Cools raised a point of order challenging procedural acceptability of the motion moved by Senator Fraser, for Senator Grafstein, to authorize the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights to consider the resolution on combating anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance as adopted by the fifteenth annual session of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) Parliamentary Association. Senator Cools had four concerns with the motion, and I propose to address each of them in turn.

[*Translation*]

The first concern is that the motion asks the committee to table its report no later than March 31, 2007. Given that this date is now passed, I agree with Senator Cools that the reporting date will require an amendment.

Secondly, Senator Cools noted that the motion refers to “Parliamentary Association”, but observed that it should refer to the “Parliamentary Assembly”. Senator Cools is correct with respect to the nomenclature and this error should also be corrected by an amendment.

• (1530)

[*English*]

Senator Cools then turned her attention to the larger question of whether it is in order to ask a committee of the Senate to “judge a proceeding of another assembly,” which, in her view, is prohibited by long-standing parliamentary practice.

The first issue to be determined, in my mind, is the nature of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Honourable senators, those of you who are participants in the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association will be familiar with this organization. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is, in essence, the vehicle by which parliamentarians from OSCE-member nations can convene to consider and debate issues that touch on the mandate of the OSCE intergovernmental organization. In other words, the assembly exists as a construct of its member parliaments, of which Canada is one.

In my opinion, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is not a body with the same standing as our Parliament or another parliament. Furthermore, in that one of the fundamental goals of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is to promote interparliamentary dialogue and cooperation, this type of motion seems to be in keeping with the very objectives of the organization and would not constitute any violation of its status.

[*Translation*]

In addition, the motion itself does not in any way direct the committee to take any stand whatsoever, nor does it ask the committee to in any way pass judgment on the resolution. A motion to refer the subject matter of the resolution to the committee would be in order. It is only a very small additional step to refer the resolution itself to the committee for consideration and report. Accordingly, I do not find that the motion is acting in the manner feared by Senator Cools.

[*English*]

This leads us to the last issue raised by Senator Cools in the point of order. Senator Cools questioned the ability of the Senate to refer to its committees “proceedings of other assemblies other than from the House of Commons.”

We are familiar with the privileges that apply, especially in Westminster-style parliaments, to the proceedings of their legislatures. However, as has already been established, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has no such standing and its proceedings are not really analogous to those of a parliament such as ours. To the contrary, the motion does not attempt to refer proceedings of another parliament but the conclusions of a body of which Canada's Parliament is a member for the consideration of one of our committees.

Furthermore, a similar motion referring a resolution from the same institution to the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights was adopted by the Senate on February 10, 2004. Therefore, I also find that this aspect of the point of order is not sustained.

[Translation]

Having disposed of the various points raised in Senator Cools' point of order, I wish to consider the two issues raised by Senator Murray. First, he questioned the manner in which Senator Cools called the Senate's attention to her concerns. In Senator Murray's opinion, it appeared to him that Senator Cools followed a novel approach whereby she debated the merits of the motion before signalling that she objected to its procedural acceptability. The senator then concluded by again debating the subject of the motion.

In my reading of the *Debates*, I will accept that Senator Cools' concluding remarks may have strayed back into the merits of the motion, but I will also accept her contention that they did so in the context of her point of order. Nonetheless, Senator Murray's point is logical: any honourable senator, being of the opinion that an item on the Order Paper is not procedurally correct, should ask that the matter be resolved first, before entering into debate on the merits of the motion. I would, therefore, ask honourable senators to bear this in mind in the future.

[English]

The second matter raised by Senator Murray was whether a committee such as the Human Rights Committee needs an order of reference in order to consider a matter as is put forward in the motion. In his comments, Senator Murray noted that only two committees are explicitly authorized to undertake work of their own volition — the Rules Committee and the Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration. Despite this limitation, Senator Murray noted that “some committees allow themselves a great deal of latitude in discussing and reporting on matters within their mandate without a specific order of reference.” For the record, I should like to remind senators that the *Rules of the Senate* also authorize the Committee on Conflict of Interest for Senators to initiate work within its areas of responsibility.

