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THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA
SPEAKER

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THE SENATE

Thursday, March 26, 2009

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

[Translation]

Prayers.

I know how devoted Paul is to the Senate and how proud he is of this institution.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

[English]

MR. PAUL C. BÉLISLE

CLERK OF THE SENATE AND CLERK
OF THE PARLIAMENTS

I ask honourable senators to join me in showing our appreciation to Mr. Bélisle on completing 15 years of service as Clerk of the Senate and Clerk of the Parliaments and to wish him well as he continues to lead the Senate administration.

Hon. George J. Furey: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to our Clerk, Mr. Paul Bélisle, who, 15 years ago, took on the many challenges that come with the position of Clerk of the Senate and Clerk of the Parliaments. It has been quite a career for a young man who first came to the Senate as a page in 1971. In fact, Paul is one of the longest-serving employees of the Senate with 38 years under his belt.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

• (1340)

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, I should like to say a few words about Mr. Bélisle's fifteenth anniversary on behalf of our side.

While a student, he was also a messenger before joining the Committees Directorate first as a clerk and then as associate director. He served as clerk to many standing committees and some notable special joint committees, such as the committees on the Canadian Constitution, Senate reform and Canada's international affairs.

Your Honour and honourable senators, Mr. Bélisle started his career in this place in 1971, when he served as a page while attending university. Indeed, he has been around the Senate longer than any of us.

[Translation]

Mr. Bélisle has worked under four Speakers: Roméo Leblanc, Gildas Molgat, Daniel Hays and, of course, our current Speaker, Senator Noël Kinsella.

To help pay his way through university, he worked as one of our night messengers. He then became a committee clerk while attending law school. A few years later, he continued to serve as a committee clerk and took on additional responsibilities as the Associate Director of Committees and Private Legislation.

[English]

Paul Bélisle has also given good counsel and advice to several iterations of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration. The chairs and deputy chairs with whom he has worked include such present and former honourable senators as Senators Hastings, Kenny, Rompkey, Kroft, Bacon, Di Nino, Nolin, DeWare, Atkins, Roberston, Keon, Stratton and Tkachuk. I am privileged to be part of such august company.

His remarkable career has also included positions as Executive Secretary of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association; Executive Secretary Treasurer of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Canadian region; and membership on the Editorial Board of the *Canadian Parliamentary Review*.

Honourable senators, Mr. Bélisle works tirelessly in building and directing an administration that is both competent and professional. I can confirm his commitment to the highest standards of public service, accountability and transparency.

Currently, Mr. Bélisle is a member of the Quebec bar, the Association of Clerks-at-the-Table in Canada, the Society of Clerks-at-the-Table in Commonwealth Parliaments, the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments and l'Association des secrétaires généraux des Parlements francophones.

[Translation]

On behalf of the committee, I would like to congratulate and thank Mr. Bélisle.

Honourable senators, one can judge the character of a person by those he hires. Over the years, as a committee chair and deputy chair, I worked with some of the very talented people that Mr. Bélisle brought to the Senate, including, to name a few, Till Heyde, Gérald Lafrenière, Denis Robert and many others.

[English]

As Chair of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, I extend my congratulations and thanks to Mr. Bélisle for his unwavering dedication to the well-being of the Senate, for his watchful eye over all of our administrative operations and for his attentive stewardship of the resources we have entrusted to him.

Speaking to the Senate 15 years ago on the appointment of Mr. Bélisle, the then Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable John Lynch-Staunton, reminded us that:

Not many who are summoned to the Senate arrive with anything more than a casual knowledge of the duties and responsibilities, and indeed the privileges shared by these

gowned officers of the Senate. Without them, we quickly find that we cannot be sworn in and we cannot make the required attestation. When in session, we rely more often than not on their so subtle signals to know when to sit, when to stand, when to speak, and more subtly, when to be quiet.

Mr. Bélisle's importance to this chamber, its committees and beyond cannot be understated. He is the key to the smooth operation of the Senate, both as a legislative body and as an entity with more than 400 employees.

Honourable senators, two weeks ago Mr. Bélisle spoke the following words to our new pages at their swearing-in ceremony:

Many years ago — I will not tell you how many — I was given the same unique opportunity to learn about our parliamentary institutions and processes. At that time, I knew it would be a significant challenge in my young life. But I never imagined how the experience would chart the course of my career by reinforcing my belief in the importance of public service.

Mr. Bélisle, we thank you for the past 15 years as Clerk of the Senate and Clerk of the Parliaments, for the advice you render every day at the table and for your work ensuring that this place runs properly.

We thank you as well for your dedication to the Senate in the many years prior to your becoming our Clerk, for your work on behalf of the Senate with Canadian and international parliamentary associations and, most importantly, as you put it yourself, for your belief in the importance of public service.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

AGENT ORANGE

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, the term "Agent Orange" became almost a household expression in Canada during the Vietnam War. Honourable senators will know that Agent Orange is a toxic defoliant used by the United States military. However, many of us did not know and do not know that the U.S. military was using Agent Orange at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown in New Brunswick during the 1960s.

Agent Orange contains a chemical called dioxin, a known carcinogen that has been linked to various types of cancer. Scientific testing in New Brunswick into this matter has not been consistent.

My main focus today is not to dissect this matter from a scientific standpoint but from a human standpoint. The fact is that during the 1960s, soldiers, their families and civilian employees at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, as well as civilians living in the neighbourhood, were all exposed unknowingly to Agent Orange.

On September 12, 2007, the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Greg Thompson, announced the government's plan for payments to certain individuals who had been exposed to Agent Orange. An amount of \$96.5 million was set aside for payments of \$20,000

each to eligible military and civilian personnel. The government has decided that "eligible" means that the applicant must be living and diagnosed with, at least one of 12 diseases identified by the U.S. Institute of Medicine. Furthermore, the applicant must have been living on the base or within a five-kilometre radius during the summers of 1966 and 1967. If the person died from cancer, the spouse or caregiver would be entitled to claim in their stead.

• (1345)

However, Minister Thompson announced that the program would be effective only after February 6, 2006 — the day that the Harper government took office. Honourable senators, to be eligible, veterans or civilians would have to be living on or after February 6, 2006. If they died before the Harper government took office, the caregiver would not be eligible for payment.

Military Widows on a War Path is a group founded in New Brunswick that is fighting to correct the inequities of the Harper government. The members are widows whose husbands were confirmed to have been living at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown during the time of spraying and have the medical documentation proving that they were negatively affected by the dioxins in Agent Orange. Most of the members of Military Widows on a War Path have applied for the *ex gratia* payments but have been denied on the grounds that their husbands died before the cut-off date of February 6, 2006. They argue that the surviving spouse of a serviceman who died before February 6, 2006, is as entitled to payment as a surviving spouse of a serviceman who died after February 6, 2006, all else being equal.

Another qualifying date looms, honourable senators. The deadline for the application process under this program expires on April 1, 2009, which is next week. As of the end of February, Veterans Affairs Canada had approved \$41 million in payments. That figure is less than one half of the allotted amount. Once the program has ended, the unused money will return to general revenue and not to Veterans Affairs Canada. If there are funds left in the program, why not relax the restrictions? Why are the only eligible years 1966 and 1967 when the spraying of Agent Orange took place at other times as well? Why is it only a five-kilometre radius from the base? Why are only 12 diseases addressed, as outlined by the U.S. Institute of Medicine? Why must a soldier who was serving in 1966-67 have been alive on February 6, 2006, when the Harper government was elected?

In a pre-election speech in Woodstock, New Brunswick, on January 11, 2006, Mr. Harper made a promise. He said:

A Conservative government will stand up for full and fair compensation for persons exposed to defoliant spraying during the period from 1956 to 1984.

Honourable senators, this promise has not been kept. We have seen the Main Estimates for this fiscal year and there is no provision to continue this program. I can assure honourable senators that despite these artificial deadlines set by the Harper government, the damage done to civilians and to military personnel in New Brunswick by Agent Orange is an issue that will not disappear.

HEALTH CARE

Hon. Wilbert J. Keon: Honourable senators, I want to raise two issues today in this chamber. The first is the high cost of our health care system and how a healthy lifestyle focusing on prevention can help to alleviate those costs. The second is to draw the attention of honourable senators to preventive action they can take today.

In Canada, total health care expenditures for 2008 were \$172 billion, or over \$5,000 per person, which, by any account, is a significant amount of money. What is shocking is that much of this money is wasted. Half the diseases people contract that drive them to be consumers of the health care system are preventable. By preventing disease, we not only improve Canadians' health but we also ease a significant portion of the burden on our health care delivery system.

We must also understand that the health care delivery system is responsible for only 25 per cent of health outcomes, so we must concentrate on the other determinants. Knowledge is the key to health — knowing the determinants of health and adopting a healthy lifestyle allows one to live in a state of well-being and productivity. This action includes getting a regular health assessment.

• (1350)

The second issue I want to raise is preventive action one can take now.

On Tuesday, March 31, the Canadian Medical Association is hosting a complimentary cardiovascular and diabetic risk assessment in room 601 of the Parliamentary Restaurant. The examination is very quick; the results are available in 10 minutes.

Last year, over 90 parliamentarians participated in this event. I encourage all honourable senators to find a few minutes to take the assessment. By your example, you will demonstrate to all Canadians the importance of prevention in caring for your health and assuming responsibility for your own health, well-being and productivity.

QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I am pleased to be working with 18 new colleagues since their appointment to this place in December 2008. However, I am startled by the remarks made by Senator Greene, who, in his maiden speech of February 10, 2009 — only his eighth sitting day — questioned the validity of Question Period in this place.

Further to his comments, Senator Brown jumped on the bandwagon and described Question Period as “of little value” and “of no real purpose.”

I am very disappointed to hear these kinds of remarks from Senator Brown who, in his earlier days in this place, called for the accountability of the Senate and the responsibility of all senators to work for the good of the public interest.

Honourable senators, Question Period has been a fundamental exercise of democracy in this place since 1968. The main purpose of Question Period is to hold the government accountable on

public affairs. The opposition has a responsibility to scrutinize the government's agenda and to occasionally highlight important issues that may go under the radar in the media. Canadians count on us to ensure that the Conservative government remains accountable.

Just as the opposition has the responsibility to ask questions to the government, the Leader of the Government in the Senate, a minister and a member of cabinet, has a responsibility to provide answers to Canadians.

Yet, it appears that Senator Brown is uncomfortable with his leader being questioned and would rather have partisan cheerleaders reciting compliments rather than developing a stronger nation by listening to and acting on the critical insight that the opposition is offering.

The issue of whether the daily Question Period in the Senate has a public audience is irrelevant. Question Period occurs in both chambers regardless of the attendance in the galleries. Is Senator Brown suggesting that Question Period should be cancelled when there is low attendance in our galleries? That is absurd.

The transcripts from each Question Period are put on record, printed and are accessible online to anyone in less than 24 hours. Canadians not only deserve to know how the government responds to important issues, but they have the right to know.

Honourable senators, as Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I commend our Liberal senators for their outstanding efforts in ensuring that this Harper government remains accountable to all Canadians.

Senator Comeau: Bring back Mercer as leader.

Senator Tardif: The unthinkable abolition of Question Period would certainly decrease the transparency of this already non-transparent government.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

THE LATE JOSEPH ZATZMAN

Hon. Fred Dickson: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to Joseph Zatzman, who will be inducted this June into the Junior Achievement of Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame, an initiative that promotes the activities of Junior Achievement of Nova Scotia and celebrates our province's business leaders.

