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Tuesday, March 16, 2010



THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA
SPEAKER

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, March 16, 2010

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

Prayers.

[*Translation*]

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

CONGRATULATIONS ON FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Marie-P. Poulin: Honourable senators, on March 20 the International Organization of La Francophonie, the OIF, will be celebrating the fortieth anniversary of its founding.

It was on March 20, 1970, that a number of countries met and adopted the mandate of promoting the French language throughout the world while sharing humanist values based on peace and sustainable development.

Now, 40 years later, the OIF includes 70 states and governments, 56 of them full members and 14 of them observers. Together they make up more than one third of the member nations of the United Nations.

Here are some facts: first, the OIF represents more than 870 million people on five continents; second, it has observer status at the United Nations General Assembly, in recognition of the role it plays in the world; third, it has entered into some 33 cooperation agreements with regional and international bodies; fourth, French is the official language of 32 member states of the OIF; fifth, TV5, the French-language television channel, is the third-largest international television network in the world, broadcasting in 202 countries, with an estimated audience of over 207 million households; sixth, OIF's members account for 19 per cent of world trade; seventh, French ranks third among languages most widely used on the Web.

Honourable senators, we are all very proud of having the privilege of living in a country where French is one of the two official languages. We are proud to be active members of the International Organization of La Francophonie, but we must work together to develop the Canadian institutions that contribute to the quality and encourage the learning of this beautiful language of our country.

PROROGATION

Hon. Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis: Honourable senators, last week I was unable to complete my statement on the biased nature of media reporting during prorogation.

I would like to take a few seconds to conclude.

The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien prorogued Parliament four times. The Right Honourable Pierre Trudeau prorogued Parliament eight times.

Honourable senators, prorogation is a prime ministerial prerogative entrenched in the Constitution of Canada. Over the past 143 years, Parliament has been prorogued 105 times.

It seems to me both fair and useful to set the facts straight on this matter, which caused such a flap in the media in February.

[*English*]

CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, last week we saw the beginning of celebrations marking the fortieth anniversary of relations between Canada and the People's Republic of China. There will be several events throughout the year to mark the occasion. The first event took place at the National Arts Centre with a wonderful evening of music presented by an orchestra of over 80 Chinese musicians playing traditional Chinese instruments.

On October 13, 1970, honourable senators, Canada officially recognized the People's Republic of China. In 1973, Pierre Elliott Trudeau became the first prime minister to pay an official visit to China, helping expand those fledgling Canada-China relations. With the foundation of diplomatic relations in place, the two countries turned to their economic relationship.

In 1973, Canada and China signed the Canada-Chinese Trade Agreement, which allowed for mutual extension of "most favoured nation" status. The same year, a Canadian trade fair was held in Beijing, attracting over 600 Canadian officials and business leaders. It was the first such trade fair attended by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. The two countries also established a joint economic and trade committee that provided a forum for discussions of economic and trade-related concerns.

By 2003, China had become Canada's second largest trading partner after the United States. In the decade 1993 to 2003, trade between Canada and the People's Republic of China increased fivefold.

China's economy has grown to be the second largest single-country economy in the world, next to the United States, recently surpassing that of Japan. China is also the world's largest single-country exporter in the world, having recently surpassed Germany in that regard.

China has weathered the economic downturn very well, posting an 8 per cent economic growth last year, while most other nations of the world have had negative growth. A strong Chinese economy presents great opportunities for Canada. This rapidly developing economy has always held Canada in special regard.

Prime Minister Harper and his cabinet have recognized the potential for Canada. Visits by the Prime Minister and several other cabinet ministers took place last year. Those visits resulted in a series of agreements and exchanges, and we have those visits to build on, honourable senators, in the year to come.

Honourable senators, many events will take place this year to recognize the fortieth year of relations between Canada and China, and I hope honourable senators will take the opportunity to help expand that relationship both culturally and economically as the year progresses.

• (1410)

APOLOGY TO RESIDENTS OF AFRICVILLE

Hon. Donald H. Oliver: Honourable senators, it was a long time coming — a very long time. February 24 was a great day for Nova Scotia's African-Canadian community. On that day, the Mayor of Halifax, Peter Kelly, finally apologized to the former residents of Africville and their descendants "for what they have endured for almost 50 years, ever since the loss of their community."

For more than 150 years, Africville, a Black community in the north end of Halifax with 400 residents, existed peacefully. Life centered around the Seaview United Baptist Church. They paid their taxes and were honourable church-going citizens. Yet, no municipal services were provided: no water, no sewer, no public street lighting or electricity. The road grader would not even level out the potholes in the dirt road. Clearly, Africville was treated with neglect and contempt.

As the popular concept of urban renewal took place, the city needed the Africville lands for industrial development. In the 1960s, Halifax City Council voted to completely destroy Africville to permit construction of a bridge linking Halifax with Dartmouth. All of the private homes were bulldozed as soon as new housing arrangements were signed. Often, furniture, clothing, dishes and personal effects were loaded into city dump trucks and moved. Yes, garbage trucks. Africville was demolished.

Individual families were often separated and relocated to slum housing, and some Africville residents received cash compensation of less than \$500 for their expropriated homes. The Mayor of Halifax at the time made a specific promise to provide continuing assistance to help residents adjust to the forced relocation. However, in January 1964, the city council motion authorizing the relocation contained no such clause.

The story of Africville is truly one of the horror stories of Canada. These Black citizens lost everything — their homes, their church and their community.

More than 40 years later, the Halifax Regional Municipality has formally apologized to Africville residents by offering a settlement that includes a \$3 million contribution to the Africville Genealogy Society, a group established to capture the memories of Africville and to keep the community spirit alive. The Seaview Municipal Park will be renamed Africville. Land adjacent to the park will also be transferred to the society to build a replica of the church and an Africville interpretive centre.

[Senator Day]

At the press conference, Mayor Kelly said:

The repercussions of what happened in Africville linger to this day. They haunt us in the form of lost opportunities for young people who were never nurtured in the rich tradition, culture and heritage of Africville. They play out in lingering feelings of hurt and distrust, emotions that this municipality continues to work hard with the African Nova Scotia community to overcome. For all the distressing consequences, we apologize.

Honourable senators, Mayor Kelly also said:

The future is a blank page and, starting today, we hold the pen with which we can write a shared tomorrow.

[Translation]

THE WEEK OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

Hon. Andrée Champagne: Honourable senators, as the Chair of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, I, too, am pleased to rise today in this chamber to recognize the Week of La Francophonie, held from March 15 to 20, 2010. Moreover, March 20, the Day of La Francophonie, marks the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the International Organization of La Francophonie.

La Francophonie comprises 70 member states and governments, which together represent 870 million people worldwide, including 200 million French speakers. Here in Canada, over 9.5 million Canadians speak the language of Molière. French is taught in our schools, used in many courts of law and used widely in print and electronic media. While French must coexist with English, which is spoken by over 300 million North Americans, it remains at the heart of our day-to-day lives.

Often through hard-fought battles and ongoing efforts, the French language has been able to maintain its place in government affairs. In this precinct of parliamentary democracy, one quarter of all parliamentarians are francophones.

And what of French culture and its enormous contribution to the spread of the French language, not only here in Canada but around the world? Our singers, composers and actors have climbed the greatest stages. The work of our filmmakers is seen on screens around the world. Our writers and playwrights win prestigious awards, and our painters depict the reality and culture of our homeland. These individuals are the greatest ambassadors of Canada's francophone culture.

Some of the saddest and happiest recent events have demonstrated the empathy and pride of Canada's francophone community.

The day after the terrible earthquake that struck the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince in January, we witnessed the speed with which the francophone community — and indeed, all Canadians — rushed to show their solidarity with the people of Haiti.

At the Vancouver Olympic Games, in addition to the impressive performance of our athletes, how refreshing it was to see the growing bilingualism of Canadian athletes.

As we celebrate the Week of La Francophonie, we cannot rest on our laurels and let down our guard, despite the progress we have made in recent decades.

It is our duty as francophone parliamentarians to promote and defend the French language in our institutions and across this country, just as it is our duty to do so beyond our borders.

That is why we are fully committed to participating in the various international forums of La Francophonie. The Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie is a pillar of this great consultative assembly of La Francophonie, based on the sharing of the French language and the universal values of peace, democracy, justice, human rights and progress.

Please join me in celebrating La Francophonie, “building the Francophonie of tomorrow” and ensuring that the cultural diversity of francophone countries continues to be a driving force of dialogue and peace with a view to development.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I would like to take advantage of the statement by Senator Champagne to draw your attention to the presence in our gallery of several guests who are attending the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Network of Women Parliamentarians: Florine Pary-Mille from Belgium; Joséphine Nze-Mouenidiambou from Gabon; Amissétou Affo Djobo Oloude from Benin; Geneviève Colot from France; Stéphanie Vallée from Quebec; Minono Eyoum Epoube from Cameroon; France Gélinas from Ontario; and Mila-Bellè Telou Epse Belei from Togo.

Our visitors are guests of the Honourable Senator Losier-Cool and, on behalf of all the senators, I welcome them to the Senate of Canada.

[English]

LAKE WINNIPEG WATER DIVERSION PROJECT

Hon. Janis G. Johnson: Honourable senators, I bring to your attention new developments regarding a controversial proposal to drain water from the United States into the Lake Winnipeg watershed.

You may recall that the Garrison Diversion Project intends to take water from the Missouri River, use it for irrigation in North Dakota, and then pass it down into Lake Winnipeg via the Red River.

As a Manitoba senator and long-time defender of Lake Winnipeg, I can assure you that this is a dangerous project. Lake Winnipeg is already under incredible stress, and we in Manitoba have been fighting desperately to save this vast and magnificent lake.

The lake is threatened by invasive species, climate change and agricultural runoff, which increases the fertility of the water and causes enormous algae blooms. These malodorous clumps of green slime float in the centre of the lake and are large enough to be seen by satellite photography. These algae blooms consume oxygen and suffocate fish and small organisms. Eventually, Lake

Winnipeg could follow the same fate as Lake Erie and become a dead basin with drifting rotting birds and fish. We cannot handle agricultural runoff from North Dakota, and we do not need any more invasive species that will force our native fish and aquatic organisms out of the system.