The *Rules of the Senate* are clear that it is only these three committees that can initiate consideration of matters that fall within the mandate spelled out in the rules. All other committees must have their matters referred to them by the Senate.

There is no question that there is a wide range in the specificity of orders of reference given to committees. As noted by Senator Murray, some orders of reference are very broad and give committees a great deal of latitude, while others are more narrowly focused.

For example, the Foreign Affairs Committee has an order of reference authorizing it to “examine such issues as may arise from time to time relating to foreign relations generally” — a very broad order of reference. Others, such as the order of reference to the Transport and Communications Committee to examine and report on the objectives, operation and governance of the Canadian Television Fund, are more specific.

[Translation]

In his intervention, Senator Murray asked me to reflect on “the extent to which the Senate wishes to keep its standing committees on a short leash.” While the senator raises an interesting issue, it is not a matter for me, as Speaker, to decide. Rather, it is a matter only the Senate can decide when it considers proposed orders of reference.

[The Hon. the Speaker]

[English]

In conclusion, debate on the motion may continue, but amendments relating to the reporting date and the name of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly should be moved to correct it.

THE SENATE

MOTION URGING GOVERNMENT TO TAKE LEADING ROLE IN REINVIGORATING NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Dallaire, seconded by the Honourable Senator Robichaud, P.C.:

That the Senate call on the Government of Canada to take a leading role in the reinvigoration of the urgent matter of nuclear disarmament in accordance with the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty* at the Preparatory Committee Meetings scheduled to convene April 30 to May 11, 2007 in Vienna which act as a prelude to the next Treaty Review Conference in 2010; and

That the Senate urge the Government of Canada to take a global leadership role in the campaign of eradicating the dire threat to humanity posed by nuclear weapons.
—(Honourable Senator Murray, P.C.)

Hon. Lowell Murray: Honourable senators, I shall take up where I left off on April 17. I thank Senator Dallaire, whose motion provides the occasion for us to reflect on recent circumstances that have brought us closer to nuclear destruction, not farther away from it. The increased threat is graphically illustrated, as Senator Dallaire reminded us, by the famous doomsday clock, which the atomic scientists advanced from 12 minutes to nuclear midnight, where it stood a while ago, to seven minutes, and then to five minutes in January of this year. The question that demands the attention of all who have political responsibility of any kind is how to turn the hands of that metaphorical clock back by changing the dangerous reality it represents.

Senator Dallaire told us that the nuclear non-proliferation regime established in 1970 is in danger. Action and inaction by signatories and non-signatories have eroded and weakened it. The review conference of 2005 failed. The next such review is scheduled for 2010. Meanwhile, the opportunity to reverse course, to restore the effectiveness and credibility of that treaty, comes next month at preparatory committee meetings in Vienna. I trust Canada will spare no effort to try to revive the process and save the treaty from a descent into irrelevance.

Senator Dallaire reminded us that, in the treaty, the issue of non-proliferation — non-nuclear countries obtaining nuclear weapons — is inextricably linked to that of nuclear disarmament, disarmament by states that presently have nuclear weapons. That element, disarmament, has waxed and waned over the years, but it seems to have achieved renewed prominence in the declaration made last January by the former United States cabinet secretaries George Shultz, Henry Kissinger and William Perry, with former

senator Sam Nunn. Those U.S. statesmen recommended a series of steps that need to be taken — “concrete stages,” they called them — to achieve the promise of the non-proliferation treaty. However, they acknowledge that none of these steps by themselves is adequate to the present danger. About 20 years ago, President Reagan and the Soviet Union’s Mr. Gorbachev had come to Reykjavik with the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons altogether. They had not succeeded; however, as the statement recalls, their vision “shocked experts in the doctrine of nuclear deterrence but galvanized the hopes of people around the world.” I believe I counted, in a three-page statement, eight times that Secretary Schultz and the others came back to this objective — “a world without nuclear weapons.”

• (1540)

I do not believe this was mere rhetoric on their part, nor does one have to read between the lines of their statement to understand why the ultimate objective of complete nuclear disarmament has now become much more immediate and pressing in their minds.