A member of the Order of Canada and a fellow Nova Scotian, Mr. Zatzman's business and voluntary service career has spanned seven decades. He began in 1934 with a small grocery shop called the Community Groceteria. By the 1940s, he built his first apartment building through Maplehurst Properties, which was to become one of the largest property owners and management companies in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Zatzman served as Dartmouth's mayor from 1964 to 1967, where he saw the development of the Burnside Industrial Park. Burnside is now Atlantic Canada's largest industrial park and is

home to 1,300 enterprises and 15,000 employees. He went on to chair the Nova Scotia Resources Development Board and, in the 1980s, headed up the Nova Scotia Business Development Corporation.

• (1355)

Mr. Zatzman was also chair of the United Jewish Appeal, the Israeli Bond Committee and the Regional Authority. In addition, he was a member of the advisory board of Royal Trust, a governor of Saint Mary's University and served as director of the Victorian Order of Nurses and of Kiwanis.

Honourable senators, Mr. Zatzman's contribution to my region of the country was tremendous. While he passed away in December 2007, his legacy will live on for decades to come.

I congratulate his family for this honour from Junior Achievement of Nova Scotia.

ORGANIZED CRIME

Hon. Yonah Martin: Honourable senators, last week I returned to Abbotsford, a city in the Fraser Valley, 45 minutes east of Vancouver, British Columbia, a place that is dear to me, in which I spent the first 14 years of my teaching career. Abbotsford is also a place where the oldest of the now infamous Bacon brothers had been one of my students.

In Abbotsford, at MP Ed Fast's office, I met a young Canadian who inspired me to make this statement today. I was moved not only by his sparkling charm and good looks. Kenton O'Donnell is only 11 years old, and his mother, as we discovered at this meeting, is also one of my former students. At present, the O'Donnells live across the street from the Bacon family home, in which two brothers still reside.

What compels me to make this statement, honourable senators, is what I learned from my face-to-face meeting with 11-year-old Kenton O'Donnell. He spoke from the heart and believes that one person can make a difference by simply speaking the truth.

In a speech to the staff and students of Clayburn Middle School, Kenton described his constant fear of living so close to two of British Columbia's most notorious gang targets, the Bacon brothers.

Residents of Kenton's neighbourhood have witnessed numerous shooting incidents aimed at the Bacon brothers, and Kenton remembers the sound of gunshots during one of these events. Every day, he rushes home from school in fear as he passes the Bacon brothers' home, always on the lookout for strange vehicles. It is not safe to play outside, and most of his friends are not allowed to play at his house anymore, as parents fear for the safety of their children.

Honourable senators, Kenton O'Donnell is but one Canadian who has become a prisoner in his own home, living in fear of going outdoors due to the threat of gang violence in his community.

[Translation]

As parliamentarians, it is our duty to give those responsible for law enforcement the tools they need to protect our communities, our families and our citizens. We must take decisive, responsible action to enhance safety in our streets and neighbourhoods.

[English]

New crime legislation, currently in the other place, will provide law enforcement officials and the justice system with better means to address serious organized crime and gang issues, including gang murders and drive-by shootings, while providing additional protection for police and peace officers.

[Translation]

The activities of organized crime and gangs are not confined to cities. They threaten all Canadians in all regions of our country.

[English]

Honourable senators, 11-year-old Kenton O'Donnell was brave enough to speak out against the violence in his community. In allowing the media to print his story, his parents hope to encourage parents to speak honestly to their children to prevent them from ever engaging in destructive criminal activities.

It is now our turn to remember Kenton's courage and everyday struggle and work as parliamentarians to pass tougher laws to protect the safety and security of law-abiding citizens. Just as it requires a collective effort to address the needs of hard-working Canadians during these economically challenging times, only our collective will can and must reclaim our streets, our communities and our lives.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before proceeding, I draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of two honourable senators from the Senate of Mexico, Senator Luis Alberto Villarreal García and Senator Eloy Cantú Segovia.

Welcome to the Senate of Canada.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PLANS AND PRIORITIES, 2009-10

REPORTS TABLED

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Reports on Plans and Priorities, Main Estimates, 2009-10.

• (1400)

[English]

SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION TO MEXICO,
JANUARY 11-17, 2009—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Noël A. Kinsella: Honourable senators, I ask leave of the Senate to table a document entitled: “Report of the Visit of the Honourable Noël A. Kinsella Speaker of the Senate and a Parliamentary Delegation to Mexico,” January 11 to 17, 2009.

Is permission granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

[Translation]

TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS ACT, 1992

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-9, An Act to amend the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992.

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY FORUM OF THE AMERICAS

CONGRESS “TOWARDS A GENDER-SENSITIVE
LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT
IN THE AMERICAS”, NOVEMBER 19-22, 2008—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report from the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation of the Canadian Section of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA), concerning its participation in the congress entitled “Towards a Gender-Sensitive Legislative Agenda for Development in the Americas”, held in Bogota, Colombia, November 19 to 22, 2008.

MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
DECEMBER 17-19, 2008—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the eighteenth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas, held in Miami, U.S.A., December 17 to 19, 2008.

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO URGE GOVERNMENT TO
ENGAGE IN CONSULTATIONS ON SENATE REFORM

Hon. Hugh Segal: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Senate embrace the need to consult widely with Canadians to democratize the process of determining the composition and future of the Upper Chamber by urging the Government to:

- (a) invite all provincial and territorial governments in writing to assist immediately in the selection of Senators for appointment by democratic means, whether by holding elections to fill Senate vacancies that might occur in their province or territory or through some other means chosen by them;
- (b) institute a separate and specific national referendum on the future of the Senate, affording voters the chance to choose abolition, status quo, or an elected Upper Chamber; and
- (c) pursue the above initiatives independently of any legislation that it may introduce in this Parliament for reforming the existing term and method of appointment of Senators.

• (1405)

[English]

MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON
CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I move, seconded by the Honourable Senator Cowan:

That pursuant to Rule 85(2.1) of the *Rules of the Senate* the membership of the Standing Committee on Conflict of Interest for Senators be as follows:

The Honourable Senators Andreychuk; Angus; Carstairs, P.C.; Joyal, P.C.; and Robichaud, P.C.

(Pursuant to rule 85(2.1), the motion was deemed adopted.)

[Translation]

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL EXTRACTIVE SECTOR

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
STRATEGY—MARCH 2009 DOCUMENT TABLED

Leave having been given to revert to Tabling of Documents:

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a document entitled, *Building the Canadian Advantage: A Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy for the Canadian International Extractive Sector, March 2009*.

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

HERITAGE AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

CBC/RADIO-CANADA

Hon. Marie-P. Poulin: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Today, 800 employees targeted for termination at CBC/Radio-Canada will begin to learn their fate following yesterday's announcement of severe cutbacks in staffing, program services and the proposed sale of assets to raise much-needed cash. Most certainly, these are anxious days for the public broadcaster, which is in severe financial difficulty because of falling advertising revenue due to the worldwide economic meltdown.

Despite the corporation's difficulties, the government persists in refusing a lifeline through bridge financing that would allow CBC/Radio-Canada to weather the recession.

Will the Leader of the Government explain to Canadians why, with billions of dollars set aside for emergency funding of infrastructure, it is allowing local programming to be gutted? Why is this government allowing a unique institution that preserves and promotes our national identity to erode?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): I thank the honourable senator for the question. Our government acknowledges the challenges facing the broadcasting industry, the private sector and the CBC. We cannot deny that we are living in difficult economic conditions, and the CBC has had to make tough decisions because of these conditions.

I hasten to add, honourable senators, that the CBC receives over \$1.1 billion of Canadian taxpayers' money. This is the highest funding package ever given to the CBC. The government is quite certain that after following the long-term strategic priorities approved by their board of directors, the CBC will emerge from this situation in a strengthened position.

[Translation]

Senator Poulin: Honourable senators, the government's indifference shows a contempt for Canadians. So many Canadians depend on our public broadcaster for news, especially francophone minorities.

Let me give you one small example, honourable senators. Ontario will be very hard hit. As the senator representing northern Ontario, I would like to tell you that the CBC announced this morning that the only Ontario program on the French radio network, *L'Ontario aujourd'hui*, which runs for 30 minutes daily, will be cancelled. There are 1.3 million French speakers in Ontario who have access to only one program a day, 30 minutes, and it will be cancelled.

Will the government guarantee Canada's francophone minorities that they will not be reduced to silence?

• (1410)

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I strongly disagree with Senator Poulin's characterization of the actions of the government.

We have had many meetings. The minister fully understands the situation in which the CBC and other broadcasters find themselves. As I mentioned earlier, we have provided stable funding to the CBC of over \$1 billion this year.

Minister Moore has had an open relationship with the CBC and we are confident — Senator Cordy can laugh, but Minister Moore has worked hard to deal with all these serious matters — that the CBC will be able to provide the service that Canadians expect in this difficult economy.

As the Prime Minister said yesterday, the government will monitor the decisions of the board closely to ensure that the CBC respects its mandate, which is to provide service for the whole country.

I suggest that Senator Poulin read the special Senate report on the CBC, overseen by her colleague Senator Fraser, in which it was suggested that the CBC return to its original mandate and move out of competition with private sector broadcasters.

Hon. Joan Fraser: Honourable senators, nowhere in that report did our committee or any member of the committee suggest that the mandate of the CBC should not be to provide service to official language minorities across this country, whether that be to francophones outside Quebec or anglophones inside Quebec.

I was modestly encouraged yesterday when I heard the Minister of Canadian Heritage say that the government would watch, as the leader has suggested, to ensure that the CBC, in this period of, arguably, unnecessarily grave crisis, continue to respect its mandate.

Will the leader convey to the minister the view of this chamber that a core part of that mandate is to preserve local programming for official language minorities across this country?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I never suggested that Senator Fraser's report made any recommendation whatsoever with regard to servicing Canadians in both our official languages. I said that in her report she suggested that the CBC go back to its original mandate and get out of the business of competing with the private sector. That is all I said.

The CBC was started under a Conservative government as an element of unity for the country. The government believes that the CBC has an important role to play in our regions and in our smaller centres but most particularly for our two official languages.

Returning to Senator Fraser's report, the question was whether the CBC should be in downtown Toronto and downtown Montreal competing with the private sector.

• (1415)

Senator Fraser: I am delighted to hear that the Leader of the Government actually paid attention to that report. We strongly recommended that CBC television should get out of the business of commercial advertising in both languages for its own sake and that of the private sector with which it competes for commercial revenue. Is the Leader of the Government suggesting that the Government of Canada has now accepted that recommendation?

Senator LeBreton: I am not suggesting anything of the sort. Honourable senators on the other side are the greatest at putting words in other people's mouths.

Senator Fraser: Thank you.

Senator LeBreton: The fact is that the government is very conscious of the situation with regard to the CBC, as they are with all people in the media, particularly in broadcasting. The CBC has the benefit of \$1.1 billion of taxpayers' money in order to operate. The CBC has a mandate to provide services across this country.

Minister Moore is an excellent minister, and the CBC and all of us should be thankful that we have a minister like him. If senators opposite have been listening to him, they would know that he was a broadcaster at one point and that he understands fully the complexities of the broadcasting industry, especially in this new age of information.

Obviously, the board of directors of the CBC had some tough decisions to make, as have all people in the broadcasting sector. I simply wish to reiterate that the government has every confidence in the CBC and its board of directors that they will come through this downturn and be in a position to provide the service to the citizens of this country that is required of them in either official language, according to their mandate.

Hon. Hugh Segal: Honourable senators, I wish to ask the Leader of the Government about an important principle that Senator Poulin's question underlines.

As I understand the question, Senator Poulin is asking whether the government would like to make decisions in the place of CBC management with respect to programming. I am troubled in that as someone who believes in the dispassionate freedom of the CBC and all journalistic organizations to make their own decisions, it is important that the Leader of the Government have an opportunity to share her view of the principle that was advanced no doubt in good faith by the Honourable Senator Poulin. What would that do to journalism and freedom in this country?

Senator LeBreton: The government has absolutely no interest in interfering with the direction that CBC's board of directors decides to take. The government has full confidence in the decisions of the board of directors to see the CBC through the difficult times faced by everyone across the spectrum.