These two systems have been separate for thousands of years, and foreign species could cause irreparable damage to our valuable commercial fishery.

We have seen this happen before with lampreys and zebra mussels in the Great Lakes. We cannot take this risk with Lake Winnipeg, especially when it is already so stressed with agricultural runoff and algae contamination.

• (1420)

The State of North Dakota has not shown much sympathy for our legitimate concerns. I spoke about this project approximately 13 years ago and it has been a long and simmering controversial water diversion project. Therefore, I am extremely happy to inform honourable senators that the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia has made a decision ordering the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to take a hard look at the threat the water transfer poses to Canada’s environment. This is critical and a first. The U.S. District Court is also confirming an injunction that stops further work on the controversial project. In its decision, the court actually agreed — after all these years — that the consequences of having foreign species move into Canada might be catastrophic.

The Lake Winnipeg basin is the second largest in North America. It drains four Canadian provinces and four American states. This is a geographical area — and I do not think people realize this — stretching from the Rocky Mountains to northwestern Ontario, covering 100 million square kilometres.

Many American legislators are onside with us, as are landowners and scientists. All vehemently oppose this project. Honourable senators know better than anyone else that it also serves to highlight the lack of legislation in Canada and the United States barring movement of water from one drainage area to another.

Adèle Hurley, Director of the Program on Water Issues at the Munk Centre for International Studies of the University of Toronto, said the two countries need to develop laws to “keep water in its natural basins” because transfers “simply set off a new round of environmental issues. . . .”

We have seen this for so long with regard to Lake Winnipeg and we could not agree more.

THE LABRADORIA MURAL

Hon. Ethel Cochrane: Honourable senators, last week I was delighted to be in Happy Valley-Goose Bay for the official commemoration of the stunning Labradoria clay mural. Work on the mural began in November 2006 and, today, this breathtaking piece of art hangs in the foyer of the Lawrence O’Brien Arts Centre.

Initially, the project began with a few tiles during the Labrador Creative Arts Festival when guest artist Linda Faulks introduced the youth to clay. From there, art teacher and festival coordinator Dorrie Brown continued the work, guiding the young artists to answer this question: What do you think of when you think of Labrador? The artists — then ranging in age from 12 to 18 years and representing Innu, Inuit, Metis and non-Aboriginal cultures of Labrador — responded eagerly and thoughtfully. The result is a truly striking and powerful display of images that sprung from these young minds that they carefully and skilfully transferred, by hand, to clay tiles.

Honourable senators, anyone familiar with Labrador knows that it is truly the Big Land. It is a testament to the passion and vision of Dorrie Brown and the artists that this project overcame the challenges of time, space and money. Ultimately, a number of benefactors stepped up to help with the more than \$30,000 in costs associated with the project. Without a doubt, this was money well spent. This was a unique opportunity that opened a world of possibilities for these young people from small, isolated communities.

I was overwhelmed by the incredible young artists I met and by the remarkable community spirit and support that exists in Labrador. Each of the mural's 54 clay tiles presents an image that speaks to the cultural diversity, the strength and the ways of Labrador and her people.

At the ceremony, Dorrie Brown said to the young artists: "We're celebrating you because you're special." Honourable senators, they are special beyond words. I commend everyone associated with this project, but especially Dorrie Brown and the artists for their contribution to such a moving and a powerful mural. Indeed, this project leaves a rich and lasting legacy.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

NATIONAL FINANCE

REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 104 TABLED

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 104 of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table the first report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, which deals with the expenses incurred by the committee during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament.

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 75.)

[Senator Cochrane]

[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS

REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 104 TABLED

Hon. Janis G. Johnson: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 104 of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table the first report of the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights, which deals with the expenses incurred by the committee during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament.

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 76.)

RULES, PROCEDURES AND THE RIGHTS OF PARLIAMENT

REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 104 TABLED

Hon. David P. Smith: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 104 of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table the first report of the Standing Senate Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament, which details expenses incurred by the committee during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament.

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 78.)

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 104 TABLED

Hon. Maria Chaput: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 104 of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table the first report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, which deals with the expenses incurred by the committee during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament.

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 79.)

[English]

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 104 TABLED

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 104 of the *Rules of the Senate*, I have the honour to table the first report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, which deals with the expenses incurred by the committee during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament.

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 80.)

CANADIAN NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

VISIT TO NEW YORK AND NEW ORLEANS OF
THE COMMITTEE ON THE CIVIL DIMENSION
OF SECURITY, OCTOBER 1-4, 2009—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association to the visit to New York and New Orleans of the Committee on Civil Dimensions of Security, held in New York and New Orleans, United States of America, from October 1 to 4, 2009.

CANADA-EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS
OF ARCTIC REGION, NOVEMBER 18-19, 2009—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association to the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, held in Helsinki, Finland, from November 18 to 19, 2009.

CANADIAN NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

VISIT TO HELSINKI OF POLITICAL COMMITTEE'S
SUB-COMMITTEE ON TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS,
SEPTEMBER 21-24, 2009—REPORT TABLED

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association to the visit to Helsinki of the Political Committee's Sub-Committee on TransAtlantic Relations, held in Helsinki, Finland, from September 21 to 24, 2009.

CANADA-EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT-CANADA
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETING,
NOVEMBER 9-13, 2009—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association to the Thirty-second European Parliament-Canada Inter-parliamentary Meeting, held in Brussels, Belgium, from November 9 to 13, 2009.

• (1430)

CANADIAN NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

SUB-COMMITTEE ON TRANSATLANTIC
DEFENCE AND SECURITY CO-OPERATION,
SEPTEMBER 7-11, 2009—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table in the Senate, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its

participation at the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation, held in Ottawa, Kingston, Trenton and Toronto, Canada, from September 7 to 11, 2009.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE
TO STUDY NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE
POLICIES AND REFER PAPERS AND EVIDENCE SINCE
FIRST SESSION OF THIRTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

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

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence be authorized to examine and report on the national security and defence policies of Canada, including, but not limited to:

- a) the capability of National Defence to defend and protect the interests, people and territory of Canada both here and abroad; and its ability to prevent and respond to a national emergency or attack;
- b) the role of our Forces in Afghanistan and post 2011;
- c) the relationship with NATO, NORAD, the UN, other international bodies and our allies; the role and use of reservists; the effectiveness of humanitarian efforts such as Haiti; and the Canada First Defence Strategy;
- d) the working relationships among the various agencies involved in intelligence gathering, security, protection and defence, and how they collect, coordinate, analyze and disseminate information and whether these functions might be enhanced;
- e) the existing mechanisms to review the performance and activities of the various agencies involved in security, intelligence, defence and humanitarian assistance;
- f) the security of our borders and critical infrastructure and the impact on consumers, transport systems, border security and budgets;

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the committee on this subject since the beginning of the First session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the committee; and

That the committee report to the Senate no later than June 16, 2011 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 90 days after the tabling of the final report.

QUESTION PERIOD

CABINET

PROROGATION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In the midst of the holiday season in December, Prime Minister Harper shut down Parliament, leaving 35 government bills to die on the Order Paper. The Prime Minister defended this move as a “routine procedure” that would enable his government to “recalibrate” its agenda. It was not to avoid embarrassing questions or inquiries, or to shut down the committees in the other place, or even to gain control of the Senate committees, but simply to recalibrate the government’s legislative agenda.

The Senate is now in its third week back and not one single piece of government legislation has been tabled in this chamber. Surely the government could have at least tabled some of the 35 bills that died on the Order Paper.

Given this lack of legislative business on our Order Paper, can the Leader of the Government in the Senate explain to this chamber exactly what was achieved by this so-called “recalibration”? How did Canadians benefit from this two-month suspension of Parliament when the voices of their elected representatives were silenced?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank Senator Cowan for the question. The actual number of days that Parliament did not sit was 22 days, not two or three months. It was 22 days because Parliament was not scheduled to return until the end of January. There was also a week off in February. If one checks the calendar, it was 22 days.

I think the answer to Senator Cowan’s question is clear. There was a great deal of detail in the Speech from the Throne, and also in the budget. The opposition was so impressed that it has not asked a question on either item, in either chamber. In terms of government legislation, I can assure the honourable senator opposite that we will be tabling government legislation in the Senate shortly.

Senator Cowan: It is not only the Senate Order Paper that is empty of government legislative business — the situation in the other place is almost as bad.

Senator Tkachuk: Where is Mr. Ignatieff?

Senator Cowan: Mr. Ignatieff tied with you in the last poll, Senator Tkachuk.

As of today, only three government bills have been introduced in the other place. Canadians cannot but wonder whether this government has a serious legislative agenda, much less a recalibrated one. If, after two months of recalibration, all the government can manage is the introduction of three bills in Parliament, including the new youth justice bill that was introduced today, how can Canadians believe that this government took more than an extended vacation?

Senator LeBreton: I thank Senator Cowan for the question. As honourable senators know, the government, in consultation with the opposition, is able to bring much of this legislation back in its existing form. The Prime Minister, members of the government and members of cabinet did a great deal of work on both the Throne Speech and Budget 2010.

In terms of working our way through the second year of our stimulus package and looking at ways to reduce the deficit, Senator Cowan would know it is much easier for governments to announce spending programs and to spend money. It is much more difficult to look for areas where we can save money. There was much time and effort spent on that, and I think we are already seeing the results of it in terms of the response to the budget by leading economists.

The time spent from January 4 was spent in hard work, not only on the Throne Speech, which has many initiatives, but also on Budget 2010. Again, so successful were we that we have received the praise of leading economists. The market responded very well to the budget. We were so successful that there was nothing in the Throne Speech or the budget that the opposition saw fit to question.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Canadians have just learned that this federal Conservative government is cutting back funding to our Community Access Program, CAP sites. In fact, in my own province of Prince Edward Island, all of the sites — 38 in total — will be closed by the end of March.

This cut means that people will lose jobs, but it also eliminates access to information and opportunities for many Canadians, especially in rural areas. Not all Canadians have access to the Internet in their homes. In my province, one third of Islanders do not have access to the Internet in their homes. That is well below the national average.