First, as they acknowledge, the fitful progress towards disarmament has left non-nuclear weapon states “increasingly sceptical” of the sincerity of the nuclear powers. I would add that it has probably made some of those non-nuclear states less hesitant to try to achieve their own strategic goals by going nuclear.

Second, when they refer to the Cold War deterrent strategy, they doubt whether the old Soviet-American “mutually assured destruction” factor can be replicated with an increasing number of potential nuclear enemies around the world without, as they say, “dramatically increasing the risk that nuclear weapons will be used.”

Third, they point out those new nuclear states “do not have the benefits of years of step-by-step safeguards put into effect during the Cold War to prevent nuclear accidents, misjudgments or unauthorized launches.” These former officials would know more than most of us about the false warnings and the dangerous incidents that, as Senator Dallaire said, have brought us so close to nuclear holocaust when the standoff essentially involved only two nations.

Fourth, non-state terrorist groups that might acquire nuclear weaponry “are conceptually outside the bounds of a deterrent strategy.”

The conclusion is that the various intermediate stages along the road, while necessary, are inadequate. We must be focused on the purpose and the objective — elimination of nuclear weapons.

It should also be clear to all of us that just as the danger is no longer primarily that of nuclear war between two superpowers, the remedy will not be found only in superpower negotiations. The leadership of the United States is, of course, vital. The leadership by example, and not just by resolution, of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, all of whom are nuclear weapon states, will be indispensable. However, as even the former U.S. officials recognize, it will take a worldwide consensus to achieve our objective. This is where Canada comes in. There is an opportunity

and a responsibility for Canada to take the lead in rescuing a process that is now bogged down.

As honourable senators know, we were the first nuclear-capable state to decide not to develop our nuclear weapons capacity, and we were the first to divest ourselves of the nuclear weapons we had acquired from the U.S. Meanwhile, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the late Honourable Howard Green placed arms control and disarmament at the centre of Canadian policy for the first time.

Mr. Green is properly remembered for his political leadership on the issue. Less conspicuous in the public media, now as then, was the research capacity and the technical expertise quickly assembled in our foreign service and defence establishment, initially under General E.L.M. Burns as Disarmament Advisor to the Canadian Government. These experts provided the technical and institutional support and much intellectual energy, not just for their own minister and government, but also for the multilateral negotiations at the official and political levels where the other countries acknowledged and often deferred to their leadership.

The process that is limping into Vienna at the end of this month needs a real injection of both political and intellectual energy if it is to survive. I believe Canada is well placed to take the lead, and not just because of our reputation. Surely, we could assemble the expertise needed in the present circumstances — some of it is probably to be found within the government now — and provide real value-added at the technical and official levels in the multilateral negotiations that must take place.

The essential element, of course, is political leadership, and here the timing is almost perfect for the present government. They have refurbished Canada’s relationship with the United States; they are modernizing and rebuilding our Armed Forces. All that is to their credit. At some considerable political risk to themselves, and at deadly risk to our serving soldiers, they have committed Canada to the NATO mission in Afghanistan. This is a government that can credibly take the lead in a renewed and concerted international effort to reduce reliance on nuclear weapons and eliminate them as a threat altogether. I suspect that much of the world community going into Vienna is waiting for someone to take the lead, and that Canada will not lack for allies, great and small, if our government stepped forward.

Nor will they lack support in Parliament and in the country. Both Houses of Parliament are represented in the Canadian chapter of the International Parliamentary Network for Nuclear Disarmament, which I commend to honourable senators as a very good forum for discussion and which I found to be also an excellent source of timely information on these issues.

[*Translation*]

I am convinced that a new government initiative to resuscitate the international nuclear disarmament process would be very welcomed in Canada.

Canadians know that the threat of nuclear destruction has increased in recent years, as nuclear technology has become more accessible throughout the world, nuclear ambition has become more prevalent among nations and security systems have become more diffused and therefore less effective.

Statesmen and experts who are concerned about the current danger contend that nothing less than a worldwide consensus will be required to overcome that threat. It is unthinkable that, in 2007, the international community could fail as it did at the 2005 conference. The multilateral negotiations leading to the 2010 conference are critical. The process is in need — and very urgently so — of a new momentum. Under these circumstances, where will the required leadership come from, if not from Canada?