I noticed in news reports today that certain officials at the CBC are speculating as to what they might do internally to deal with their program line-up, including one individual who suggested

that many more reruns would be aired. That is a decision of the CBC; it is not a decision in which the government will be involved, most particularly the minister responsible, the Minister of Heritage.

Senator Poulin: I do not think it is the intention of anyone to put words in anyone's mouth, so let us be clear and return to the global picture of an arm's-length, public national broadcaster.

The global picture also relates to a mandate clearly defined in the facilitating legislation. We realize today, and we probably began to realize a few years ago, that the funding does not permit the CBC to meet the enabling legislation. This situation began to grow a number of years ago and is the situation that we face today.

• (1420)

The leader said that Minister Moore was providing \$1.1 billion a year in stable funding to CBC/Radio-Canada. This is wonderful news because the CBC has been asking for stable funding for the last 15 years.

I ask the leader if this is an announcement of stable funding for the CBC.

Senator LeBreton: It is not an announcement, honourable senators. The government made a commitment to the CBC. It is neither Minister Moore, nor the government, but the taxpayer who provides the CBC with the \$1.1 billion per year.

Obviously, the Honourable Senator Poulin has had a relationship with the CBC and has been a member of a government. The CBC has faced difficulties before, but this government lived up to its commitment and provided the CBC with \$1.1 billion. We lived up to our promise.

As a Crown corporation, the CBC and its board of directors are responsible for the management of the CBC. The decisions they have to make are their decisions, especially in these difficult economic times. The entire broadcasting sector is experiencing difficulties because of the decrease in advertising dollars.

I would dare say, honourable senators, that \$1.1 billion is not a small amount of money for taxpayers to pay the CBC to provide a service to Canadians. The senator can correct me if I am wrong, but I have not heard one single person in the CBC complaining about the \$1.1 billion they have received.

Hon. Tommy Banks: Honourable senators, I wish to assuage Senator Segal's concerns by assuring him that no one on this side would confuse questions of the principle of bilingual broadcasting with journalistic choice. I hope the two things are not related in anyone's mind.

The leader suggested that she is in favour, as many of us on this side are and as reflected in the report of the committee then chaired by Senator Fraser, of the CBC getting out of the business of competing with commercial broadcasters. Then the leader said that the CBC should get out of downtown Toronto.

In my view, the services that the CBC ought to provide are those that either cannot or will not or are not provided by private broadcasters. Those audiences are not defined by geographical means; they are defined by means of interest.

Would the leader agree that any government, regardless of its political stripe, ought to provide the CBC with the opportunity of getting out of commercial competition with the networks? I hope the leader would agree that any government should let the private networks do those things which demonstrably they can but could not always do and provide the CBC with enough money to do what the Broadcasting Act requires it to do?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I referred to Senator Fraser's report in answer to a question. I did not say the government supported that report; I just made reference to the report.

The topic of competition has been mentioned in the public discourse in connection with the importance of the CBC, especially in Atlantic Canada, in the North and in areas where it is believed people rely on the CBC for access to good Canadian programming, content and regional news.

• (1425)

The question discussed by the public is obviously one of the reasons why the CBC is looking at their assets. The CBC will make this decision themselves about balancing the need for a broadly-based Canadian operation in the regions or broadcasting in downtown major metropolitan areas competing with private companies. That question is one they will have to decide themselves.

Senator Banks: Downtown Toronto is not a way to define a potential radio listening audience or television viewing audience, but I know the honourable senator did not mean it that way. Does the government believe that the CBC ought to get out of the business of competing in the commercial television market, as it is out of that business in the commercial radio market?

Second, with all due respect to everyone concerned, and I am glad to hear that Minister Moore was a broadcaster, has this government considered placing a broadcaster in charge of the CBC, because other governments previously have not?

Senator LeBreton: With all due respect, previous governments that I had some association with did just that. There are varying degrees of opinions as to whether that initiative was a success.

Senator Banks is right. He answered the question for me. I am not talking about the content of downtown Toronto, but there are major assets in downtown Toronto that obviously the CBC will have to make a decision about: whether they should allocate their resources in that way when they look at their mandate and the services they provide to Canadians. The CBC's board of directors is looking at all the options available and the government in no way has any intention of interfering with the decisions of that board.

With regard to the honourable senator's question, I already answered it. The government has made no comment whatsoever on whether the CBC should be in competition with the private sector. I made reference to that issue only because I wanted Senator Fraser to be aware that I had read her report and that some of the things they now acknowledge as difficulties were foreseen by Senator Fraser and her committee.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

LITERACY AND ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, my question is to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Nearly 15 per cent of Canadians are unable to understand the instructions on a bottle of Aspirin; roughly 27 per cent have great difficulty in reading more than the simplest sentences. Nine million Canadians have the lowest literacy skills, which affect their ability to find well-paying jobs, to lead healthy and prosperous lives and to contribute to the Canadian economy in the best way possible.

In the most recent budget, the government cut its funding for literacy and essential skills. Specifically in the budget, grants to local volunteer organizations who work with adult literacy and essential skills have been cut by 20 per cent. Why has the government cut these grants to the volunteer organizations?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, once again we are facing a situation where programs in place from many years ago have been replaced by other programs. We went through the same debate with Status of Women Canada. We did not cut the budget for Status of Women; we put the money directly into communities where it helps women.

• (1430)

We are committed to literacy and essential skills as a key part of the government's commitment to a competitive workforce. The Office of Literacy and Essential Skills of Human Resources and Skills Development invests \$45 million in the development of literacy and essential skills that Canadians need to work, to learn and to live productive lives. In January, the office issued two calls for proposals for projects that will help people improve their literacy skills so they are able to get jobs and participate more fully. The deadline for these requests for proposals was a week ago. I will have to get an update for Senator Callbeck as to what kind of uptake we had on those requests.

The government is also investing \$500 million per year in the new labour market agreements that support provincial and territorial efforts to address barriers to employment, including low literacy levels and essential skills. We also support projects to help newcomers to Canada strengthen their literacy and essential skills.

Many programs through the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, among others, teach English or French to newcomers to this country, and we will continue to work in this vein. There are many programs in government, but in the new labour market agreements of \$500 million a year hopefully there are programs that will go a long way to addressing this obviously serious issue. Although Senator Callbeck read some statistics, I am not sure of the basis of those statistics.

Senator Callbeck: Those statistics came right out of the budget. The minister can talk about the commitment to literacy and essential skills and replacing programs, but when I look at the budget, the total funding to volunteer organizations,

post-secondary institutions, professional organizations, the provinces and the territories has been cut. Craig Alexander, the deputy chief economist at TD Bank Financial Group, stated that the Canadian economy would enjoy a \$32 billion boost if literacy rates were improved by 1 per cent. At a time when the Canadian economy can use every boost it can get, I would think that this government would be increasing the amount of money spent on literacy rather than decreasing it.

Senator LeBreton: I dare say, honourable senators, that \$45 million and \$500 million are not small sums of money. There are many other literacy programs in many other departments. In the seniors' portfolio, through the New Horizons Program, we even have programs for financial literacy to educate people on how to defend themselves financially. These are specific programs.

As the honourable senator knows, many departments have programs contributing to literacy. As I said a moment ago, \$45 million in the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills at Human Resources and Skills Development, and \$500 million on the labour market agreements that support programs, including literacy, are not small sums of money. I hope that these programs will produce the results that they are designed to produce and improve literacy levels in this country.

INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

LITERACY AND ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. On the literacy issue, reports have shown that nearly one half of Quebecers lack the basic literacy skills required to compete in the global economy. In Nunavik, the situation is dire. More than 63 per cent of young people between 15 and 24 years of age do not attend school. That is double the Quebec average. Can the leader please tell us what the government is doing to ensure that young Inuit people have the literacy skills they need to fully participate in society?

I understand that in his announcement tomorrow, Minister Cannon may be talking about the Arctic. Will the minister have anything to say about literacy rates in that part of Quebec?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): I wish to thank the honourable senator for that question. I will not comment on what Minister Cannon may or may not say tomorrow. However, I would be more than happy to provide Senator Munson with a written response.

In the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, under our capable minister, Minister Strahl, there are many literacy, education and skills-training programs. I am aware of these programs because we have been dealing with them. I would be happy to provide a fulsome answer to the honourable senator's question.

LIFE EXPECTANCY IN NUNAVIK

Hon. Bill Rompkey: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate, which also concerns a serious situation in Nunavik in northern Quebec, which, as the minister knows, is the homeland of the northern Quebec Inuit.

According to Statistics Canada, the residents of the Nunavik have a lower life expectancy than anywhere else in the country. While the rest of the country has made gains in this regard, the descendants of the original Canadians in Nunavik are the only citizens to remain at 1970 levels. The average life expectancy there is 15 years shorter than the Canadian average. What is more significant, perhaps, is that it is 2.7 years shorter than any other Canadian of Inuit origin. This is a serious situation in Nunavik that needs to be addressed. What is needed is an increase in medical funding and support for northern medical workers, the lowering of the cost of nutritious foods and the reduction of overcrowded housing conditions in Nunavik. Will the minister intercede on behalf of the people in that part of the territory to address this serious situation?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): I thank the honourable senator for that question. I will take that question as notice. These are complex issues with regard to our northern and Aboriginal communities. Minister Strahl has worked diligently with many of the problems facing people living in these regions. I will take the question as notice and provide a written answer.

[Translation]

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, two delayed answers to oral questions raised in the Senate by Senator Mercer, on February 11, 2009, concerning transportation, the Canada-United States border strategy and the Windsor-Detroit corridor; and by Senator Tardif, on March 5, 2009, concerning official languages, the Language Rights Support Program.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CANADA-UNITED STATES BORDER STRATEGY

(Response to question raised by Hon. Terry M. Mercer on February 11, 2009)

Since 2001, the Government of Canada has been working in a Bi-national Partnership with the United States, Ontario and Michigan to develop an end-to-end border capacity solution that will best meet current and future mobility needs as well as provide an efficient and secure Windsor-Detroit Corridor. The development of additional border capacity is critical to support the economies of Canada and the United States.

The Bi-National Partnership has completed a comprehensive and coordinated Environmental Assessment on both sides of the river that is awaiting requisite governmental approvals; and the Bi-National Partnership is also negotiating the bridge governance and procurement regime to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the new crossing, preferably through a public-private partnership.

The environmental assessment process is fully compliant with the existing legislative requirements in both Canada and the United States (i.e., the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act* and the *U.S. National Environmental Policy Act*).

The government announced, on June 18, 2008, the environmentally and technically preferred location for the Canadian inspection plaza and the river crossing. The bridge and border inspection plaza will be located in the Brighton Beach industrial area of West Windsor. The technically preferred design of the new Ontario access road was announced on May 1, 2008.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation submitted the Final Environmental Assessment Report on December 31, 2008 to the Ontario Minister of the Environment for approval. The report provides an overview of the complete environmental assessment process, starting from the beginning of the process in February 2005. It provides a high-level discussion of each step in the process; and specific details regarding the environmental analysis. These technical documents include detailed analytical reports on issues such as air quality and noise assessment. Approval from the Ministry of the Environment is expected mid-2009.

On January 14, 2009, the United States Federal Highway Administration issued a Record of Decision, which is the final step in the United States environmental process that approves the selected alternative for the new border crossing system between Detroit and Windsor. The Selected Alternative is the crossing system composed of the United States border inspection plaza, the interchange tying into the existing I-75 highway network, and the bridge spanning the Detroit River.

Transport Canada continues to work with its Michigan and United States partners on the governance structure for the new bridge and customs plazas, including development of the legislation necessary in Michigan to proceed with the procurement phase of the project.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

FUNDING OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES SUPPORT PROGRAMS

(Response to question raised by Hon. Claudette Tardif on March 5, 2009)

There is no change in the Government of Canada's position with respect to the Language Rights Support Program (LRSP) or the Court Challenges Program (CCP).