Islanders use these CAP sites. Therefore, why is this government cutting back and closing so many of these CAP sites which provide such a valuable service?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank Senator Callbeck for the question. I regret to advise the honourable senator that she is totally misinformed. The Community Access Program has not been cut. It is being fully funded and, in addition to that, Minister Clement and the government have committed \$200 million over three years for rural broadband service.

Senator Callbeck: Why are we losing 38 CAP sites on Prince Edward Island? It is a federal jurisdiction; the federal government has cut our money and we are losing those sites that Islanders used when they were looking for work to be active in their communities and to learn about federal government services.

I ask the Leader of the Government in the Senate why the federal government is closing 38 CAP sites in Prince Edward Island.

Senator LeBreton: I hope *The Guardian* has not already written its editorial on this. Senator Callbeck is mistaken about this subject. The Community Access Program will be fully funded for the fiscal year 2010-11.

Senator Comeau: She cannot take “yes” for an answer.

• (1440)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Hon. Carolyn Stewart Olsen: Honourable senators, as we cheer on our Paralympian athletes competing in Vancouver, we also recognize the contributions made each and every day to our society and economy by the over 4 million Canadians living with a disability.

Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate please tell all honourable senators what action has been taken by the Government of Canada in recent days to protect and promote the rights of Canadians with disabilities?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank Senator Stewart Olsen for her excellent question, which was based on fact.

Last Thursday morning, at the United Nations in New York City, Canada ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with the support of the provinces and territories.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator LeBreton: I am sure we are all proud of our Paralympians who are doing an outstanding job at the Paralympic Games in British Columbia and winning many medals — gold, silver and bronze.

Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are required to promote, protect and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities, and to ensure that they enjoy full equality under the law. Canada is proud to have participated in the development of the convention. The Council of Canadians with Disabilities stated in a press release that it:

... applauds the Government of Canada's leadership during the drafting and the steadfast commitment to a CRPD that is built upon Canadian values of equality, non-discrimination and the duty to accommodate.

Our government remains committed to removing obstacles and creating opportunities for persons with disabilities, and we applaud everyone who helped to make this convention a reality.

FINANCE

BUDGET 2010—ARTS AND CULTURE

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, the 2010 Budget contains nothing new for arts and culture, an important sector of the economy that has been largely left out of the stimulus initiative. The government's past pledge not to cancel spending was the best it could do. Why has the government failed to recognize the importance of the arts and culture sector to Canada's overall economic future, and why has it not given this sector a substantial share in the stimulus initiative?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): This question is like the line of questioning last week. The fact is that there are significant funds in the budget for arts and culture.

This question is like Senator Carstairs' question on why ParticipACTION was not for seniors. Apparently, she was advised that was the case when she called someone at ParticipACTION. A simple check of ParticipACTION's website would have shown Senator Carstairs that there is information directed entirely to seniors.

Honourable senators, there are many references in the budget to our ongoing commitment to arts and culture. If there had been nothing in the budget for arts and culture, that community would have made their views known loud and clear.

Senator Hubley: I will quote a couple of comments that have been made since this cutback:

We're of course disappointed there's nothing new. But it is very clear that we are facing an avalanche of cuts to come and nobody is going to escape it.

Members of the film, television and new media industry expressed their particular disappointment. In light of the fact that they had been involved in extensive meetings in Ottawa, they, too, were disappointed in the budget. It is not correct to say that the arts did not respond.

We know the government's stimulus program focuses mainly on the manufacturing and construction sectors. Recent reports confirm the predictable results. Women do not benefit directly from the stimulus program as much as men. Will the government change its stimulus program to benefit women by including sectors of the economy that are not particularly dominated by men?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I noticed that Senator Hubley changed the tenor of her question and quoted someone about cuts to come. I will tell you what our government has done for arts and culture.

The government increased spending on arts and culture by 8 per cent. We increased direct support to arts and culture organizations by putting a record \$181 million into the Canada Council for the Arts. Through our Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality, we committed \$14 million for arts and culture in minority language communities. Funding for our national museums is at its highest level. We doubled support for the National Arts Training Program across Canada. We have

reviewed spending to ensure maximum benefit goes to artists and cultural groups and is in the interests of taxpayers. Our Economic Action Plan invested \$540 million over two years in arts, culture and heritage. This year we will continue to invest in upgrades, repairs and renovations to local theatres, museums, cultural centres, festivals, children's programs and first-class training institutions.

It is somewhat of a stretch, honourable senators, to say that this government has done nothing for arts and culture.

[Translation]

HERITAGE

PUBLICATIONS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Hon. Maria Chaput: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In francophone Manitoba, we have small community newspapers that usually have about 200 subscribers and put out 10 or 12 issues a year. That is very small.

One example is *Le Montagnard* in Saint-Léon, which has been publishing for 30 years thanks to its volunteer workers, subscriptions, advertisements and the Publications Assistance Program, which provided postal subsidies. This program will be discontinued at the end of March and replaced with a new program called the Canada Periodical Fund. However, this new fund for periodicals requires a minimum production of 5,000 copies per year. Without postal subsidies, francophones living in minority-language communities will lose their small newspapers, as the production of these publications is below the new program's criterion of 5,000 copies per year.

I ask the leader: Should this new fund not meet its obligations under the Official Languages Act and its responsibilities for the development and advancement of official language minority communities?

Would the leader please find out whether the criteria for the new Publications Assistance Program can be changed so that this program also supports our small French-language newspapers in official language minority communities?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I appreciate Senator Chaput's questions and take them seriously. This is a good question that deals with a small periodical.

I will take the question as notice. I am sure that the policy takes into account the Official Languages Act. This question is specific and I will take it as notice and provide a written answer.

INDIAN AFFAIRS

ABORIGINAL HEALING FOUNDATION

Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston: Honourable senators, my question relates to funding for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. As the Leader of the Government will know, this body has been charged

[Senator LeBreton]

with disbursing funds provided by the federal government to promote healing among Aboriginal people throughout our country. There is no new money announced in the budget for the healing foundation, and funding will cease at the end of March, except for 12 regional centres that will continue for two years, I believe. One hundred and thirty-four community projects will cease to operate.

Much work has been done on the Aboriginal residential schools issue. The government has agreed to a settlement for the abuse, and there is a process in place to deal with the claims. The government and churches have apologized, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is beginning its work. A great deal has been done, but a tremendous amount of healing still needs to take place.

• (1450)

What will the government do to ensure that residential school survivors and their families receive the support and help they need to continue healing? How will the government ensure that the programs reach those who need them most? Will the government consider allocating funds to help maintain the work of community-based projects?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I am proud to be part of a government that officially apologized after many years of nothing being done on the residential school issue.

The government thanks and appreciates the Aboriginal Healing Foundation for its dedication in providing healing programs and services to address the experiences of survivors of the residential schools, their families and their communities. Twelve healing centres will continue to provide services until March 2012. We are fulfilling our commitment to provide emotional and mental health support to former residential school students and their family members.

Budget 2010, which the honourable senator's colleague seemed to think contained nothing, announced an additional \$199 million over the next two fiscal years. The additional funding provided in the budget will enable Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Service Canada and Health Canada to meet the needs of former residential school students. With the additional funds and the 12 healing centres, the government will continue with this work, although a great deal of it, as the honourable senator has indicated, has already been done by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, and we appreciate their efforts.

[Translation]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

REGULATIONS FOR REFUGEE STATUS

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, first I to thank the Leader of the Government in the Senate for her diligence in following up last Thursday with her colleague, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism.

I would like to go back to the topic raised by Senator Dallaire: the deportation of Rwandan nationals. Following the Rwandan genocide in 1994, Canada imposed a moratorium on deportations

to Rwanda. The moratorium was lifted on January 23, 2010, at a time when the government was advising its own citizens not to travel to Rwanda and when many cases of persecution and 16 cases of murder of witnesses to genocide had recently been reported. Why, then, was the moratorium lifted?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the issue of removal from Canada of individuals is handled by border security officials.

In terms of the moratorium, I will take Senator Tardif's question as notice. As honourable senators know, issues with regard to travel advisories to Canadians or citizens in this country and their status are complex.

However, with regard to Senator Tardif's specific question on the moratorium, I will take the question as notice.

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: Some of the Rwandan nationals threatened with deportation speak French, are studying in French and have integrated into francophone minority communities, including a number in my community in Edmonton.

Could the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration not regularize the status of these people in order to support and promote the vitality and renewal of francophone minority communities?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Again, all the conditions and the regulations whereby Canadians come into this country, whether through the immigration process, the refugee process or other means, are complex, as honourable senators know. Dealing with these individual cases is difficult.

With regard to the specific question Senator Tardif raises about Rwandan individuals who are living in Canada and seeking to make Canada their home, I will take the question as notice and refer it to the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism.

[Translation]

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: Honourable senators, the justice system that has been set up in Rwanda because of the sheer number of people who committed genocide is called the Gacaca. Basically, it allows individuals to express their regret for the crimes they committed, and then the community takes action to reintegrate them into the community.

However, rape is a crime that does not come under the Gacaca, but rather the regular courts. What happens is that some people claim they did not commit rape. That puts them back under the Gacaca system, and before they can be identified by their victims, they murder them. Currently, more than 170 women have been killed for reasons that are still unknown. It appears that some individuals are eliminating the main witness against them, the victim of their rape.

This is an issue I would like to bring to the minister's attention. When nationals are sent back, it must be taken into consideration that they may be people whose lives are at risk because of a rape they suffered, which they may not talk about openly.

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, it is hard for Canadians to fathom such horrific circumstances. I will add Senator Dallaire's comments to the question of Senator Tardif when I refer it to my colleague, the Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Poirier, seconded by the Honourable Senator Runciman:

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. Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall: Honourable senators, I am pleased to deliver my maiden speech today in this historic chamber. I am sure that other senators who served as elected members of Parliament, members of legislative assemblies and members of the house of assembly enjoyed the familiarity of the chamber.

Honourable senators, I have had the honour and privilege to have had a long and challenging career in the Newfoundland and Labrador public service. Each new position was celebrated as a milestone. In the latter years, I served as the deputy minister of social services, the deputy minister of transportation and works, and later, the Auditor General of Newfoundland and Labrador for 10 years. However, to become an elected member of the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly was truly the most memorable and rewarding.