Canada has proven itself time and again as a NATO member and a NORAD partner. The current government — and this is to its credit — is renewing and strengthening Canada's commitment under these alliances. Disarmament is just as important to Canadians, and the international situation provides a major opportunity to our country. While there is no consensus at the international negotiating table, such a consensus is very present among Canadians. It is up to the government to take the necessary initiative.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Would Senator Murray entertain a question?

Senator Murray: Of course.

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: I would like to thank the senator for this very eloquent and well-documented speech. As Senator Murray said, Canada is a country that has disposed of its nuclear weapons. However, as a NATO member, we have maintained the ability to deliver these systems through the use of aircraft, missiles, and artillery, even during the 1970s. Thus, when it comes to nuclear weapons, the issue is one of ethics, and perhaps even of a two-prong policy.

• (1550)

[English]

Instead of modernizing the nuclear arms fleets, if we start to eliminate them, the need for a missile defence system would go by the wayside; there would be no nuclear weapons or nuclear delivery systems.

Recently, our NATO ally, the U.K., signed a deal to spend \$40 billion over the next 20-odd years to upgrade its nuclear submarine capability and upgrade its Trident nuclear submarine capability.

Do you think that they know something that we do not if they feel that in this post-Cold War era they must do this upgrade? I could understand doing that type of upgrade for the circumpolar Arctic North; it might make sense for us to have nuclear powered submarines to travel under the ice. To upgrade nuclear delivery submarines to the new generation seems illogical. Are we going down the wrong road or are they smoking something we do not know about?

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Honourable Senator Murray, before you answer the question, you will have to ask for more time.

Is it agreed, honourable senators?

[Senator Murray]

Hon. David Tkachuk (Acting Deputy Leader of the Government): Five minutes.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: You have five minutes, Senator Murray.

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, the last thing I would want to do is to be unkind to the British, but I am aware of the intentions announced by their government on this matter.

To put it mildly, there is an inconsistency — and not only an inconsistency, but also a contradiction — between the commitment of most NATO members to the objective of nuclear disarmament, on the one hand, and their inclusion of nuclear capacity as part of their strategy, on the other.

I do not understand why the British are doing what they are doing. If I were really being unkind, I would say that it is something in the nature of a status symbol that they are seeking.

On motion of Senator Tardif, debate adjourned.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Tardif calling the attention of the Senate to questions concerning post-secondary education in Canada.
—(Honourable Senator Callbeck)

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak on the inquiry of Senator Tardif regarding the state of post-secondary education in Canada.

First, I want to thank the honourable senator for initiating this inquiry on a subject that is also of great importance to me. I want to thank Senators Trenholme Counsell, Segal, Losier-Cool and Moore, who have spoken on this inquiry. Today, I would like to further that debate and discuss the issue of broadening access to post-secondary education.

Senator Tardif reminded us that we must aim higher than our current post-secondary attainment of 44 per cent if we are to compete on the global stage with countries such as the United States, India and China. Today, we are told that 73 per cent of new jobs in our knowledge-based economy will require post-secondary education. That means that three out of four new jobs will require post-secondary education. With Canada's post-secondary attainment rate for young Canadians aged 25-34 at only 53 per cent, that means that we have a gap of 20 per cent between our current post-secondary attainment rate in that age group and the post-secondary attainment rate.

If that is not enough, certainly other numbers should alarm us. Canada's population will shift in the next decade. By 2026, there will be 300,000 fewer young adults, which means that unless we increase participation substantially, the hallways of our colleges and universities will echo for lack of students and we will have gaps in our labour market. There will not be enough graduates to fill the high-skilled jobs created by the knowledge economy or left

vacant by retiring baby boomers. Remember, honourable senators, within 20 years it is expected that retirees will outnumber new workers four to three.

According to the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation, 30 per cent of 18-20 year olds in 2001 were enrolled in or had completed university; 35 per cent were in college. That leaves 35 per cent of young Canadians on the outside looking in. We know who some of these young Canadians are — some are Canada's Aboriginal people. Fifty-eight per cent of our Aboriginal youth living on reserve do not even finish high school. Some are youth from low-income families. Less than one half of students from families whose income is below \$25,000 participate in post-secondary education.