Under the Language Rights Support Program, any case, whether initiated or not, that could have been subject to funding under the Court Challenges Program before September 25, 2006, can be subject to an application for funding under the new Program, no matter at what level it may be before the courts.

Any new applicants for funding after September 25, 2006 can only be considered under the Language Rights Support Program. The Language Rights Support Program should be in operation before the end of this calendar year (2009).

In terms of the Court Challenges Program, the Government is honouring its commitment to funding recipients that were approved by the Court Challenges Program before September 25, 2006. It has agreed to fund these recipients through all stages of appeal.

The Court Challenges Program is administered at arms-length from the Government of Canada by the Court Challenges Program of Canada. New funding commitments to new recipients stopped in 2006 (including new intervenors to pre September 25, 2006 cases) under the program. They were reminded of this requirement in February 2009.

[English]

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Your Honour, pursuant to rule 59(10), I rise today on a question of privilege on an important matter that I feel is obstructing my privileges as a senator.

I have not given notice under the alternate procedure for raising a question of privilege, as set out in rule 43, because this has been a developing matter throughout the course of the morning and could largely have been resolved before I rose had the government taken appropriate action.

My question of privilege has its genesis in the events that took place two weeks ago today, when the Senate stood together and passed Bill C-10, the budget implementation bill, in an expeditious manner.

To remind colleagues, we received the budget bill on Wednesday, March 4. In order to expedite its consideration, we provided our unanimous consent so that it could be given second reading and be sent to committee the next day.

The government advised us that they needed the Senate to complete its work on the bill by the end of March. The Liberal chair, Senator Day, and the Conservative deputy chair, Senator Gerstein, of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance agreed to a work plan that would ensure that would happen.

However, on Tuesday, March 10, the Minister of Finance appeared before the National Finance Committee and had one of his departmental officials disclose that buried in the 500-page bill was a clause that placed unemployed Canadians at increasing risk of losing their EI benefits every day that the legislation failed to pass.

As a result of that new information, the work plan that had been agreed to by both sides was shelved and Bill C-10 received Royal Assent two days later.

Two weeks ago today, I said:

We, on this side, will not oppose the swift passage of Bill C-10 but our motivation should not be misunderstood by anyone. Our allowance of swift passage is not because we believe this budget constitutes a coherent and effective action plan for the country. However, unfortunately, even the confused half-measures it contains are preferable to doing nothing, which was Mr. Harper's initial instinct, as we saw in that horrible economic statement in November.

• (1440)

This was not an easy decision, but it was a decision made together with my colleagues in a show of strength and solidarity by our caucus to ensure that the most vulnerable Canadians are able to receive at least some of the assistance they so desperately need. It is in this context that honourable senators will then understand my shock when it was brought to my attention that a federal government website claims that the Senate is dragging its heels and has not yet passed the budget implementation bill.

Some Hon. Senators: Shame.

Senator Cowan: On the website it says:

Many of the vital investments in Canada's Economic Action Plan are contained in the Budget Implementation Act, 2009.

This is the important part:

While the House of Commons has passed this legislation, the Senate must still approve the Act for it to become law. Senators must do their part and ensure quick passage of this vital legislation.

I am certain that all senators are interested to know where this astonishing statement is to be found. It can be found at actionplan.gc.ca, the federal government's official budget website.

Your Honour, I will state the obvious: This is a false statement. This Conservative government is misleading Canadians about the Senate and the important work done by all of its members, myself included.

The problem is compounded by the fact that many senators — and I am sure all of us, to a greater or lesser extent — have been receiving a great deal of correspondence concerning Bill C-10. My reply to those who write to me includes the following statement:

On March 12th, 2009, the Senate voted to pass Bill C-10 in order to help unemployed Canadians receive five extra weeks of employment insurance benefits. Hidden in the Conservative budget was a two week retro-active provision which provided for these benefits and which would not have been available to a great many workers and their families had we not acted swiftly to allow the bill to pass when it did.

Honourable senators, I ask you to think of the typical Canadian who receives my letter but then goes to the official government website and finds the government's declaration that, contrary to what I have told them, the Senate has yet to pass Bill C-10.

If this Canadian chose to believe the government website, he or she could only conclude that I was not telling the truth in my correspondence. To be so branded by the government itself obviously affects my ability to perform my duties as a member of this chamber and as a representative of my province, and it is a breach of my privileges as a senator. In fact, it is a breach of all of our privileges — the privileges of each and every one of us, no matter where we sit in this chamber.

Honourable senators, in a ruling made in the House of Commons concerning a question of privilege on October 29, 1980, the Speaker in the other place said:

... it seems to me that to amount to contempt, representations or statements about our proceedings or of the participation of members should not only be erroneous or incorrect, but rather, should be purposely untrue and improper and import a ring of deceit.

All of the elements the Speaker referred to in that ruling are to be found here, Your Honour. We have erroneous and incorrect statements about our proceedings that are purposely untrue and improper. In my opinion, there is certainly a ring of deceit in what the government is telling millions of Canadians about all of us and about our work. Even though it was reported last night on the CTV National News that the government is making this inaccurate statement about the work of the Senate, as of the moment when I rose to make this statement, the government deliberately continues to do so.

The Government of Canada has no hesitation or shame in continuing to tell millions of Canadians that we in the Senate have not fulfilled our legislative duties on the budget bill. This is more than being misleading; it is a case of the Government of Canada intentionally spreading falsehoods about each and every one of us in this chamber, and that affects our ability to do our work for Canadians in all regions of the country.

In light of all of these facts, I ask Your Honour to find that there is indeed a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege.

Honourable senators, should His Honour find that there is a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege, I am prepared to move the appropriate motion to have the matter referred to our Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament, where the government will have an opportunity to explain why it is unable to tell the truth to Canadians.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I find it interesting that the Leader of the Opposition did not even bother to follow the rules, which basically say that if one is to seek a *prima facie* ruling on a question of privilege, it must be brought before honourable senators at the first opportunity so that we are advised. I think His Honour has ruled on this issue before, that a letter must be submitted three hours prior to the commencement of the sitting.

Senator Cowan indicated in the first lines of his comments that he has been working on this matter all morning to try to clear it up, but as he was not able to do so, he is raising the issue in the chamber. I may be paraphrasing somewhat, but I think that was the gist of the honourable senator's opening comments.

If the honourable senator knew this morning that this was going on, and in fact knew for two weeks, why did we not receive a letter?

Senator Cowan: Why were the statements not taken off the website?

Senator Comeau: Rather than debate these points as we go along, I will stick to my points. The honourable senator indicated that he has known about this matter for two weeks. There was plenty of time to advise us. We would then have had time to determine whether, as indicated by the Leader of the Opposition, the statements were purposely untrue and, in his opinion, amounted to a ring of deceit, and whether the deceit was deliberate. I am using the honourable senator's words.

There is no way that one can, at the drop of a hat, come into the chamber and start using those kinds of words. Oh, yes, the other side can; I forgot.

Senator Cowan: I am quoting from the Speaker.

Senator Comeau: The other side is allowed to use words like "purposeful," "ring of deceit" and "deliberate." If this side were to use those words, the argument would not last long.

Your Honour, we are more than pleased to view the content of the website in question. The honourable senator indicated the website address. If there are errors on the website, by all means, we would be pleased to pass on the message to the government that the website be amended and fixed.

However, regarding the issue of whether the Speaker or a committee can look into whether this is a "ring of deceit" and "deliberate" and those kinds of nasty terms, that is another matter.

Your Honour, there is no question of privilege on this point, and we should continue with the business we have before us.

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would remind our honourable colleagues that notice is not required. Honourable senators might want to check their rule books. Rule 59(10) states that notice is not required for raising a question of privilege.

Our leader, Senator Cowan, has raised a question of privilege because up until he spoke at 2:45 p.m. the statements could have been removed from the website. Had that been done, he would not have raised the question of privilege.

His reference to "two weeks prior" was to put into context the whole question regarding Bill C-10; it had nothing to do with the website. The first time the website was revealed was in hearing about it on CTV News last night. We thought that the government would remove the content. It was not removed, and so our privileges as senators have been affected. I maintain that it is a question of privilege for all of us.

Hon. Tommy Banks: By way of belts and suspenders, if it is a question of whether or not the question of privilege is raised before Your Honour at the first opportunity, I had not heard of this incident until just now. I would reiterate the question of privilege, which is my first opportunity to do so.

• (1450)

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: I wish to repeat the comments of the Honourable Senator Banks. This news is brand new to me. My privilege has been questioned also.

Senator Tkachuk: Are you just finding out from someone else?

Senator Grafstein: I trust my leader.

Senator Tkachuk: Good for you.

Hon. Sharon Carstairs: Honourable senators, each year in this place, I conduct a seminar with the pages. I distinguish for them the difference between a point of order and a matter of privilege. I do that because I consider a matter of privilege the most important thing that ever occurs in this place. It can never, ever be handled lightly.

Our rules state that a matter of privilege is "the duty of every senator." A violation of the privileges of any one senator affects all of us because it means that our privileges have been violated as well. Like the honourable Senators Banks and Grafstein, I learned about this at a committee of the Library of Parliament at lunchtime today. That is the first time I learned of it.

I would have assumed that the words would have been immediately stricken from the record as soon as the budget had passed this place and was given Royal Assent.

Honourable senators, let us face it: Each and every one of us is very much tied to what happens in the media; we all have staff who monitor what happens in the media. I would have assumed that if the news story of the website content was aired publicly by CTV last evening, someone would have informed the government about it, and at that particular point, someone would have given the order that it be stricken from the website.

There may well have been an inadvertent point in the last two weeks in which no one checked the website or looked at it.

Senator Comeau: That is right.

Senator Carstairs: However, at the moment that it became public last evening, the Government of Canada had a responsibility to protect the privileges of every single member of this chamber and to strike that information from the website. The fact that they did not do so last night and have not done so all morning long is even more egregious, in my view. This is a matter of privilege. It is a matter of privilege not just for me but for every single senator, including everyone who sits on the other side.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, it is for the Speaker to determine when he or she has heard enough.

Hon. Terry Stratton: I would like to refer to the *Rules of the Senate*.

Some Hon. Senators: Order!

The Hon. the Speaker: I have heard enough to deal with this matter, and I will take it under advisement. My job at this point is to determine whether a prima facie case of privilege has been made out. I will attend to that forthwith.

I will, as I feel it is my obligation, point out that I am in receipt of a document, "Canada's Economic Action Plan: The Rollout." It is indicated to me that at 2:43 p.m. this afternoon this statement remains:

While the House of Commons has passed this legislation, the Senate must still approve the Act for it to become law. Senators must do their part and ensure quick passage of this vital legislation

That is false. As Speaker for all members of this chamber, I would encourage all honourable senators to take steps to have that removed.

I shall be determining the matter that has been raised. It is for me to rule whether a question of privilege on a prima facie case has been made out, and I shall do so.

Senator Carstairs: I rise on a different point of order, Your Honour. Have we changed the *Rules of the Senate*? Are computers now allowed at our desks?

Senator Stratton: Yes. That has always been the rule, as long as it does not make any noise.

Senator Fraser: The question was put to His Honour.

Senator Stratton: Honourable senators, on a point of order.

The Hon. the Speaker: It is the general understanding in the chamber that electronic devices that do not make noise are allowed in the chamber.

Senator Carstairs: Thank you.

The Hon. the Speaker: Do you have a new point of order, Senator Stratton?

Senator Stratton: I wish to refer honourable senators to rules 43(3) and 43(5), which state that in the determination of a question of privilege, the question of privilege must be in writing three hours before and then sent by the Clerk to all offices of each senator.