Like most people, being appointed to the Senate of Canada was something I never contemplated. It is an honour and a privilege, and I extend to the Prime Minister my appreciation for the appointment and the opportunity to serve not only the people of Newfoundland and Labrador but also the people of Canada.

Honourable senators, I also take this opportunity to thank the people who have supported me during my career, and firstly, the people of the District of Topsail in Newfoundland and Labrador for their unwavering support over the past seven years. To have served as their representative in the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador was truly rewarding and, yes, a tremendous experience. To them, I extend my deepest gratitude. I also thank the people throughout the province for their support of my appointment to the Senate of Canada. I was truly overwhelmed by their outpouring of support and good wishes.

• (1500)

I thank my husband and our three children individually. Each continues to support me in all of my endeavours, wherever they may take me. I thank my friends in the provincial District of Topsail and the community of Paradise, in which I reside. I would also like to thank all senators in this chamber for their good wishes and support. I am looking forward to working with all of you on behalf of all Canadians.

I wish to extend a special thank you to Senator Marjory LeBreton, Senator Gerald Comeau and Senator Consiglio Di Nino for easing my transition; and a very special thank you to my good friend and former colleague in the provincial House of Assembly, and now my colleague in the Senate, Senator Fabian Manning. Thank you, Senator Manning, for so kindly agreeing to sponsor me.

Honourable senators, when I was sworn in last week there was some attention given to the name of my hometown of Paradise. Several people approached me later and asked if they had heard correctly. What can I say? The name says it all.

Paradise is a community of approximately 14,000 people and borders the capital city of St. John's, the city of Mount Pearl and the municipality of Conception Bay South, which is the largest town in the province. Paradise is known as the fastest growing community in Atlantic Canada.

Honourable senators, we are very fortunate to live in Canada, a country which has so much to offer its citizens. We enjoy a universal health care system, a strong education system and diverse cultures. No single event has brought Canadians together and given us such a sense of pride in our country than the Olympics and the Paralympics, recently held in Vancouver, British Columbia. I would be remiss if I did not offer my sincere congratulations to all the athletes, the organizing committee and the volunteers for making these games a great success. In addition, we must recognize the heroes who serve our country and other uniformed personnel, especially those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Honourable senators, our economy is the envy of the world. We are emerging from the global recession with one of the strongest economies in the industrialized world. This government has managed the economy well during very difficult times.

[Senator Marshall]

Last week, Governor General Michaëlle Jean delivered the Speech from the Throne outlining our government's agenda. Our government embarked on its Economic Action Plan a year ago and will complete its plan in March 2011. It will focus on jobs and growth, it will protect incomes and it will help individuals and communities get back on their feet. Just this past weekend, we heard in the media that jobs and a strengthening dollar have pushed Canada ahead of the pack. Twenty-one thousand jobs were created in February and the unemployment rate dropped to a 10-month low of 8.2 per cent.

Because of our government's sound fiscal management, Canada's fiscal position is strong. We are headed in the right direction. In addition, communities across Canada are benefiting from the Economic Action Plan, including many communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. To date, communities in Newfoundland and Labrador have benefited from funding in excess of \$50 million.

The Speech from the Throne also addressed the government's plan to return to fiscal balance and reduce the deficit. The first step will be to wind down stimulus spending as economic activity rebounds. The second step will be spending restraint while protecting growth in transfers that directly benefit Canadians such as pensions, health care and education.

Honourable senators, my home province of Newfoundland and Labrador is no stranger to fiscal restraint. I joined the Newfoundland and Labrador public service in 1979 and the two decades that followed were periods of significant fiscal restraint. Over that period of time, the province struggled with its finances. It was not until 2005 that the province experienced its first stretch of surpluses, primarily because of its offshore oil development.

Over the centuries, Newfoundland and Labrador has depended on its fisheries. Most families, like mine, had a connection with the fisheries, which was the backbone of Newfoundland's economy. In 1992, the cod moratorium altered our way of life. Fortunately, the discovery of oil offshore has brought prosperity to our province.

In 1985, Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador, led respectively by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Premier Brian Peckford, signed the Atlantic Accord, a federal-provincial agreement that made the province a full partner in the development of its offshore oil resources. As a result, there have been significant revenues flowing into the Newfoundland and Labrador treasury in recent years, and we have truly reaped the benefits of this agreement.

However, the development of the offshore has not come without a human cost. In 1982, the drilling rig the *Ocean Ranger* capsized and sank on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. All 84 men perished; 56 were from Newfoundland. There were no survivors during this tragedy.

Last year, Cougar Flight 491, which was ferrying workers from St. John's airport to the offshore, crashed into the ocean. Sixteen men and one woman were lost. There was one survivor. Numerous fishing tragedies over the years continue to remind us of the harshness of our environment. Although the ocean has always provided our livelihood, our history has been marred by many tragedies.

There are two other items in the Throne Speech that I would like to speak to before I sit down. The first is a commitment to establish a prime ministerial award for volunteerism. Newfoundland and Labrador is a close-knit community, and it is a community of volunteers. In our province, a minister of the provincial cabinet has been designated as the Minister Responsible for the Volunteer and Non-Profit Sector. Communities and the province also host events to celebrate volunteerism. I look forward to hearing the details on the prime ministerial award for volunteerism.

The Speech from the Throne also noted that we will celebrate the quadricentenary of the settling of Cupids in Newfoundland and Labrador this year. Cupids is a small community located in Conception Bay on the Avalon Peninsula, about an hour's drive from St. John's. It was the first English community in Canada, established by John Guy in 1610. It is turning 400 years of age this year and we are celebrating with a series of special events. Both the provincial and federal governments are supporting the celebrations in Cupids.

In 1995, archaeologists discovered the original site of John Guy's plantation, and archaeological digs have located many artifacts. I extend an invitation to all senators to join the celebrations this summer.

In closing, I would like to say that I am looking forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate, and I am committed to making a contribution that will be of benefit to all Canadians. Thank you, fellow senators.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

(On motion of Senator Comeau, debate adjourned.)

• (1510)

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Yonah Martin moved second reading of Bill C-268, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (minimum sentence for offences involving trafficking of persons under the age of eighteen years).

She said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to speak in support of Bill C-268, An Act to amend the Criminal Code with respect to minimum sentences for offences involving trafficking of persons under the age of 18 years.

Bill C-268 was drafted with one clear intention: to create a separate offence for the traffickers of children in Canada and to ensure the penalties reflect the gravity of the crime.

I would like to once again acknowledge the member of Parliament for Kildonan—St. Paul, Joy Smith, for her concerted and ongoing efforts to combat human trafficking and to protect our nation's most vulnerable, our children.

Human trafficking is one of the most horrific forms of abuse that exists today and requires a multi-faceted, long-term approach. Bill C-268 is one important step in the ongoing fight

against human trafficking. The passage of this bill into law will provide our law enforcement officials and judiciary with an essential tool for combatting this heinous crime and punishing those who prey upon the most vulnerable of our society: homeless and abused youth, children in protective care, and Aboriginal youth.

To achieve this important goal, the bill will create a separate offence for trafficking a person under the age of 18 years, which will carry mandatory minimum penalties of six years for the aggravated offence where the maximum penalty is life imprisonment, and five years where the maximum penalty is 14 years imprisonment. As a society, we need to send a clear message that trafficking of children is a grave crime and severe penalties will be imposed on anyone who engages in such despicable conduct.

Human trafficking violates victims' human rights and offends the most basic values of a free and democratic society.

Honourable senators, let me recount once again the abhorrent details of two early human trafficking cases involving minors to underscore the need for Bill C-268.

In a town not too far from our nation's capital, Imani Nakpangi abused a young, 15-year-old girl over a period of two and a half years. Nakpangi physically assaulted and forced the young girl to have sex with strangers and threatened to kidnap her brother and do harm to her parents should she ever escape.

For two and a half years, Imani Nakpangi made in excess of \$360,000 off this innocent young victim. While the young girl lived a life of terror, abuse and exploitation, Nakpangi lived a life of luxury, driving a BMW and living in a large Niagara Falls home, purchased with the revenues he earned from his crimes.

Imani Nakpangi was arrested and convicted for his crimes. On June 24, 2008, he received a sentence of three years imprisonment. However, Nakpangi received 13 months pretrial credit and will therefore spend less time in jail than he spent trafficking his young victim.

An Hon. Senator: Shame!

Senator Martin: In November 2008, Montreal resident Michael Lennox Mark was also convicted for the trafficking of a 17-year-old girl and selling her for sex. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment. Mark served only a single week in prison after being convicted because he was given two-for-one credit for his pretrial custody.

Honourable senators, with these first two sentences in Canada resulting in approximately one to two years served for the trafficking of children, traffickers are currently able to continue making hundreds of thousands of dollars from the exploitation and rape of our children without much threat of serious sanction.

These convictions set an alarming precedent for all future cases involving the trafficking of children. It is imperative that we send a clear message that trafficking of minors will not be tolerated, and pass this bill.

Canada remains one of the few developed countries that does not have enhanced penalties for the trafficking of children.

In 2005, Canada ratified the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Article 3(3) states:

Each State Party shall make these offences punishable by appropriate penalties that take into account their grave nature.

Current Canadian convictions do not reflect the severity of the crime or the sentences handed out to child traffickers in other countries. Bill C-268 does not simply try to mirror other jurisdictions but, rather, the penalties are respectful of our Criminal Code and are consistent with other sections while upholding and fulfilling our international obligations.

The Criminal Code already recognizes that certain serious crimes involving child victims require more stringent penalties. Section 212(2.1) imposes a five-year mandatory minimum sentence for the aggravated offence of living on the avails of prostitution of a person under the age of 18.

Honourable senators, Canadians from coast to coast to coast are making their voices heard and calling on us to protect our daughters, sons, nieces, nephews, grandchildren, and our country's future. I have personally received countless letters, emails and telephone calls in support of this bill.

The member for Kildonan—St. Paul tabled over 14,000 signatures in support of this bill in the other place. Last week, the Honourable Senator Plett tabled over 8,300 signatures in support of this bill in our chamber.