In Canada today, most students or potential students are from middle- and high-income families. Post-secondary participation for children with higher annual family incomes — that is, over \$50,000 — range from 63 per cent to 77 per cent. More than 80 per cent of children whose parents attended university will attend university themselves. They are students who come from families where going to college or university is a family tradition; where going to college or university is the last step before adulthood. Children growing up in these families do not hear the words, "if you go to university." They hear, "when you go to university."

Canada's challenge is to increase the number of young Canadians who hear these words. To do that, we need to make some changes. We have to make post-secondary education attractive for more than just middle- or high-income Canadians. We have to increase participation by Aboriginal people, youth from low-income families, people whose families have no history of higher education, and youth from rural Canada.

We have to show young Canadians that post-secondary education is an option. We have to elevate their educational ambitions. We need to make higher education a tradition for more families and a possibility for all families. As Senator Trenholme Counsell stated, we must do more to create an environment where each young Canadian can contribute to the very best of his or her potential.

How do we do this? The most obvious first step is to make post-secondary education more affordable.

Unfortunately, this is not what is happening today. In 2006-07, the average tuition and fees for an undergraduate university student is \$4,347. Compare this amount to 1990-91, when it was \$1,464. This amount of \$4,347 does not include many other costs associated with post-secondary education. Students have to live. They have to eat. They have to buy books. These costs are not trivial and they must be taken into account.

The average student debt today is more than \$22,000. According to Statistics Canada, even while taking inflation into account, bachelor degree graduates from the class of 2000 owed on average 76 per cent more than graduates from 1990. Student debt is certainly continuing to increase.

Let us be clear. The federal government is certainly doing a lot. In 2004-05 the federal government spent more than \$12 billion on post-secondary education and training, which was an increase of

60 per cent from 1997-98. The federal government has also introduced tax measures to help or encourage post-secondary education.

• (1600)

The Department of Finance projected that the use of these types of education tax measures in 2005 would total more than \$1.5 billion, which was up 92 per cent from 1998. We are making investments, and these are essential, but they are not enough. While it is true that post-secondary education is the responsibility of the provinces, all Canadians benefit from an educated and competitive workforce. Even if the specific action is provincial in jurisdiction, the vision should be pan-Canadian.

Following World War II, the Veterans Rehabilitation Act served as a national approach to meet the educational needs of returning veterans. We provided support to students to cover tuition and living expenses. They received support as long as they made satisfactory progress, and graduated with an education or trade and virtually no debt.

The post-war years were years of great prosperity in Canada. We had a large workforce that made Canada a world leader. This example clearly illustrates the national benefits of investment in post-secondary education.

I am not advocating free tuition, but I do think we need to provide more assistance based on need and ability. I believe we can increase accessibility by keeping things simple and streamlining options and information so that potential students feel confident they will get the support they need.

Our goal must be to ensure that the ability to learn, and not the ability to pay, is a deciding factor for post-secondary education.

In his remarks, Senator Segal spoke about income contingent repayment, which is a recommendation from the Royal Commission in Ontario. This plan would enable youth to take courses without paying tuition prior to enrolment. Repayment would begin after university, through the income tax system, based on the ability to pay. I realize there are many pros and cons to this approach, but certainly it is an idea worth exploring.

Investments in education are blue chip investments. Governments get a good return on their education dollars. University graduates who work full time typically earn \$1 million more over the course of their careers than people with a high school education. College graduates take home \$3.7 billion more every year than they would if they stopped after high school.

Indeed, because of this, post-secondary graduates contribute much to this country's tax base, which funds our social and other government programs. People with post-secondary education have a better quality of life, are healthier and are employed in higher paying, more fulfilling jobs.

It is clear that higher education pays off for graduates and everyone else. Canadians who attended college save us an estimated \$343.7 million per year in social services they do not need to use.

While working to make post-secondary education less expensive, we also need to change the culture we have created around post-secondary education. We still tend to equate

post-secondary education with going to university, and university is something for the middle or high income groups, although this thinking has begun to shift in recent years.