Senator Tardif: There are two ways.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 5, 2008-09

THIRD READING

Hon. Irving Gerstein moved third reading of Bill C-21, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2009.

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

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, I was waiting to see if my friend Senator Gerstein would speak on this item. I have an aversion to letting this kind of item pass through without making a comment so that honourable senators know what they are voting on. This bill related to \$1.5 billion of revenue that is being voted upon in Supplementary Estimates (C).

Honourable senators, what I do, and have done again for you, is look at the schedule that appears in Supplementary Estimates (C) and compare it to the schedule that appears in Bill C-21, and I find them to be identical. Honourable senators will recall that that has not been the case in every instance, but in this instance it is, which means that we have been studying the same schedule as we proceeded with in our study of the supplementary estimates. We have been studying the same schedule that you are now being asked to vote on.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, are you ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question.

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

(Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.)

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 1, 2009-10

THIRD READING

Hon. Irving Gerstein moved third reading of Bill C-22, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2010.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is there debate, honourable senators?

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, the same point applies to this item. Senator Gerstein, the Deputy Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, and I both spoke on this bill yesterday. You are being asked to approve interim financing until the end of June, during the first three months of the financial cycle and the supply cycle. You are being asked to approve \$27 billion of expenditure. Included in that amount is \$2.75 billion that must be spent by the end of June, which has been generally referred to as a "\$3 billion fund." As I say, it must be spent by the end of June. We are giving approval to spend only \$2.75 billion of that amount.

• (1500)

Honourable senators, I have again compared the schedule that appears attached to this interim supply bill, Bill C-22, and it compared exactly and precisely to what appears in the Main Estimates.

We will continue to study the Main Estimates throughout the year. This is just interim supply for three months.

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

(Motion agreed to and bill read third and passed.)

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Fortin-Duplessis, seconded by the Honourable Senator Gerstein:

That the following Address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Military Merit, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Merit of the Police Forces, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, Her Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the Senate of Canada in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Minister of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I rise today in my role as Leader of the Government in the Senate to provide a formal reply to our government's Speech from the Throne.

On January 26, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Governor General sat in this very chamber and delivered an important message to us all. The Governor General said:

In these uncertain times, when the world is threatened by a struggling economy, it is imperative that we work together, that we stand beside one another and that we strive for greater solidarity.

Today, in our democratic tradition, Canadians expect that their elected representatives will dedicate their efforts to ensure that Canada emerges stronger from this serious economic crisis.

Honourable senators, an unprecedented global recession is raging and even though Canada in no way contributed to this recession, Canadians are rightly concerned about its effects on Canada's economy. Most important, they want us to set aside the partisan attacks and work together on their behalf.

By and large, we have engaged in a constructive debate and, except for a few puzzling interventions, we have now passed the budget implementation bill, which will set in motion a number of initiatives required immediately to assist our fellow citizens.

These initiatives include improving access to credit and strengthening Canada's financial system; supporting the automotive sector during difficult times through financial assistance; increasing benefits to Canadian workers through the Employment Insurance Program; assisting workers by enhancing the availability of training opportunities; freezing EI premium rates at their lowest level since 1982; delivering \$20 billion in tax relief to Canadians over 2008-09 and the next five fiscal years; investing in social housing for low-income Canadians; supporting home ownership and the housing sector by assisting with the costs of retrofits and renovations; assisting provinces, territories and municipalities in building and maintaining the modern infrastructure we will need in the years to come; and helping those who are the most vulnerable, the Canadians who, through no fault of their own, have lost their jobs, and low-income seniors.

Honourable senators, the economic news, while impacting Canada, contains some comfort for Canadians. Canada's banking sector is well capitalized and is looked upon as a model to our G20 partners. As the IMF stated in their report a few weeks ago, our government's Economic Action Plan is an appropriate and prudent course to follow, acknowledging of course the impact on Canada of the worldwide recession.

Fortunately, late in 2007, at which time the Prime Minister expressed concern that 2008 would be challenging because of the deteriorating sub-prime issue in the United States, our Conservative government took measures ahead of the curve, so to speak, to put us in a better place. Thanks to policies such as reducing taxes, paying down debt and investing in necessary modern infrastructure, Canada is in fact in a much stronger position as we face this global crisis.

That is exactly what Canada's best economists are saying. Earlier this year, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, Mark Carney, told reporters that our country entered the global recession with low interest rates, low inflation and low unemployment, adding:

Our level of indebtedness is far less than in other countries and our budgetary wiggle room of the federal government and provincial governments is much better than before.

The Bank of Montreal's Sherry Cooper echoed those views when she said:

At the end of the day we will have outperformed much of the rest of the world, certainly the rest of the G7.

Honourable senators, it is important to remember that at this time last year no one foresaw the extent of the global recession or what it would mean for Canada. A year ago, the Chief Economist for the Canadian Chamber of Commerce said:

I don't think we will slide into a recession even if the Americans do. The domestic side of our economy is doing so well.

Last June, the OECD published an economic survey of Canada, which stated:

The baseline projection calls for growth well above recession territory — even if below potential rates — for both 2008 and 2009.

Even more cautious assessments, such as the one issued by the TD Bank last March, claimed that Canada would “narrowly miss entering into a recession.”

Honourable senators, it is clear that the Canadian economy did not enter a recession until the fourth quarter of 2008. This is one point on which all economists agree. The facts are there and they are quite clear.

Today, we are buffeted about by conflicting views on what will happen in the months ahead. The truth of the matter is that no one can say with any degree of certainty.

What we do know is that this crisis swept the globe, especially in financial institutions, through no fault of the Government of Canada and our provincial and territorial partners. Having said that, it became clear that we could not escape its wrath.

What we do know for certain is that many Canadian communities are feeling the effects of the global recession and those affected need our help.

Our government launched the most comprehensive and inclusive pre-budget consultation process in Canadian history and brought down a budget in late January, the earliest federal budget in the history of the country. The Prime Minister personally held round table discussions in December and January all across the country, and face-to-face meetings were held with more than 46 municipalities; 5,400 letters, emails and submissions were received from individuals and groups, and there were 7,400 participants in the Minister of Finance's online consultation.

As well, 680 organizations representing manufacturing, forestry, mining and industry made submissions to the government. We listened to Canadians and, as a result, we succeeded in putting together a realistic, focused action plan to lead our country through these difficult times, protect Canadian jobs and lay the groundwork for future prosperity.

Canada's Economic Action Plan will provide almost \$40 billion in stimulus, boost Canada's GDP by an estimated 1.9 per cent and create an increase of 190,000 new jobs.

Honourable senators, one industry that has received a great deal of attention is, of course, the automotive industry. The auto sector is vital to the economic life of communities all across Ontario, and in parts of Quebec, but also impacts the rest of the

country. Canada's Economic Action Plan will offer short-term repayable loans to the automotive sector in collaboration with the Ontario and United States governments. Canada has a 20 per cent share of this industry, and it is vital that we retain that 20 per cent share at the end of the day.

Honourable senators, Canada's Economic Action Plan also provides significant support to Canadian industry, including over \$440 million in savings over the next five years, by permanently eliminating tariffs on a range of machinery and equipment.

We will provide \$170 million over two years to assist the forestry sector and \$110 million over three years to the Canadian Space Agency to develop advanced robotics and other space technologies. However, supporting key industries to protect Canadian jobs in difficult times is just the beginning.

Honourable senators, Canada's Economic Action Plan will do much more than protect jobs. It will put more money into the pockets of hard-working taxpayers through further tax relief, and our quality of life and our economic competitiveness will be strengthened with timely and necessary investments.

I would like to take a few moments to outline the goals of our government and how we will provide real support to Canadians. Let us start with taxes.

Conservatives understand that Canadians work hard for the money they send to Ottawa, and that is why our first three budgets delivered nearly \$200 billion in tax relief. We believe in rewarding hard work. Honourable senators, cutting taxes is also smart economic policy because it helps restore consumer confidence as well as providing additional incentives for Canadians to work, save and invest.

• (1510)

Canada's Economic Action Plan goes even further by increasing the basic personal amount that Canadians can earn without paying federal income tax, raising the upper limit of the two lowest personal income tax brackets by 7.5 per cent so that Canadians can earn more at lower tax rates, increasing the amount that low- and middle-income families can earn before their federal child benefits are phased out, and investing \$580 million to effectively double the tax relief provided by the Working Income Tax Benefit. That is real assistance to low-income Canadians.

Honourable senators, I am also very proud to serve in the government as Minister of State for Seniors, just as I am very proud of my government's record for supporting and rewarding seniors for their many years of building our country.

In our first three years in office, our government increased the Age Credit by \$1,000, doubled the pension income credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and brought in pension income splitting.

Canada's Economic Action Plan builds upon those achievements by increasing the age credit by yet another \$1,000 for 2009 and subsequent taxation years. This increase will provide annual tax savings of up to an additional \$150 for 2.2 million seniors.

Honourable senators, some of the most widely popular measures of Canada's Economic Action Plan are the Home Renovation Tax Credit and the ecoENERGY Retrofit Program.

Canada's Economic Action Plan will provide a boost to workers in the housing industry and assist working families by implementing a temporary home renovation tax credit that will provide up to \$1,350 in tax relief and reduce the cost of renovations for an estimated 4.6 million Canadian families by providing an additional \$300 million over two years to the ecoENERGY Retrofit Program to support an estimated 200,000 additional home retrofits by assisting first-time home buyers by offering up to \$750 in tax relief to help with the purchase of their first home and by boosting the RRSP Home Buyers' Plan withdrawal limit from \$20,000 to \$25,000.

Home renovations and retrofits are smart investments. They improve the value of property; they reduce both energy consumption and long-term cost of ownership; and they help save Canadians money on their energy bills, which is good for families and good for the environment. These programs also put people to work — carpenters, plumbers and electricians — and they create a consumer demand for all of the related building supplies.

Canada's Economic Action Plan will boost construction in other ways as well. We will expand and accelerate federal investments in roads, bridges, tunnels, harbours, border crossings and other projects with almost \$12 billion in new infrastructure stimulus over two years.

Many Canadians choose to travel by train. It is a comfortable and environmentally friendly means of getting across our country. Our government will make it safer and easier to take the train by investing \$72 million over five years to improve railway safety and \$407 million to improve Via Rail's train frequencies, on-time performance and speed, particularly in the Ottawa-Toronto-Montreal corridor.

Our government will modernize and expand border service facilities in Ontario and British Columbia and rehabilitate federal bridges throughout Canada. The Prime Minister was in Sarnia last week to make an announcement regarding the Blue Water Bridge, the second busiest crossing point between Canada and the United States. It was heartening to see President Obama and the Prime Minister acknowledge the potential of using stimulus money on border infrastructure.

Honourable senators, Canada needs better roads and bridges, but our investments in infrastructure will not stop there. Our government will advance Canada's knowledge advantage as well by dedicating up to \$2 billion to repair, retrofit and expand facilities at post-secondary institutions; providing \$750 million for leading-edge research infrastructure through the Canada Foundation for Innovation; investing \$500 million in Canada Health Infoway to encourage the greater use of electronic health records; and developing and implementing a strategy to extend broadband coverage to unserved communities.

Investing in infrastructure is a win-win for Canada. It creates job in all sectors for Canadians at a time when new jobs are needed, and it will provide better roads, bridges, tunnels and

broadband coverage that Canada will need in the years to come. Often projects such as the heavy construction ones are not high priorities in good economic times. This is all the more reason to use this opportunity to do this much-needed work now.

Investing in social housing has also been identified in Canada's Economic Action Plan. There are approximately 630,000 social housing units in Canada supported by all levels of government but administered by the provinces and territories. Budget 2009 provides a one-time federal investment of \$1 billion over the next two years to address the demand for renovations and energy retrofits on social housing units. This \$1 billion builds on the \$1.9 billion announced by the government in September 2008 to extend housing and homelessness programs for low-income Canadians. The government also recognizes that low-income seniors may face increased difficulty finding affordable housing. Canada's Economic Action Plan will provide \$400 million over two years for targeted funding for the construction of housing units for low-income seniors.