Support for the bill has come from key stakeholders in the fight against child trafficking, all expressing the need for mandatory minimum sentences for child trafficking. Fellow parliamentarians in the House of Commons, law enforcement officials, victims' organizations, First Nations leaders, NGOs and everyday Canadians are calling on us to act.

Honourable senators, children across this country, in every province and territory, are falling victim to human traffickers. Our children are being trafficked not just for sex but also for the purpose of child pornography, child slavery, drug distribution and other criminal activities. The physical, emotional and psychological abuse caused by all forms of child trafficking severely impacts and harms these young victims.

Honourable senators, it is our duty to protect the most vulnerable. It is our duty to send a clear message to those who traffic and harm our children that their crimes will not be tolerated and that Canada is not a safe haven for child traffickers.

Honourable senators, it is my sincere hope that you will all join me in supporting the passage of this bill into law.

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: I have a question, Your Honour.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Will Senator Martin accept a question?

Senator Martin: Yes.

[Senator Martin]

Senator St. Germain: I would like to compliment Honourable Senator Martin on the thoroughness of the excellent presentation she just made on this subject. I am asking this question because I would like to see it on the record. The Catholic Women's League in Vancouver has asked me to make a presentation to some of their groups in regard to this issue. After listening to the honourable senator's speech, I believe she would be much more qualified to deliver it.

Is there a pattern of light sentences for such an egregious crime? Is there any explanation why, or is it the way the law is structured now? Would this bill change things to allow the judiciary to act the way it should and bring these people to justice?

In addition, how is it that these children are being trafficked? Are they coming from other countries? Why is it that we cannot close that loophole? Or, are these children residents of Canada that are being trafficked from within Canada?

Senator Martin: I thank the honourable senator for the question. Yes, the Catholic Women's League has also met with me and given its absolute resounding support to this bill. As the honourable senator knows, tens of thousands of women across Canada are part of the league and are calling for us to act. I thank the honourable senator for mentioning them for the record. In addition, as I mentioned, countless Canadians are calling on us to support quick passage of this bill.

• (1520)

With regard to the honourable senator's questions, the victims of child trafficking are as young as 12 years of age, and it is unimaginable how these perpetrators could take our young children, as young as 12 years of age, and subject them to this treatment. It has happened, not just in Canada, but throughout the world. It happens today and it has happened in history. It is all the more imperative that we see quick passage of this bill.

The victims are Canadian and, as I said, the most vulnerable. These perpetrators prey upon the most vulnerable. They search the streets and take kids that may be homeless, whether temporarily or in between homes. They know who those children are and whether they are in foster care. They know what they are looking for and the children are amongst the most vulnerable. They are very much at risk of being trafficked in Canada. Some of the networks also go into the United States. It is absolutely criminal, but these networks do exist in our country, in North America and around the world.

In terms of lighter sentencing, I can applaud our government for the passage of the Truth in Sentencing Act, Bill C-25. As a result of that legislation, with respect to the cases that will come before the courts, we will no longer have situations where one will have 2-for-1 or even 3-for-1 time served in remand centres. These criminals will justly have to serve their time as it is given.

However, because precedents could be set in that these earlier cases resulted in such light sentences, we are saying that, as legislators, we can also provide guidance to our courts in terms of passing a bill such as this, which calls for a minimum of five years for such heinous crimes. I know Senator Dyck, the critic for this bill, is calling for even tougher sentences, but this is our first step. This is a very concise, well-thought-out bill, and I urge all senators to support it in committee and here in this chamber.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Will senator Martin take a further question?

Senator Martin: Yes.

Hon. Sharon Carstairs: Honourable senators, it is extremely unusual to amend the Criminal Code by way of a private member's bill. It is almost always done by way of a government bill. Part of the reason for that is, at least in this chamber, it is extremely difficult to pass private members' bills because they go to the bottom of the agenda of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee. Whenever a government bill arrives, it takes precedence, it goes to the top and this again goes to the bottom.

Can Senator Martin explain to the chamber why the government has not introduced this bill as a government bill?

An Hon. Senator: Good question.

Senator Martin: I do not think I can answer the honourable senator's question specifically. What I can say is that there is already a precedence for Bill C-268 that stems from section 212 (2.1) of the Criminal Code, which already recognizes that certain serious crimes involving child victims require more stringent penalties. I can quote from that section, but I will instead come back and provide the honourable senator a more definitive answer to that question.

At this time, I cannot answer why it was done in this way other than to say that this came out of consultations with the Peel Regional Police, the police who first caught Imani Nakpangi, and what they were seeing on the ground. Joy Smith's son is also a police officer; therefore, this came in consultation from the officers on the ground who said this legislation was needed. That is why Joy has devoted so much time and effort to this.

With regard to the answer to the honourable senator's question, I will come back and answer it another time.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, could it simply be that Joy Smith had an excellent bill and why not go with it?

Senator Martin: Yes, and as I have stated, this is a very concise, well-thought-out bill that has tremendous support across Canada. I do agree with what Senator Comeau has stated as well.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Senator Martin's time is not up yet. She has 45 minutes. Will she accept a further question from Senator Day?

Senator Martin: Of course.

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, I thank the honourable senator for accepting my question. It is nice that we recognize the work of someone from the other place, but the honourable senator did not mention the work that had been done by one of our former colleagues on this very issue, Senator Phalen. He had a bill that he was not able to get through on the same issue.

Senator Phalen has since retired, maybe two years ago now. Has Senator Martin had an opportunity to compare his initiative and his draft bill to what she is proposing, and can she tell us the essential difference?

Senator Campbell: Maybe the honourable senator should have researched it first.

Senator Martin: I have not done a comparative study. I have, however, met with Joy Smith, with Professor Perrin, who was one of her advisers, and with many of the support groups, as I mentioned, but that is also a good suggestion. I could go back and do that, but I do appeal to all honourable senators to look at this bill and know that it has received majority support from the House of Commons, from the honourable senator's Liberal colleagues as well as ours. I ask that the committee to which this bill will be referred have a serious look at it and we can hope for quick passage in this chamber.

(On motion of Senator Tardif, for Senator Dyck, debate adjourned.)

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Cowan calling the attention of the Senate to the issues relating to realistic and effective parliamentary reform.

Hon. Hugh Segal: Honourable senators, I rise to address the inquiry on democratic and parliamentary reform placed on the Order Paper by my good friend, Senator Cowan. As those of us who are not leaders of the opposition do not get as much time as he did last week, I will be unable to address all the points he made, but I shall do my best to address one or two.

I enjoyed his speech very much, not because I agreed with much of it. In fact, I have learned in this place that if I excluded the things I did not agree with from the broad body of opportunities to take enjoyment from other people's views, I would have no enjoyment at all. That would apply equally on both sides of the house, I hasten to add.

I do want to say that Senator Cowan was remarkably thoughtful in the choices that he made relative to the proposal that he put on the table and the criticism that he launched of our Prime Minister and our government. I admire someone who knows how to make difficult choices, even if the result of those choices is to utterly misrepresent facts on the ground as they exist. I would beg his indulgence to clarify some of those facts in the spirit of non-partisan cooperation to which his speech made scant but, on occasion, passing reference.

I want to deal with his criticism for the lack of progress on democratic reform. Let me suggest that history would imply for all of us that it takes a Liberal to oppose every measure for Senate reform that has taken place in the other house; to oppose, delay, dilute, obfuscate every bill presented by the Prime Minister for reform of the Senate in this house; and then to criticize the Prime Minister for making no progress. That reminds me of the teenage

kids who kill their parents to make the inheritance arrive more quickly, then throw themselves on the mercy of the court because they are orphans. That is the kind of logic my good friend used the other day.

• (1530)

As far as constitutionality is concerned, my good friend's arguments are a virtuous circle of Liberal hypocrisy and hyperbole, but the virtue was apparent. His logic can best be described this way: As changing the Senate in any way may well require, in the view of some, formal constitutional amendment, therefore, any legislative effort to do so in the federal parliament is likely ultra vires or even politically treacherous, and he attacks the Prime Minister on both counts. Honourable senators, my good friend the Leader of the Opposition gives sophistry a bad name.

He cites witnesses on the constitutionality of the government proposal, but he does not cite others, and he especially leaves out the senior law officers of the Crown who offered different views from the ones he chose to cite in his presentation. In fact, part of why I enjoyed Senator Cowan's remarks so much is because of his inspired selectivity around the witnesses he chose to cite. That is the kind of leadership we all benefit from in so many ways.

It was my great privilege to serve on the Special Senate Committee on Senate Reform, led by the chair, the Honourable Dan Hays, a distinguished colleague in this place, and deputy-chair, the Honourable David Angus, an outstanding colleague in this place as well. That committee sat 13 times between June and October 2006 on Bill S-4 and on two other motions relating to Senate representation.

Interestingly enough, Senator Cowan made no reference to one of its witnesses whose presence was historic. On September 7, 2006, for the first time in Canadian history, the Prime Minister of Canada, the one he calls anti-democratic, the one he calls unopen to other opinions, appeared before a committee of the Senate for the first time in our nation's history. It was a public session, it was televised, and he took comments and questions from all and sundry around the table. Honourable senators know that the Prime Minister, the one with the secret agenda, the one who cannot be trusted to discuss his ideas openly. There he was. Amongst the questions he received was one from Senator Dawson, our honourable colleague from Quebec City, about the proposed length of term; a matter referenced at some length in the Leader of the Opposition's speech, namely, eight years.

The Prime Minister invited both debate and amendment, indicating that the government would be glad to consider any such proposed improvements or amendments that might be suggested. That invitation does not sound arbitrary to me, certainly not as arbitrary as a decision of the Liberal majority in this place to shut down all reform pending some coming Supreme Court ruling forever in the future.

Let us be clear. Whether reform comes from this place or from endless constitutional negotiation of the kind that has failed consistently and on scores of occasions since 1868, there will be at least one province that will take a challenge to the Supreme Court. Who knows which; they all have the right to do so.