In today's job market, post-secondary education has clearly become essential. It should also be noted that when our economy demands that three out of four workers need a post-secondary education, we are not just talking about universities, we are talking about colleges. I think colleges have a greater role to play in providing a practical education; that is, post-secondary options that are not entirely academic.

Colleges are especially important in light of the fact that over the next 20 years, skilled tradespeople will be desperately needed. These post-secondary institutions will certainly have an important role to play as we move towards making post-secondary education more inclusive.

Senator Losier-Cool has already spoken about the success of New Brunswick community colleges, about which I agree completely, because I had the privilege of teaching business administration in the community college of Saint John in the 1960s.

Speaking of success, I want to mention the many achievements of post-secondary institutions in my home province of Prince Edward Island. Holland College is making a tremendous contribution to the province's economy by producing highly skilled workers and tradespeople whom we need now and in the future.

The University of Prince Edward Island is also expanding, making great strides to recruit more faculty members, improve campus facilities and create more research opportunities. UPEI achieved the number five spot in *Maclean's* undergraduate university rankings last November, making great progress up the ladder since being ranked eighteenth in 2000.

I want to point out that not only are UPEI and Holland College achieving success individually, but they also collaborate in programs such as its new Bachelor of Education Degree in Human Resource Development, which prepares students to teach in the field of adult education.

I believe that colleges and universities need to collaborate more. Credits earned at college can be applied to university. This initiative is one way to decrease the cost and the risk of failure for students who are forging a new tradition for themselves and for their families.

We also need to look at distance education options so we can take advantage of our computer age and use information technology as an educational tool. This could particularly benefit young people in rural areas.

Senator Tardif has proposed that the Senate establish a subcommittee to explore some of these issues of post-secondary education in greater depth. I support her initiative, as I feel that our post-secondary education system is critical to the future success of Canada. I urge all honourable senators to do the same for the sake of post-secondary education and Canada's future.

On motion of Senator Hubley, debate adjourned.

[Senator Callbeck]

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY PERMISSIBILITY OF SENATORS' STAFF INQUIRING INTO THE TRAVELLING DETAILS OF OTHER SENATORS—MOTION IN AMENDMENT— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Banks, seconded by the Honourable Senator Moore:

That the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration be directed to examine and determine, in light of recent discussions and in light of present Rules, procedures, practices and conventions of the Senate, whether it is appropriate or permissible that persons working in the offices of senators, including senators who are Ministers of the Crown, should obtain or attempt to obtain from hotels used by senators conducting business properly authorized by the Senate, detailed breakdowns including lunches or other costs included in hotel invoices, and including any and all sundry costs associated with the stay; and

That the Committee be directed to report its determination to the Senate no later than Thursday, December 7, 2006;

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Comeau, seconded by the Honourable Senator Stratton, that the motion be amended by deleting the word "and" at the end of the first paragraph and by adding the following paragraph immediately thereafter:

"That the Committee be directed to take into consideration whether it would be appropriate or permissible for persons working in the offices of Senators to obtain from hotels replacement receipts for the Senator in whose office they work should the originals be misplaced or be otherwise unavailable; and".—(*Honourable Senator Day*)

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, this item is showing the fourteenth day on the Order Paper and it will drop off after the fifteenth day. It is a motion that I would like to speak on, and I would also like to consider the amendment that has been proposed by Senator Comeau and the impact of that on the basic motion.

Unfortunately, honourable senators, I am not prepared to proceed today and I will be away on Senate business tomorrow. Therefore, I respectfully request the adjournment of this matter in my name for the remainder of my time.

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

On motion of Senator Day, debate adjourned.

• (1610)

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE CONTINUED DIALOGUE BETWEEN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND THE DALAI LAMA—SPEAKER'S RULING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Di Nino, seconded by the Honourable Senator Andreychuk:

That the Senate urge the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama, notwithstanding their differences on Tibet's historical relationship with China, to continue their dialogue in a forward-looking manner that will lead to pragmatic solutions that respect the Chinese constitutional framework, the territorial integrity of China and fulfill the aspirations of the Tibetan people for a unified and genuinely autonomous Tibet.—(*Speaker's Ruling*)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the item under "Motions" of Senator Di Nino, that we have gone by, is standing in the name of the Speaker and I am prepared to rule on that item now.