Constructing new social housing is just one way our government is assisting vulnerable Canadians. Canada's Economic Action Plan will help workers who have been hit by the global recession by increasing, for two years, all regular Employment Insurance benefit entitlements by an extra five weeks; providing \$500 million over two years to extend EI income benefits for Canadians participating in longer-term training; extending work-sharing agreements by 14 weeks to a maximum of 52 weeks so more Canadians can continue working; helping young Canadians find summer jobs by investing \$55 million over two years; supporting older workers and their families with an additional \$60 million over three years for the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers; extending the Wage Earner Protection Program to cover severance and termination pay owed to eligible workers impacted by employers' bankruptcy; consulting with Canadians and developing options to provide self-employed Canadians with access to EI, maternity and paternity benefits; and, finally, boosting funding for training delivered through EI by \$1 billion over two years.

Canada's Economic Action Plan meets Canada's short-term needs while serving our long-term goals. It will help Canadians who are out of work, protect Canadian jobs and businesses, build our communities and put more money into the hands of hard-working families.

Honourable senators, we have a plan and the government is committed to working with individual Canadians, businesses, labour, manufacturers and our resource industry and with our provincial, territorial and municipal partners to see us through this worldwide recession.

As the Prime Minister said in Brampton on March 10:

... for the first time in history, all regions of the world are seeing a rapid slowing of economic growth at the same time, or a so-called "synchronized" global recession.

The immediate source of this global recession is the ongoing crisis of the financial sector in the United States and other advanced western countries. . . .

And let me be clear to you as my fellow citizens: We will not turn the corner on this global recession until the American financial sector is fixed.

Our stimulus plan will help us to sustain economic activity and make transitions but it cannot fix the problem of the global financial system.

These are uncertain times to be sure, yet Canadians have lived through uncertain and even dangerous times before. The walls of this very chamber remind us of the sacrifices made by so many young men in the service of our country nearly a century ago. I should say young women, too, because my aunt was a nurse in the First World War.

Honourable senators, I know one thing: Canadians understand the situation we are in. They know about and they support the government's action plan. They are growing weary of the doom and gloom talk of the opposition who have no plan and who show no inclination to offer positive reinforcement.

• (1520)

As we continue to face upheaval in the global financial markets, I remind all senators of the wise words of Canadian historian, Desmond Morton, who said:

Canadians, like their historians, have spent too much time remembering conflicts, crises, and failures. They forgot the great, quiet continuity of life in a vast and generous land. A cautious people learns from its past; a sensible people can face its future. Canadians, on the whole, are both.

Honourable senators, as we have done so many times in the past, we will get through this period. Canadians will emerge from this period of uncertainty a stronger and more united people.

Finally, honourable senators, before I sit down, I take this opportunity to thank Canada's public service for their efforts in the past, and as we go forward, in their efforts to implement the stimulus package. We can be proud of our public service, people who are conducting themselves in a responsive and responsible manner.

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Will the honourable leader permit two questions?

I commend the government for moving ahead with the Blue Water Bridge. This bridge has been an issue for both sides of this chamber in terms of Canada-U.S. travel, so we look forward to its construction.

The leader does not need to respond to my questions today; she can put her responses in writing. First, who will own the new Blue Water Bridge, and how will it be regulated? Second, can the leader advise us, again in writing, how many new and part-time jobs the government hopes to create by this stimulus package in the next two years?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, as we know, economists are all over the map on what will or will not happen with the stimulus package.

I will be happy to obtain the projections that the government used. As Senator Grafstein knows, because he is knowledgeable in this area, these projections are based on a wide range of different

views from economists. I will obtain that information for the honourable senator.

With regard to the ownership of the Blue Water Bridge, I know there are still issues about the proposed bridge in Windsor. I am not personally aware of any problems or difficulties at the Blue Water Bridge in Sarnia, but I will obtain an answer to that question as well.

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

Hon. Senators: Question.

[Translation]

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, and Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne adopted.)

(On motion of the Honourable Senator Comeau, ordered that the Address be engrossed and presented to Her Excellency the Governor General by the Honourable the Speaker.)

[English]

NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Grafstein, seconded by the Honourable Senator Hubley, for the second reading of Bill S-217, An Act respecting a National Philanthropy Day.

Hon. Andrée Champagne: Honourable senators may remember, and I am sure Senator Grafstein does, that when we last debated this bill, I spoke against it. My mother used to say that only fools do not change their minds, so I have been rethinking my ideas on this bill. I am still trying to put together a small amendment, which I intend to bring to the house. I want to take the adjournment on this bill for the rest of my time, and I will come back shortly, by the beginning of next week.

(On motion of Senator Champagne, debate adjourned.)

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, 1999

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Banks, seconded by the Honourable Senator Day, for the second reading of Bill S-212, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

Hon. Tommy Banks: Honourable senators, this bill seeks to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999. That act contains a provision that every seven years it will be reviewed by a committee of each house of Parliament. Last March, your committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources undertook such a review and completed it in April of 2006.

Our completed report then contained some 24 recommendations. Bill S-212, which is before honourable senators, seeks to implement two of those recommendations, relating to encouraging public participation in the enforcement of the act.

The committees of both houses heard undisputed evidence that the original provisions of this act, which were intended to engage the public in the enforcement of the act, have been ineffective. By and large, the public does not participate because the costs are too great. Concomitantly, the burden of proof is too great, which affects the cost, and the lack of access to adequate information prevents private actors from mounting successful actions under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

Public participation is an essential part of a comprehensive strategy to protect our environment by ensuring compliance. The importance of public participation in compliance and enforcement was acknowledged in the original act, which was passed in 1988 by a Progressive Conservative government.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: If Senator Banks is speaking for the second time, I must advise the Chamber that he would close debate.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Our side does want to speak to the bill. We want to reserve our time to be able to have our comments heard. I can assure honourable senators that my colleague, Senator Lang, will deal with this bill expeditiously, so if honourable senators will allow us, we want to continue with the adjournment.

Senator Banks: I will reserve the remainder of my time to follow Senator Lang's remarks because I think that approach would be more appropriate and usual, and I thank Senator Comeau for that courtesy.

(On motion of Senator Banks, for Senator Lang, debate adjourned.)

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BANK OF CANADA ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— ORDER STANDS

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Grafstein, seconded by the Honourable Senator Fairbairn, P.C., for the second reading of Bill S-203, An Act to amend the Business Development Bank of Canada Act (municipal infrastructure bonds) and to make a consequential amendment to another Act.

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, perhaps the house leader on the other side can give me some indication as to when they might address this bill. It is a matter of some priority.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Unfortunately, our critic of Bill S-203 is not in the chamber at this point. I want to confer with him to find out which stage he is at in his briefings from the officials. I will undertake to try to give the honourable senator an indication as to the status of this matter on Tuesday.

(Order stands.)

• (1530)

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES OF CANADA ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— ORDER STANDS

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Grafstein, seconded by the Honourable Senator Pépin, for the second reading of Bill S-201, An Act to amend the Library and Archives of Canada Act (National Portrait Gallery).

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, again I wish to ask the deputy leader on the other side to advise me when they might address this bill. There is some priority with this bill as well.

Senator Stratton: All your bills have priority.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): As with my other colleague, the critic on this bill happens to be outside the chamber at this time. I must confer with my colleague regarding the status on this bill. Again, I will get back to the honourable senator on Tuesday.

(Order stands.)

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— ORDER STANDS

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Grafstein, seconded by the Honourable Senator Joyal, P.C., for the second reading of Bill S-208, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (clean drinking water).

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, I assume that the Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate will move the adjournment because Senator Cochrane is not present. This bill has been before Parliament now for seven-odd

years. Having said that, it has passed this chamber and gone over to the other side. Last evening we heard interesting evidence that progress has been made but we discovered to our amazement that there is no regulation in terms of water as it relates to the Aboriginal communities, which is one of the paramount issues of this bill.

I hope that the government can deal with this matter quickly so we can refer the bill to committee to see if the substantive arguments I have made are still substantiated.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I appreciate the comments of the honourable senator. Another one of my colleagues does not happen to be in the chamber at this time. I will confer with her and try to get back to the honourable senator next Tuesday as well.

(Order stands.)

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— ORDER STANDS

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Grafstein, seconded by the Honourable Senator Bryden, for the second reading of Bill S-205, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (suicide bombings).

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, again I wish to pose a question to the Deputy Leader of the Government. This bill was passed at third reading and sent over to the other place. It has been before three Parliaments. It strikes me that at least we could send it back to the committee as quickly as possible. I understand that the objections to this bill have eroded and therefore it would be useful to move it forward. I am being pressured, as I am sure the honourable senator is as well, to move forward.

The only thing I can announce to the Senate is that since I last spoke on this measure, yet another prime minister has supported this bill. We now have five prime ministers, two Conservatives and three Liberals, who support this bill. That support is unheard of and I hope we can move the bill forward quickly.

I have received the undertaking from the other side that they would deal with this expeditiously, not once, not twice, but three times. It strikes me that I should wait another week, but if they do not address it this next week I will move notwithstanding the adjournment.

Hon. Terry Stratton: Honourable senators, I wish to respond to that item. Honourable Senator Andreychuk has told me that she will speak to this issue next week.

(Order stands.)

[Senator Grafstein]

AGING

BUDGET—SECOND REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the second report of the Special Senate Committee on Aging (*budget—study on the implications of an aging society in Canada—power to hire staff*) presented in the Senate on March 24, 2009.

Hon. Sharon Carstairs moved the adoption of the report.

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

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

MOTION TO SUPPORT RESOLUTION ON EXPANDING TRADE BETWEEN NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Grafstein, seconded by the Honourable Senator Fairbairn, P.C.:

That the Senate endorse the following Resolution, adopted by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at its 17th Annual Session, held at Astana, Kazakhstan, from June 29 to July 3, 2008:

RESOLUTION ON EXPANDING TRADE BETWEEN NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE

1. Reaffirming the importance of trade for economic growth, political stability and international peace,
2. Recalling the fundamental importance of the economic and environmental dimension in the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security,
3. Considering that expanded free trade between North American and European markets will benefit all OSCE participating States politically as well as economically,
4. Recalling the commitments made by the participating States at the Maastricht Ministerial Council in December 2003 regarding the liberalization of trade and the elimination of barriers limiting market access,
5. Recalling the recommendations of the 2006 OSCE *Best Practice Guide for a Positive Business and Investment Climate*, published by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, which advocate stronger international trade policies and conditions favourable to the circulation of international capital,

6. Concurring with the conclusions of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities that free trade agreements and the reduction of tariffs are vital to a strong trade policy,
7. Recalling the importance that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly accords to the development of international trade as underlined by the Assembly's Fifth Economic Conference on the theme of "Strengthening Stability and Co-operation through International Trade" held in Andorra in May 2007,
8. Recalling the deep historical and cultural ties between the peoples and states of North America and Europe which shaped their common values, on which the OSCE is based, and which are reinforced by the strength of their economic links,
9. Recognizing the considerable impact that the economies of North America and Europe have on international trade,
10. Considering the increasingly interdependent nature of the economic links between North America and Europe,
11. Noting the scope and depth of trade between North America and Europe which benefits public accounts and the private sector in addition to generating opportunities for employment,
12. Welcoming recently signed agreements that promote greater and freer trade between a limited number of markets in North America and Europe, such as the January 2008 Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Free Trade Association,
13. Acknowledging the appeal of the emerging markets in Asia and South America, whose growth will generate new levels of competition and economic efficiencies for trade between North America and Europe,
14. Concerned with the persistence of trade barriers in the economic relations between North America and Europe which limit opportunities for greater economic growth and human development,
15. Concerned with the state of the Doha Round of negotiations at the World Trade Organization which is affecting inter-regional trade negotiations such as the Canada-European Union Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement suspended since 2006,

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly:

16. Resolves that seminars and conferences to raise awareness of the opportunities and shared benefits of trade liberalization should be considered;
17. Calls on the parliaments of the OSCE participating States to vigorously support and accelerate all multilateral, inter-institutional and bilateral initiatives

that promote the liberalization of trade between North America and Europe, including the harmonization of standards and the elimination of regulatory barriers;

18. Calls on the parliaments of the OSCE participating States to sustain the political will of their governments as members of existing economic agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, the European Union, the European Free Trade Association and the Central European Free Trade Agreement, to develop transatlantic partnership agreements that expand and liberalise trade between and among them;
19. Recommends that current and future initiatives that target expanded trade between the economies of North America and Europe consider greater involvement where appropriate of regional and subregional governments and groupings;
20. Recommends that current and future initiatives that target expanded trade between the economies of North America and Europe reflect the principles and standards of the OSCE, particularly human rights, environmental protection, sustainable development and economic and social rights, including workers' rights, as agreed to in the 1990 Document of the Bonn Conference on *Economic Co-operation in Europe*, the 1990 Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the *Human Dimension of the CSCE* and the 1990 *Charter of Paris for a New Europe*.