[Senator Segal]

Freezing all reform until that happens elevates democratic paralysis to the level of a desired public good. No democracy is well served by that kind of abdication. My friend Senator Cowan expressed this embrace of democratic paralysis in this way:

A constitution, by its nature, is the antithesis of unilateral action. Constitutions are the product of discussion and compromise. The Canadian Constitution contains a detailed amending formula meticulously negotiated over many years. At a minimum, for certain limited amendments, the Constitution requires that the three constituent parts of the Parliament of Canada agree to the amendment — that is, the House of Commons, the Senate, and the Crown. However, the overwhelming weight of the evidence heard by our Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs a few years ago, to use the committee's words, suggests that the reforms proposed by Prime Minister Harper require more; they require the involvement and agreement of our constitutional partners, the provinces.

I point out that view was the view of one group on the committee, the majority at the time. It was not the view of the minority on the committee, who finds itself in the plurality in this present chamber, as circumstance sometimes creates.

What my good friend ignores, of course, is the vital role of convention in democratic institutions. There is no mention, for example, of political parties, ministers or referenda in the Constitution of Canada, yet over time the role of these parts has become, by tradition, convention and statute, core working parts of our de facto democracy.

Does my good friend actually believe, however he may wish others to, that a prime minister who proposes a referendum process by which voters pick who they want to fill Senate vacancies as they occur, and who undertakes only to recommend to the Crown those chosen by the people, is anti-democratic? Surely even a Liberal might embrace the proposition that once one prime minister yields to democratic choice as the only basis for Senate appointments, that convention would be hard for subsequent prime ministers, even Liberals, to ignore, once it was in place.

As a Red Tory, I hold out hope on this front even for the Liberal Party. I do not agree with them, but I absolutely defend their right to disagree, to fight the battle and advance their cause. However, let me make perfectly clear, as the proposal that was put before Parliament would see vacancies filled when federal elections came, the entire chamber would not empty and be freshly elected at one time, as Senator Cowan worried it might. Continuity and expertise would continue. The membership of this place would be intrinsically staggered and continuous. As for referendum rules, they would be enacted by statute, with full debate, consultation and hopefully multi-partisan consensus, as we have had with other electoral legislation in the past. Civility might just break out in the process if our friends opposite did not find that kind of collaborative civility also offensive to the Constitution, which I fear they might.

On that civility point, if we assemble what was proposed in both government laws set aside by the opposition and the Prime Minister's openness to reasonable amendment, had they passed,

we could be deliberating today on a referendum and electoral rules for senators elected for 10 to 12 years, beyond the personal appointment preference of any prime minister of any party. That opportunity for democratic reform and revitalization has been set aside by our friends opposite, both in this chamber and in the other house.

Yes, Senator Cowan correctly quoted Chantal Hébert's observation that elections of this kind might not produce new senators from the Prime Minister's party. That observation is the precise point of democracy. Democratic choices are owned by no prime minister but by the people, and that is the basis of legitimacy for any legislative chamber.

Just as the sainted Mr. Trudeau campaigned against Meech Lake and Charlottetown, and subsequently Mr. Chrétien almost lost Canada in the Quebec referendum of 1995, Liberals seem on occasion incapable of working in any way with someone else's idea; not to amend it, not even to improve it, only to quash it. Honourable senators, it is that kind of arrogance that, over history, has been so divisive in this country, and that Conservatives have always united to oppose.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Segal: I kind of understand why Liberals dislike Prime Minister Harper so much, because he is the Canadian, having spent his early political years as both a Calgary Progressive Conservative and a Calgary Reform Party policy leader, who reached out to unite Conservatives. Honourable senators, face it; Conservatives being at each other's throats for 13 years made Liberal life and political dominance easy sailing. All they had to do was show up at election time. They cannot bring themselves to forgive him for the unification that terminated their perpetual and self-reverential control.

• (1540)

Those across the way who speak of democracy might for a moment reflect on the core truth that democracy is genuine when voters have at least two real national governing choices at election time. That is what both parties owe the Canadian people over past, present and future generations. That Conservatives are now in government is not, as many across the way believe, quietly and secretly, an oversight. It is neither a counting mistake nor an aberration of the way things are. It is a result of three elections in which Prime Minister Harper increased our party's seat total, election after election, and found a clear plurality for government two elections most recent.

Last week, Senator Cowan made this assertion in the *Debates of the Senate*, at page 71:

Indeed, if Prime Minister Harper were serious about his proposals for Senate reform, surely he would not have made the recent appointments to this place.

Now, correct me if I am wrong — I am just a new fellow; I have only been here five years — but did not the same opposition criticize the very same Prime Minister for leaving so many vacancies in so many provinces for so long after the 2006 election? Was it not our distinguished colleague and good friend Senator

Moore, from Nova Scotia, who proposed and moved in this very place, on two separate occasions, a law that would force the Prime Minister to fill those vacancies?

For the same Liberal Party to criticize the Prime Minister for filling the vacancies, first with the Honourable Senator Bert Brown, a duly-elected senator from Alberta who originated the historically seminal Triple E Senate movement in the province; and then, with the same vacancies Senator Moore sought to force him to fill, I may say, even for Liberals, is a touch hypocritical. I realize that Liberal life was easier and far less cumbersome when the numbers in this place were 70-ish to 20-ish, as they were when I arrived.

As the Liberal majority has so far chosen to oppose in this place up until most recently through delay, adjournment and severe Supreme Court envy, democratic reform, it is not at all reasonable that senators committed to that reform, a commitment which was at the core of this party's platform for three elections, should have been summoned to serve. Senator Cowan thinks that that is odious and reeking of the plague of the rubber stamp. Well, honourable senators, consistence, commitment, and keeping one's promises may strike our friends opposite as odious on this side; we view it as honourable.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Segal: Despite the recalcitrant stance of those opposite on anything they did not think of themselves, I remain respectful of their rights and interested in their ideas.

Some Hon. Senators: More! More!

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: The Honourable Senator Segal's time is up. Would he like to ask for more time?

Some Hon. Senators: Five minutes.

Senator Smith: Are you going to recalibrate?

Senator Segal: Let me quote a great Liberal on Senate reform. I do not do it often. Aurora, Ontario, October 3, 1874. Edward Blake, suffering under the burden of success of Sir John A. Macdonald victories had the good sense to stand on the back of a hay wagon and say, "I do not believe it is consistent with the true notion of popular government that we should have a Senate selected by the administration of the day holding their seats for life." Liberal advice. Finally, we have a Prime Minister who is prepared to take counsel.

If those opposite could swallow their pride and work with the government and make amendments to improve and revise proposals, that would make an opportunity to work in a bipartisan way. It was Ronald Reagan, that great neo-liberal — think about that for a moment — who had a plaque on his desk that said, "There is no limit to what we can achieve if we do not care who gets the credit." Try that idea on, and, if you want to be really risky, take it to your Liberal thinkers' conference and see how it goes. Some would say a "Liberal thinkers' conference" is the ultimate, but I will not go there. It might be liberating and it might be empowering.

Honourable senators, Senator Cowan talked about gridlock between the two chambers. The British House of Commons resolved that matter with the Parliament Act of 1911, where the

more frequently elected place always will have the hammer, the authority and the process. There is no reason we cannot do that here.

Democracy requires collaboration. It was Willis Player, a writer for the *San Diego Tribune*, who wrote in 1915 that, “A Liberal is a person whose interests are not at stake at the moment.” Well, honourable senators, it is when common interest is found that this great nation progresses. This was as true on health care as it was on the amendments, the patriation of our Constitution, 1982 and 1983, as it was on the passage of Mr. Diefenbaker’s Bill of Rights in 1961.

Honourable senators, if we work together on this, if we set aside partisan, small-mindedness as the first part of my speech failed to do, we could make democratic reform a joint process by which, with leadership from the Prime Minister and with strong sense of citizenship and productive collaboration from the opposition, we could move this country ahead in a way that would serve all generations we are here to protect very well indeed.

Senator Angus: Let us do it!

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Will the Honourable Senator Segal take a question?

Senator Segal: I would look forward to taking a question.

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise simply to congratulate Senator Segal on his campaign for the leadership of the government in the Senate.

Senator Segal: Senator Cowan will know that the Leader of the Government in the Senate has not only my utter support but also the support of every member of this caucus.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Segal: While I do not have any authority to speak officially on anyone’s behalf, I can assure the honourable senator that view is broadly felt throughout the entire Conservative caucus and a Conservative Party from coast to coast to coast that has benefited from her service, devotion, commitment and dedication for over 40 years.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Would the honourable senator take a question from me?

Senator Segal: I would be honoured to take a question.

Senator Cools: Honourable senators, I was most fascinated with Senator Segal’s reference to Mr. Blake. As we know very well, Mr. Blake was the Minister of Justice under Prime Minister Alexander Mackenzie. I was interested in the fact that the honourable senator paid great attention to what Mr. Blake had to say. Mr. Blake was a peculiar fellow known for the fact that many of his ideas did not succeed.

It seems to me it is not so important what Mr. Blake said. The question is what did Sir John A. Macdonald say? Could the honourable senator tell us what Sir John A. Macdonald said on the Senate and Senate tenure?

[Senator Segal]

Senator Segal: I think Sir John A. reflected the ethos of his time around the need to have a balance between the elected side and the side which became the evolutionary approach to Canadian democracy, which is the role of the Senate as advisers to the Crown in all occasions, slowing down, correcting and revising the process.

• (1550)

However, Sir John A. Macdonald was a man of his time. Therefore, I have no doubt in my mind that, were he here today, he would support this Prime Minister’s changes fundamentally because he would believe they are in the national interest and reflect the spirit of our times, which is what Parliament should be doing.

Senator Cools: I think the honourable senator should read and study a little bit more about Sir John A. Macdonald.

(On motion of Senator Comeau, debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

THE ACADIAN FLAG

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Fernand Robichaud rose pursuant to notice of March 4, 2010:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the importance to the Acadian people of the Acadian flag — a flag that brings people together.

He said: Honourable senators, further to the suggestion by the Honourable Senator Segal, I can assure you that my comments will be entirely non-partisan. I want to draw the Senate’s attention to the Acadian flag, a flag that brings people together, especially since 2009 marked the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of its adoption by the Acadian community. Last fall, I pointed out that the Acadian flag was designed and made in my community of Saint-Louis-de-Kent.