On Tuesday, March 27, 2007, while the Speaker *pro tempore* was in the chair, the order was called for resuming debate on the motion urging the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama to enter into dialogue about the future of Tibet. Senator Cools then rose on a point of order about the form or acceptability of the motion. She emphasized that she was not speaking to the motion itself. She suggested that the motion was improper because "the Senate cannot directly communicate with or address a foreign sovereign." Communications with a foreign government, she suggested, should be from the Canadian Government and not from the Senate.

Senator Cools quoted approvingly a motion adopted by the House of Commons on February 15, 2007, suggesting that it offered a more appropriate model to follow. That motion stated that the Government of Canada should, in the opinion of the Commons, urge the Government of China and the representatives of the Tibetan Government in exile to continue dialogue. Senator Cools suggested that a motion of this type is in keeping with the "lawful and appropriate mode of proceeding," since it does not speak directly to the Government of China, but, rather, asks that the Government of Canada speak to it.

In making her case, Senator Cools made reference to *Erskine May's Treatise on The Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament*. To quote the most recent version, the 23rd edition, at pages 712 and 713:

Addresses have comprised every matter of foreign or domestic policy; the administration of justice; the expression of congratulation or condolence . . . ; and, in short, representations upon all points connected with the government and welfare of the country; but they ought not to be represented to any bill in either House of Parliament.

This indicates that, in the United Kingdom, addresses have been used to communicate formally with the Crown.

[*Translation*]

Upon close reading, however, it will be noted that the citation does not clearly state that an Address is the only parliamentary vehicle whereby a House can make known its views on one of these classes of topics. The quote makes clear that they are a legitimate tool, but does not make it clear that Addresses are the only option available.

[*English*]

Motions of this type are not frequent in the Canadian Parliament, but a few can be found. On September 20, 1983, the Senate passed a motion demanding that the Soviet government provide a full explanation of the unwarranted August 31, 1983 attack on a Korean Airlines passenger flight and cooperate with the investigation into the matter. In this case, the motion called upon the Speaker to convey the resolution to Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. There had been leave to put the motion, since no notice had been given.

Similar motions have also been adopted occasionally in the House of Commons. Instances occurred on September 30, 1998; December 10, 1998; October 10, 2002; and October 1, 2003. These motions were adopted after unanimous consent and with one exception without debate.

[*Translation*]

In the United Kingdom House of Commons, motions urging action by foreign governments frequently appear on the *Notice Paper* as Early Day Motions, for which no day has been fixed. These motions are tabled by backbenchers to draw attention to some matter of concern, typically without any expectation of debate, although it does appear that they are subject to review to ensure their acceptability. As noted at page 390 of *Erskine May*, "[a] notice which is wholly out of order may be withheld from publication on the Notice Paper."

[*English*]

Turning to the specific motion in question, no direct consequences seem to flow from it. It only provides an expression of the Senate's view. The motion does not require that its content be communicated to anyone and it does not require action or follow-up. As senators know, there is a general preference in the Senate to allow debate on a motion or an inquiry unless it is clearly out of order. Both Canadian and U.K. practice suggest that there is sufficient flexibility to allow for motions of the kind proposed by Senator Di Nino. Of course, a motion framed in the way Senator Cools suggested would also be in order, and would avoid the concerns she raised.

In conclusion, the motion of Senator Di Nino is in order and debate on it may continue.

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino: Honourable senators, first, I would like to thank Your Honour for your ruling and for reminding all of us that the motion intends to add some moral or symbolic support to finding a resolution to a long-standing injustice. The motion is

meant to be neutral, non-confrontational and helpful to the process. However, in the spirit of cooperation and respect for our colleagues —

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, that comment might be best presented tomorrow, when we get to that item on the Orders of the Day.

Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Di Nino: Thank you, Your Honour. We will do it tomorrow.

The Senate adjourned until Wednesday, April 25, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.

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