Hon. Hugh Segal: Honourable senators, I am happy to rise today and address Senator Grafstein's motion requesting that the Senate endorse a resolution on expanding trade between North America and Europe. This resolution was adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe at its seventeenth annual session in Astana, Kazakhstan, in June and July 2008, and highlights the importance of expanded trade between North America and Europe. The motion is particularly timely in this difficult era in our economic history.

In an increasingly globalized and interdependent world economy, the Government of Canada knows that we must increase cooperation and establish greater economic ties to remain successful and competitive, especially in this time of economic uncertainty. On March 5, the Minister of International Trade, the Honourable Stockwell Day, announced an agreement on the areas to be negotiated — a huge step forward — which will launch comprehensive negotiations as early as possible.

Today, I want to speak in favour of the motion to endorse the OSCE parliamentary assembly resolution on the subject moved by my colleague Senator Grafstein. In today's global economic market, the importance of enhanced trading relations between Europe and North America cannot be understated. Expanded trade between our two continents will translate into significant opportunities for individuals, firms and governments. For many reasons, and in many different areas, Europe matters profoundly to Canada. The ties that bind Canada to Europe are durable and historic, and our shared values have made us partners on a world stage.

As the Prime Minister outlined through the Speech from the Throne, the government will continue to work internationally to spread prosperity through free, open and rules-based trade. Two years ago, it was my privilege to represent Canada at the meeting on trans-Atlantic trade called by Chancellor Merkel in the Bundestag in Germany. It was an honour to offer a Canadian perspective on the broad and compelling notion of a dynamic and mutually productive European Union-North American economic and trade initiative that would, by definition, be both separate from and complementary to the strong relationships we share through the multilateral organizations in which Canadians are so active.

At the time, Chancellor Merkel was President of the European Council and Chair of the Group of Eight, G8. Her determination to reconnect Europe and North America on security, environment, trade and investment inspired those in attendance to seek out ways to facilitate this connection. This commitment throughout Europe goes beyond partisan division. Chancellor Merkel is a centrist and moderate Conservative. Leaders of other affiliations in different countries in Europe support this initiative.

Canada is a country that is well-versed in the benefits of free trade and market integration. The Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, later NAFTA, generated economic growth and prosperity that led to the creation of the world's largest free trade area. These agreements laid the foundation for future growth and demonstrated the advantages of free trade and globalization. Expanded free trade between North American and European markets will benefit OSCE participating states. Our respective continents share deep historical and cultural links, which have helped formulate the common set of values upon which the OSCE is based.

Canada and the European Union have a vibrant and long-established economic relationship that began with the 1976 Framework Agreement for commercial and economic cooperation. Today, the EU, with its 27 member states, is Canada's second largest trading partner after the United States, its second and most important source of foreign direct investment and the second most important destination for Canadian direct investment abroad. The EU is also Canada's second most important source of new technologies and a key partner in science and technology cooperation.

Europe is a priority for our provinces and territories, which increasingly recognize the importance of expanding Canada's trade and investment in key international markets and see a window of opportunity in a new partnership with the European Union. It is a priority for Canadian businesses and investors who recognize the important potential that exists for deepening our commercial relationship. Europe is a priority as we look to continue broadening our commercial horizons with this significant market as the world's most compelling trading nation.

• (1540)

Today, I would like to commend agreements that aim to promote greater and freer trade between North America and Europe, such as the free trade agreement between Canada and the States of the European Free Trade Association, or EFTA, signed January 2008.

[Senator Segal]

The Canada-EFTA FTA will bolster our existing trade relationship with EFTA countries and provide Canadian exporters increased access to these key European markets. Moreover, the direct commercial benefits to Canada will come from the immediate elimination of duties on all Canadian non-agricultural goods and the elimination or reduction in tariffs on selected agricultural exports to Europe. In addition, as Canada's first-ever FTA with European countries, it provides a platform for Canadian business to expand commercial ties with the EFTA countries and to tap into broader European value chains.

I would like to congratulate the Minister of International Trade and departmental officials on their hard work on this free trade agreement. It is a good agreement for Canada and for the states of the European Free Trade Association.

I would also like to applaud efforts by Canada and the EU to establish a closer economic partnership, building on the momentum of the Canada-EU Summit in Quebec City, October 17, 2008.

We are working with our EU partners to define the scope and parameter of a comprehensive economic agreement with a view to launching negotiations in the spring of 2009. Bilateral goods trade between Canada and the EU is growing every year, totalling over \$80 billion in 2007. Nevertheless, the relationship has not reached its full potential. A stronger, more ambitious economic partnership between Canada and the EU would lead to greater growth and prosperity for our citizens and for our economies.

I would like to take this opportunity to support the view, as expressed by the coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, that free trade and the reduction of tariffs are vital to a strong trade policy and essential to continuing growth and prosperity. The OSCE has maintained a consistently positive approach toward free trade, and Canada should welcome such initiatives as they pertain to North America and Europe.

Although much progress has been achieved towards greater economic interdependence between North American and European markets, much more can be done. Greater effort must be put toward reducing trade barriers, which can impede opportunities for economic growth and human development. Within an increasingly complex global marketplace, protectionism is neither a viable nor pragmatic solution. To compete in today's marketplace, economies must merge their expertise, capital and resources. Only by these means will regions such as North America and Europe remain competitive well into the 21st century.

I would like to echo the views of my fellow parliamentarians from OSCE-participating states in calling for greater support for all multilateral, inter-institutional and bilateral initiatives that would promote the liberalization of trade between North America and Europe, including the harmonization of standards and the elimination of regulatory barriers. Politicians, business leaders, labour leaders and diplomats understand that windows of opportunity open infrequently and, when they do, procrastination and being unprepared is no option.

Enhanced trading relations should be reflective of existing economic agreements such as the North America Free Trade Agreement, the European Union, the European Free Trade Association and the Central European Free Trade Agreement.

Finally, I wish to state my support specifically for Items No. 2 and No. 4 of the resolution, which bring forward unequivocally the link between economic growth and success relating to peace and stability. One of the questions we all face is how do we keep a recession from deepening to a depression and how do we keep a depression from leading to war? Predecessors in the 1930s did not find that answer and the price paid by 50 million human beings as a result was massive. We must look for the steps to stop that horrific slide, and this kind of free trade linkage and support is part of the constructive answer.

Honourable senators, poverty breeds discontent, which leads to all manner of repercussions. Trade can lift people out of poverty, and we can just look at China and India where literally hundreds of millions of people are now in the working middle class when before they had lived in abject poverty. They have been given that opportunity because of successful trade undertakings.

Opening up the economic possibilities will indeed provide a measure of stability and allow for movement forward in achieving peace. I congratulate Senator Grafstein on this important motion. I am delighted to speak for this side of the aisle in fulsome support.

(On motion of Senator Stratton, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

IRANIAN NUCLEAR CAPACITY AND PREPARATION FOR WAR

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Segal calling the attention of the Senate to the government of Iran's imminent nuclear war capacity and its preparations for war in the Middle East, and to the commitment of Canada and its allies, including the USA, Russia, Turkey, the Gulf States, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and others, to diplomatic and strategic initiatives that exclude first-use nuclear attack, the ability of Canada to engage with its allies in order to understand, measure and contain this threat, and the capacity of Canada to support allied efforts to prevent a thermonuclear exchange in the Middle East.

Hon. Marcel Prud'homme: Honourable senators, I have already indicated to Senator Segal that, with your consent and in his presence, I would prefer to address this issue next week.

My speech is 38 pages long and I have tried re-writing it 16 times. I shorten it every time, but I think it is still too long to fit into the time allotted for me to address the Senate. I have it here, so I will be ready to speak either Tuesday or Thursday, in response to Senator Segal's invitation to take part in this very important debate.

With your permission, I ask to save the time I have remaining for my speech.

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

(On motion of Senator Prud'homme, debate adjourned.)

[English]

CONFERENCE ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

MOTION TO SUPPORT LONDON DECLARATION—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein, pursuant to notice of March 11, 2009, moved:

That the Senate endorse the following Declaration, adopted by the Conference on Combating Antisemitism, held at London, United Kingdom, from February 15 to 17, 2009:

THE LONDON DECLARATION ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

Preamble

We, Representatives of our respective Parliaments from across the world, convening in London for the founding Conference and Summit of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism, draw the democratic world's attention to the resurgence of antisemitism as a potent force in politics, international affairs and society.

We note the dramatic increase in recorded antisemitic hate crimes and attacks targeting Jewish persons and property, and Jewish religious, educational and communal institutions.

We are alarmed at the resurrection of the old language of prejudice and its modern manifestations — in rhetoric and political action — against Jews, Jewish belief and practice and the State of Israel.

We are alarmed by Government-backed antisemitism in general, and state-backed genocidal antisemitism, in particular.

We, as Parliamentarians, affirm our commitment to a comprehensive programme of action to meet this challenge.

We call upon national governments, parliaments, international institutions, political and civic leaders, NGOs, and civil society to affirm democratic and human values, build societies based on respect and citizenship and combat any manifestations of antisemitism and discrimination.

We today in London resolve that;

Challenging Antisemitism

1. **Parliamentarians** shall expose, challenge, and isolate political actors who engage in hate against Jews and target the State of Israel as a Jewish collectivity;
2. **Parliamentarians** should speak out against antisemitism and discrimination directed against any minority, and guard against equivocation, hesitation and justification in the face of expressions of hatred;
3. **Governments** must challenge any foreign leader, politician or public figure who denies, denigrates or trivialises the Holocaust and must encourage civil society to be vigilant to this phenomenon and to openly condemn it;
4. **Parliamentarians** should campaign for their Government to uphold international commitments on combating antisemitism — including the OSCE Berlin Declaration and its eight main principles;
5. **The UN** should reaffirm its call for every member state to commit itself to the principles laid out in the Holocaust Remembrance initiative including specific and targeted policies to eradicate Holocaust denial and trivialisation;
6. **Governments and the UN** should resolve that never again will the institutions of the international community and the dialogue of nation states be abused to try to establish any legitimacy for antisemitism, including the singling out of Israel for discriminatory treatment in the international arena, and we will never witness — or be party to — another gathering like Durban in 2001;
7. **The OSCE** should encourage its member states to fulfil their commitments under the 2004 Berlin Declaration and to fully utilise programmes to combat antisemitism including the Law Enforcement programme LEOP;
8. **The European Union**, inter-state institutions and multilateral fora and religious communities must make a concerted effort to combat antisemitism and lead their member states to adopt proven and best practice methods of countering antisemitism;
9. **Leaders of all religious faiths** should be called upon to use all the means possible to combat antisemitism and all types of discriminatory hostilities among believers and society at large;
10. **The EU Council of Ministers** should convene a session on combating antisemitism relying on the outcomes of the London Conference on Combating Antisemitism and using the London Declaration as a basis.