I believe that a few brief references to Acadian history will help understand why the Acadian flag came to be and better appreciate its importance in the life and the identity of the Acadian people.

Looking back at our history, the future was anything but promising for the Acadians. In fact, our history gives every indication that we should have disappeared. The Acadian people fought against all odds to forge their own identity and culture; they survived oppression by the majority to finally break free and become full partners in Canada.

We must remember that the Acadians’ participation in life in Canada is well underway and that every day brings its challenges. For the Acadian people, our history has given us our own identity. The Great Upheaval was the turning point in our shared history and, more than anything else, was the defining moment for the identity of the Acadian people.

In the century following their expulsion, the Acadians lived in near-total isolation, and some quietly and peacefully returned to settle along the coast of the Maritime provinces. If the Acadians endured obscurity, it was certainly during this century, as they returned, survived and regrouped. During that time, Acadian leadership was essentially provided by the men and women of the clergy. In the second half of the 19th century, intellectuals, journalists and politicians joined in the struggle to promote education and the French language in Acadian villages and communities.

It was by linking faith and language in their mission that the clergymen and women shaped Acadian leaders, paving the way for the resurgence of the Acadian people. Moreover, Acadians started to play a very active role in political life. The Acadian people achieved emancipation through the preservation of their religion and language, through the development of education and through political involvement.

In New Brunswick, it was not until the early 1960s that the education system was modernized and an equitable taxation system was established in the province to fund that system.

In the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, Acadian parents, most of whom had moderate incomes, made tremendous sacrifices to pay for their children to be educated at schools and colleges. Courage, conviction and determination were essential for the Acadian people to create institutions such as Collège Saint-Joseph in Memramcook and Collège Saint-Louis in Saint-Louis-de-Kent. One of those leading the emancipation of his people was Msgr. Marcel-François Richard, the son of a farmer and the youngest of 10 children.

He attended the school in his hometown of Saint-Louis-de-Kent and continued his classical studies at St. Dunstan's College in Charlottetown. After completing his theological training in Montreal, he became a priest, first in his native parish, and then in the parish of Rogersville, where he died in 1915.

Charismatic and dynamic, Marcel-François Richard was without question one of the most important leaders of the Acadian renaissance. His passionate dedication to various Acadian causes, particularly the development of education for Acadians, is well known.

He vigorously opposed the Schools Act of 1871, which threatened the very existence of Catholic elementary schools. He was also an advocate of higher education. In 1874, he founded Collège Saint-Louis in Saint-Louis-de-Kent. Historian Louis Cyriaque Daigle recalls that the institution had to close its doors in 1882 on orders from the Bishop of the Diocese of Chatham, Msgr. James Rogers. It seems that Collège Saint-Louis flaunted its French character too much. Anglophone students attended it as well, placing it in direct competition with St. Michael's College in Chatham.

Moreover, in the early 1870s, Msgr. Richard wanted to provide quality instruction to young girls and succeeded in interesting the teaching sisters of Montreal's Congregation of Notre-Dame. A monument to Marguerite Bourgeoys was unveiled in Saint-Louis-de-Kent in recognition of the huge contribution of the sisters of the Congregation of Notre-Dame.

Msgr. Richard was also keenly interested in agriculture and colonization, and he helped found the towns of Rogersville and Acadieville. By clearing agricultural land, he tried to combat the exodus of Acadians to the United States.

His boundless energy led him to take on a leadership role in organizing and holding the first national Acadian conventions. These conventions broke down the isolation in which Acadians had lived since their return. In the words of Pierre-Armand Landry, the first Acadian to become a lawyer:

A national convention is a time for the people to come together to debate matters of interest to the nation, to examine its status and to decide on how to improve it by eliminating obstacles that can stand in the way of its advancement toward social, material and political progress.

The Acadians moved from awareness to action. At the first national convention in 1881, Marcel-François Richard delivered an eloquent and convincing speech on the need for Acadians to have their own national holiday, separate from that of French Canadians. Supporters of the Saint-Jean Baptiste celebrations argued with supporters of the Fête de l'Assomption.

On the one side, Father Camille Lefebvre of Collège Saint-Joseph, originally from the south shore of Montreal, and his supporters stated that a common celebration would unite all French-speaking people across Canada in the pursuit of common goals, with the objective of equality in terms of rights and services in Canada.

On the other side, Msgr. Richard and his supporters felt that the Fête de l'Assomption should be the Acadians' national holiday. They stated very clearly that the Acadians had a different history and nationality. Perhaps today we would say that the Acadians have a distinct history and nationality.

The convention adopted the Fête de l'Assomption as the national holiday of the Acadian people. Msgr. Richard's convincing argument tipped the scales.

Three years later, the Acadians met once again to choose a national anthem and flag. On August 15, 1884, at their second national convention in Miscouche, Prince Edward Island, the Acadians chose the Acadian flag, a distinctive symbol that brings people together.

• (1600)

At this second national convention, Msgr. Richard's statements on the Acadian flag and national anthem proved once again to be a decisive factor. Delegates to the 1884 Miscouche Convention heard him come to the defence of the tricolour as a standard and rallying point for Acadians.

He made a strong and forceful argument for adopting the blue, white and red flag, because it would remind Acadians that they were the descendants of the first French settlers. He emphasized the importance of preserving the French language and culture.

Msgr. Marcel-François Richard proposed that a yellow star, the papal colour, be added to the blue of the flag to show Acadians' dedication to their religion and to recall the "Stella Maris," which guides fishers through the storms and reefs. Msgr. Richard felt this star would symbolize the distinctiveness of

the Acadian nationality, and he wanted Acadians to have a flag that would remind them not only that their children are French, but also that they are Acadians. Marcel-François Richard was not only able to convince his own people of the importance of having their own flag, a distinctive rallying symbol, but also had a sense of timing.

Before leaving for the national convention of 1884, Msgr. Marcel-François Richard had the first flag made by Marie Babineau, a teacher, seamstress and resident of Saint-Louis-de-Kent. This is how the presentation of the flag was described:

After a speech by Reverend Richard, the proposal was put to vote and received unanimous support and enthusiasm from the crowd. During the course of the evening, while delegates were gathered in the large room of the convent to close the Convention, Reverend Richard, to their great surprise, displayed the new Acadian flag which he had asked one of his parishioners to make. It was with a great deal of emotion that the delegates saluted, for the first time ever, their national flag . . .

Since then, the tricolour flag with the star has rallied the entire Acadian community together in asserting itself and pursuing its development. This is why the Acadian flag is so important.

The flag is a beacon, not only rallying people of the same nationality, but also bringing a community together around shared hopes and objectives. Over the years, the Acadian flag has become a powerful symbol that brings people together, and the Acadian people hold it in the highest regard.

Our Acadian flag has come to symbolize the Acadian people and all their aspirations. It represents a people who share the same dreams, customs and traditions and a common language and history.

The flag has become the incarnation of Acadians' collective consciousness, symbolizing the survival of a people and culture, representing the heart and soul of the Acadian community and its desire to assert itself and participate in building society today.

The Acadian flag represents the Acadians' reality: their past, their present and their future. This is why the tricolour with the star is part of lively Acadian celebrations and official ceremonies alike.

Those who followed the Acadian World Congress held last summer on the Acadian peninsula will have seen the variety of blue, white and red displays and decorations adorning homes in Acadian cities and towns. And, of course, the yellow star was everywhere.

Building on the progress made by the Acadian community in New Brunswick with Premier Louis J. Robichaud's Program of Equal Opportunity and the Official Languages Act, New Brunswick granted official status to this symbol of Acadian identity on the one-hundredth anniversary of the flag. On April 11, 1984, the government of Premier Richard Hatfield passed legislation whereby the Acadian flag would fly on the Legislative Assembly building in the provincial capital from then on.

[Senator Robichaud]

In summary, honourable senators, thanks to the dedication and tireless work of Msgr. Marcel-François Richard, from Saint-Louis-de-Kent, Acadians can salute with pride and respect a flag that brings people together and reflects their history and aspirations.

The Acadian flag, the tricolour with the star, represents the identity of our people, the solidarity that unites us, the pride we feel in who we are, the courage and perseverance that have helped us overcome challenges in the past, and our unshakable confidence in a better future for our children and our country, Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

(On motion of Senator Champagne, debate adjourned.)

[English]

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY ISSUES RELATED TO COMMUNICATIONS MANDATE AND REFER PAPERS AND EVIDENCE FROM PREVIOUS SESSION

Hon. Leo Housakos, for Senator Dawson, pursuant to notice of March 9, 2010, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications be authorized to examine and report on emerging issues related to its communications mandate and on the wireless sector, including issues such as access to high-speed Internet, the supply of bandwidth, the nation-building role of wireless, the pace of the adoption of innovations, the financial aspects associated with possible changes to the sector, and Canada's development of the sector in comparison to the performance in other countries;

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the committee on this subject since the beginning of the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament be referred to the committee; and

That the committee report to the Senate from time to time, with a final report no later than June 22, 2010 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

(Motion agreed to.)

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND METIS PEOPLES AND REFER PAPERS AND EVIDENCE FROM SECOND SESSION OF FORTIETH PARLIAMENT

Hon. Gerry St. Germain, pursuant to notice of March 11, 2010, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples be authorized to examine and report on the federal government's constitutional, treaty, political and

legal responsibilities to First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples and on other matters generally relating to the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada;

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the Committee on the subject during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament be referred to the Committee; and

That the Committee submit its final report no later than December 31, 2011, and that the Committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Honourable senators, is an honourable senator planning to speak to these motions? I was under the impression that when substantive motions are moved, some explanation of them should be given to the house by the proponent.

Senator St. Germain: Honourable senators, I will gladly explain.

The Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples is seeking a global order of reference to empower it to study any matter touching upon issues relevant to Aboriginal peoples without the need to seek a specific order of reference each time. In addition, we are seeking to import the evidence gathered in the last session regarding our study on elections under the Indian Act so that this evidence can be used as the basis for the committee's report on this subject, which we hope to report back to the Senate in the near future. If there are questions, I will try to answer them.