Prohibitions

11. **Governments** should take appropriate and necessary action to prevent the broadcast of explicitly antisemitic programmes on satellite television channels, and to apply pressure on the host broadcast nation to take action to prevent the transmission of explicitly antisemitic programmes;
12. **Governments** should fully reaffirm and actively uphold the Genocide Convention, recognising that where there is incitement to genocide signatories automatically have an obligation to act. This may include sanctions against countries involved in or threatening to commit genocide or referral of the matter to the UN Security Council or initiate an inter-state complaint at the International Court of Justice;
13. **Parliamentarians** should legislate effective Hate Crime legislation recognising “hate aggravated crimes” and, where consistent with local legal standards, “incitement to hatred” offences and empower law enforcement agencies to convict;
14. **Governments** that are signatories to the Hate Speech Protocol of the Council of Europe ‘Convention on Cybercrime’ (and the ‘Additional Protocol to the Convention on cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems’) should enact domestic enabling legislation;

Identifying the threat

15. **Parliamentarians** should return to their legislature, Parliament or Assembly and establish inquiry scrutiny panels that are tasked with determining the existing nature and state of antisemitism in their countries and developing recommendations for government and civil society action;
16. **Parliamentarians** should engage with their governments in order to measure the effectiveness of existing policies and mechanisms in place and to recommend proven and best practice methods of countering antisemitism;
17. **Governments** should ensure they have publicly accessible incident reporting systems, and that statistics collected on antisemitism should be the subject of regular review and action by government and state prosecutors and that an adequate legislative framework is in place to tackle hate crime.
18. **Governments** must expand the use of the EUMC ‘working definition’ of antisemitism to inform policy of national and international organisations and as a basis for training material for use by Criminal Justice Agencies;
19. **Police services** should record allegations of hate crimes and incidents — including antisemitism — as routine part of reporting crimes;
20. **The OSCE** should work with member states to seek consistent data collection systems for antisemitism and hate crime.

Education, awareness and training

21. **Governments** should train Police, prosecutors and judges comprehensively. The training is essential if perpetrators of antisemitic hate crime are to be successfully apprehended, prosecuted, convicted and sentenced. The OSCE's Law enforcement Programme LEOP is a model initiative consisting of an international cadre of expert police officers training police in several countries;
22. **Governments** should develop teaching materials on the subjects of the Holocaust, racism, antisemitism and discrimination which are incorporated into the national school curriculum. All teaching materials ought to be based on values of comprehensiveness, inclusiveness, acceptance and respect and should be designed to assist students to recognise and counter antisemitism and all forms of hate speech;
23. **The OSCE** should encourage their member states to fulfill their commitments under the 2004 Berlin Declaration and to fully utilise programmes to combat antisemitism including the Law Enforcement programme LEOP;
24. **Governments** should include a comprehensive training programme across the Criminal Justice System using programmes such as the LEOP programme;
25. **Education Authorities** should ensure that freedom of speech is upheld within the law and to protect students and staff from illegal antisemitic discourse and a hostile environment in whatever form it takes including calls for boycotts;

Community Support

26. **The Criminal Justice System** should publicly notify local communities when antisemitic hate crimes are prosecuted by the courts to build community confidence in reporting and pursuing convictions through the Criminal Justice system;
27. **Parliamentarians** should engage with civil society institutions and leading NGOs to create partnerships that bring about change locally, domestically and globally, and support efforts that encourage Holocaust education, inter-religious dialogue and cultural exchange;

Media and the Internet

28. **Governments** should acknowledge the challenge and opportunity of the growing new forms of communication;
29. **Media Regulatory Bodies** should utilise the EUMC 'Working Definition of antisemitism' to inform media standards;

30. **Governments** should take appropriate and necessary action to prevent the broadcast of antisemitic programmes on satellite television channels, and to apply pressure on the host broadcast nation to take action to prevent the transmission of antisemitic programmes;
31. **The OSCE** should seek ways to coordinate the response of member states to combat the use of the internet to promote incitement to hatred;
32. **Law enforcement authorities** should use domestic "hate crime", "incitement to hatred" and other legislation as well as other means to mitigate and, where permissible, to prosecute "Hate on the Internet" where racist and antisemitic content is hosted, published and written;
33. **An international task force** of Internet specialists comprised of parliamentarians and experts should be established to create common metrics to measure antisemitism and other manifestations of hate online and to develop policy recommendations and practical instruments for Governments and international frameworks to tackle these problems.

Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism

34. **Participants** will endeavour to maintain contact with fellow delegates through working group framework; communicating successes or requesting further support where required;
35. **Delegates** should reconvene for the next ICCA Conference in Canada in 2010, become an active member of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition and promote and prioritise the London Declaration on Combating Antisemitism.

He said: Honourable senators, I intended to speak at great length on this resolution but today there was a very important and seminal meeting on the other side. An all-party group is being formed led by Scott Reid M.P. to establish a special committee to examine the subject of this material. I was at their meeting, and I would hope that senators on both sides would participate so it is not just a committee made up of members of Parliament of all parties but would also include the Senate. They will take this matter up. I would hope both caucuses next week will take that up and see if there are volunteers on both sides willing to participate.

As honourable senators know, this matter has been before the Senate for close to a decade. I have tried to get it referred to committee and now the other house has taken the leadership on this. I hope we can join in their effort.

(On motion of Senator Grafstein, debate adjourned.)

• (1550)

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

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

That the sitting be suspended to await the announcement of Royal Assent, to reassemble at the call of the Chair with a fifteen minute bell.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

[English]

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Honourable senators, do I have permission to leave the chair?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(The sitting of the Senate was suspended.)

• (1740)

[Translation]

(The sitting of the Senate was resumed.)

ROYAL ASSENT

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

RIDEAU HALL

March 26, 2009

Mr. Speaker,

I have the honour to inform you that the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada,

signified royal assent by written declaration to the bills listed in the Schedule to this letter on the 26th day of March, 2009, at 5:05 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

Sheila-Marie Cook
Secretary to the Governor General

The Honourable
The Speaker of the Senate
Ottawa

Bills assented to Thursday, March 26, 2009:

An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2009 (*Bill C-21, Chapter 3, 2009*)

An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2010 (*Bill C-22, Chapter 4, 2009*)

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

That when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, March 31, 2009, at 2 p.m.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, March 31, 2009, at 2 p.m.)

THE SENATE OF CANADA

PROGRESS OF LEGISLATION

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

(2nd Session, 40th Parliament)

Thursday, March 26, 2009

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

GOVERNMENT BILLS (SENATE)

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.
S-2	An Act to amend the Customs Act	09/01/29	09/03/03	National Security and Defence					
S-3	An Act to amend the Energy Efficiency Act	09/01/29	09/02/24	Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources	09/03/11	0	09/03/12		

GOVERNMENT BILLS (HOUSE OF COMMONS)

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.
C-10	An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on January 27, 2009 and related fiscal measures.	09/03/04	09/03/05	National Finance	09/03/12	0	09/03/12	*09/03/12	2/09
C-12	An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2009 (<i>Appropriation Act No. 4, 2008-2009</i>)	09/02/12	09/02/24	—	—	—	09/02/26	09/02/26	1/09
C-17	An Act to recognize Beechwood Cemetery as the national cemetery of Canada	09/03/10	09/03/12	Social Affairs, Science and Technology					
C-9	An Act to amend the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992	09/03/26							
C-21	An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2009 (<i>Appropriation Act No. 5, 2008-2009</i>)	09/03/24	09/03/25	—	—	—	09/03/26	*09/03/26	3/09
C-22	An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2010 (<i>Appropriation Act No. 1, 2009-2010</i>)	09/03/24	09/03/25	—	—	—	09/03/26	*09/03/26	4/09

COMMONS PUBLIC BILLS

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

SENATE PUBLIC BILLS

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.
S-201	An Act to amend the Library and Archives of Canada Act (National Portrait Gallery) (Sen. Grafstein)	09/01/27							
S-202	An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (repeal of fixed election dates) (Sen. Murray, P.C.)	09/01/27							
S-203	An Act to amend the Business Development Bank of Canada Act (municipal infrastructure bonds) and to make a consequential amendment to another Act (Sen. Grafstein)	09/01/27							
S-204	An Act to amend the National Capital Act (establishment and protection of Gatineau Park) (Sen. Spivak)	09/01/27							
S-205	An Act to amend the Criminal Code (suicide bombings) (Sen. Grafstein)	09/01/27							
S-206	An Act respecting the office of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (Sen. McCoy)	09/01/27							
S-207	An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (foreign postings) (Sen. Carstairs, P.C.)	09/01/27	Bill withdrawn pursuant to Speaker's Ruling 09/02/24						
S-208	An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (clean drinking water) (Sen. Grafstein)	09/01/27							
S-209	An Act to amend the Criminal Code (protection of children) (Sen. Herveux-Payette, P.C.)	09/01/27							
S-210	An Act respecting World Autism Awareness Day (Sen. Munson)	09/01/27	09/03/03	Social Affairs, Science and Technology					
S-211	An Act to require the Minister of the Environment to establish, in co-operation with the provinces, an agency with the power to identify and protect Canada's watersheds that will constitute sources of drinking water in the future (Sen. Grafstein)	09/01/27							
S-212	An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 (Sen. Banks)	09/01/27							

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.
S-213	An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (carbon offset tax credit) (Sen. Mitchell)	09/01/27							
S-214	An Act to regulate securities and to provide for a single securities commission for Canada (Sen. Grafstein)	09/01/27							
S-215	An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (Property qualifications of Senators) (Sen. Banks)	09/01/27	09/03/24	Legal and Constitutional Affairs					
S-216	An Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act and the Auditor General Act (Involvement of Parliament) (Sen. Banks)	09/01/27	09/03/11	Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources					
S-217	An Act respecting a National Philanthropy Day (Sen. Grafstein)	09/01/27							
S-218	An Act to amend the Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act (Sen. Joyal, P.C.)	09/01/29							
S-219	An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (student loans) (Sen. Goldstein)	09/02/03							
S-220	An Act respecting commercial electronic messages (Sen. Goldstein)	09/02/03							
S-221	An Act to amend the Financial Administration Act (borrowing of money) (Sen. Murray, P.C.)	09/02/04							
S-222	An Act to amend the International Boundary Waters Treaty Act (bulk water removal) (Sen. Murray, P.C.)	09/02/04							
S-223	An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and to enact certain other measures in order to provide assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking (Sen. Phalen)	09/02/04							
S-224	An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Parliament of Canada Act (vacancies) (Sen. Moore)	09/02/05							
S-225	An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (oath of citizenship) (Sen. Segal)	09/02/10							
S-226	An Act to amend the Criminal Code (lottery schemes) (Sen. Lapointe)	09/02/11							
S-227	An Act to amend the Income Tax Act and the Excise Tax Act (tax relief for Nunavik) (Sen. Watt)	09/02/11							
S-228	An Act to amend the Financial Administration Act and the Bank of Canada Act (quarterly financial reports) (Sen. Segal)	09/03/03							
S-229	An Act to amend the Fisheries Act (commercial seal fishing) (Sen. Harb)	09/03/03							

No.	Title	1 st	2 nd	Committee	Report	Amend	3 rd	R.A.	Chap.
S-230	An Act to amend the Bank of Canada Act (credit rating agency) (Sen. Grafstein)	09/03/10							

PRIVATE BILLS

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

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