Senator Cools: Did I understand the honourable senator to say that he is looking for a double authority so that the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples may study any matter whatsoever without a reference from this house? Is that what I understood the honourable senator to say?

Senator St. Germain: It is a broad reference because there are so many areas that we deal with in Aboriginal issues. Therefore, it is not as specific as some references sought by committees in this place. Aboriginal affairs encompass health, housing, education, and a litany of issues. Such a motion for a broad reference has been moved in the past. I hope that answers the honourable senator's question.

• (1610)

Senator Cools: Honourable senators know that I have great respect for Senator St. Germain, the Aboriginal Peoples Committee and the good work it has done. The phenomenon of debate in this house and this house's involvement in the work of its committees is extremely important. The reason for an order of reference from the house is usually to involve the majority of senators in debate on these important questions.

Historically, all studies of committees emanate in the Senate. We must understand that, constitutionally, the committee is a creature of the house. A committee basically works on behalf of the house. It does not work on its own behalf or at the behest of its own members, although those initiatives may be valued, wonderful and desirable.

The honourable senator is correct that Aboriginal issues are extremely large. I understand that situation. However, it seems to

me that whatever the issues, the process is relatively easy for the honourable senator to come to the Senate for debate on the matter for this house to reach a conclusion to refer the order of reference to the committee. That way, senators will support the honourable senator and admire him even more for the work he is doing. Committees are not isolated cloisters that simply do studies at their own fancy. Committees are supposed to follow the house.

An Hon. Senator: The Senate.

Senator Cools: The house is the Senate in this instance.

Senator St. Germain: I understand this point, Senator Cools, and I am fully aware. The broadness of this reference may not be acceptable to the honourable senator, but anything the committee studies must be reported back to the full Senate. Therefore, I do not believe we are operating in isolation in any way. However, the matter is with the will of the house. I am seeking approval of this motion. It rests with the entire Senate. I am respectful of the honourable senator's concerns because I have listened to her in this place for, I think, about 17 years now. She has such respect for this place and the constitutionality of the entire operation.

I submit this motion at the request of the committee. This motion is not my personal request.

The honourable senator points out historically the good works the committee has been able to do. This approach allows us to respond more quickly to issues, whether it is safe drinking water or whatever issue we address. This approach has helped to resolve problems that have affected Aboriginal people so adversely.

The approach is a unique part of this committee by virtue of the constituency we try to serve. This is why we plead with the honourable senator to consider our request.

Senator Cools: Absolutely; I will consider anything and everything.

Honourable senators, I am becoming increasingly concerned with the amount of slipshod activity in this place. All that the honourable senator wants can be authorized from this house. I am sure that every honourable senator here is supportive of the activities to advance Aboriginal peoples. We are all agreed on that.

However, I believe we should follow a process. The honourable senator seeks such a broad and general reference. That authority is only available by amending the Senate rules that govern the committee so as to allow the committee to do studies on its own initiative.

Initiative is desirable; I am not quarrelling with that. I am saying to the honourable senator that when one seeks a reference so wide as to give a committee powers to do almost anything, it must be questioned. The matter is worsened by the fact that motions like this have passed with no information put before the house by the proponents. A motion is simply moved with no explanation or debate. The senators must be involved in the order of reference to the committee.

Having said that, honourable senators, I simply wish to take a better look at the motion. I move the adjournment of the debate.

Senator Robichaud: Question.

The Hon. the Speaker: There is no question before the house. The item was called.

Senator Cools: It was debated. The question was not put. Senator St. Germain was answering questions.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, what is on the Order Paper flows from the motion. The item has been called. Unless a motion has been put regarding what we were given notice of, there is no question before the house.

Senator Cools: The honourable senator did move it.

The Hon. the Speaker: Did Senator St. Germain move the motion?

Senator St. Germain: I moved the motion.

The Hon. the Speaker: Okay, the motion was moved by Senator St. Germain and seconded by Senator Greene.

Is Senator Cools moving adjournment of the debate on the question?

Senator Cools: We were on debate and we were on the question. Senator St. Germain was generous and gave some explanation.

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Cools is moving the adjournment of the debate.

Senator Cools: Yes, happily.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it seconded by Senator Downe?

Are honourable senators ready for that question?

Hon. Percy E. Downe: I did not second the motion moved by Senator Cools.

The Hon. the Speaker: It was moved by Senator Cools and seconded by Senator Day that further debate continue at the next sitting of the Senate. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

An Hon. Senator: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: Those in favour of the motion will signify by saying “yea.”

Some Hon. Senators: Yea.

The Hon. the Speaker: Those opposed to the motion will signify by saying “nay.”

Some Hon. Senators: Nay.

The Hon. the Speaker: The motion is defeated.

We are back on the main motion. Is there further debate? Are honourable senators ready for the question?

An Hon. Senator: Yes.

The Hon. the Speaker: It is moved by the Honourable Senator St. Germain that — dispense?

Hon. Senators: Dispense.

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

Some Hon. Senators: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: Those in favour, please say “yea.”

Some Hon. Senators: Yea.

The Hon. the Speaker: Those opposed, please say “nay.”

An Hon. Senator: Nay.

(Motion agreed to, on division.)

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY PRESENT STATE OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM

Hon. Irving Gerstein, for Senator Meighen, pursuant to notice of March 11, 2010, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce be authorized to examine and report upon the present state of the domestic and international financial system; and

That the Committee submit its final report no later than December 31 2011, and that the Committee retain until March 31, 2012 all powers necessary to publicize its findings.

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

(Motion agreed to, on division.)

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY PROVISIONS AND OPERATION OF DNA IDENTIFICATION ACT AND REFER PAPERS AND EVIDENCE FROM SECOND SESSION OF FORTIETH PARLIAMENT

Hon. Sharon Carstairs, for Senator Fraser, pursuant to notice of March 11, 2010, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs be authorized to examine and report on the provisions and operation of the *DNA Identification Act* (S.C. 1998, c. 37); and

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the committee on this subject since the beginning of the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament be referred to the committee; and

That the committee report to the Senate no later than October 28, 2010 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 90 days after the tabling of the final report.

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

(Motion agreed to.)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY ISSUES RELATED TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE GENERALLY

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk, pursuant to notice of March 11, 2010, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, in accordance with Rule 86(1)(h), be authorized to examine such issues as may arise from time to time relating to foreign relations and international trade generally; and

That the committee report to the Senate no later than March 31, 2011.

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

(Motion agreed to.)

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY RISE OF CHINA, INDIA AND RUSSIA IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADIAN POLICY AND REFER PAPERS AND EVIDENCE SINCE SECOND SESSION OF THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk pursuant to notice of March 11, 2010, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to examine and report on the rise of Russia, India and China in the global economy and the implications for Canadian policy;

That the papers and evidence received and taken and the work accomplished by the committee on this subject during the Second Session of the Thirty-ninth Parliament and during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament be referred to the committee; and

That the committee presents its final report no later than June 30, 2010 and retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until December 31, 2010.

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

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Honourable senators, I wanted to take part in the debate on this motion. It seems to me that the Senate is in a mood where it is not taking any motions for adjournment. However, I wanted to speak to this motion because I have been trying to get on the Foreign Affairs Committee for some years now. I am especially interested in China and India. I was hoping we would have some debate on this motion. Barring all of that, I would like the opportunity to speak to the motion.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is there further debate?

An Hon. Senator: Question.

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

Some Hon. Senators: Yes.

Senator Cools: I thought I had said I moved the adjournment.

An Hon. Senator: The question was called.

Senator Cools: Now we know the game.

The Hon. the Speaker: It has been moved by the Honourable Senator Cools, seconded by the Honourable Senator Carstairs, that further debate on this item be continued at the next sitting of the Senate.

Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying "yea."

• (1620)

Some Hon. Senators: Yea.

The Hon. the Speaker: Those opposed will please signify by saying "nay."

Some Hon. Senators: Nay.

The Hon. the Speaker: In my opinion, the "nays" have it.

Honourable senators, it is moved by the Honourable Senator Andreychuk, seconded by the Honourable Senator Wallin, that the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade — dispense?

Some Hon. Senators: Dispense.

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

Some Hon. Senators: No.

Some Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: Those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying "yea."

Some Hon. Senators: Yea.

The Hon. the Speaker: Those opposed to the motion will please signify by saying “nay.”

Some Hon. Senators: Nay.

The Hon. the Speaker: In my opinion, the “yeas” have it.

(Motion agreed to, on division.)

SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY ACCESSIBILITY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND REFER PAPERS AND EVIDENCE FROM SECOND SESSION OF FORTIETH PARLIAMENT— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck pursuant to notice of March 11, 2010, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology be authorized to examine and report on the accessibility of post-secondary education in Canada, including but not limited to:

- (a) analysis of the current barriers in post-secondary education, such as geography, family income levels, means of financing for students, debt levels and challenges faced specifically by Aboriginal students;
- (b) evaluation of the current mechanisms for students to fund post-secondary education, such as Canada Student Loans Program, Canada Student Grants Program, Canada Access Grants, funding for Aboriginal students, Canada Learning Bonds, and Registered Education Savings Plans;
- (c) evaluation of the current mechanisms to fund scientific research and development in post-secondary and related institutions and the commercialization of such research;
- (d) examination of the current federal/provincial transfer mechanism for post-secondary education;
- (e) evaluation of the potential establishment of a dedicated transfer for post-secondary education; and
- (f) any other matters related to the study;

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the Committee on this subject during of the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament be referred to the Committee; and

That the Committee submit its final report no later than December 31, 2010, and that the Committee retain until June 30, 2011, all powers necessary to publicize its findings.

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

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators I note that this item was neither presented by the chair nor the deputy chair of the committee. I would like to have the opportunity to discuss with my colleagues why it was not submitted as a committee request for an order of reference.

With that in mind, it is not a question of not attaching a great deal of importance to post-secondary education in Canada. In fact, I served in a post-secondary institution for many years, and I do very much value what post-secondary education stands for and what it does for Canadians. However, I would like to be able to confer with my colleagues on the committee prior to bringing this to a vote. I move the adjournment in my name.

The Hon. the Speaker: The point of the honourable senator is that sometimes our practice is to hold a motion so that the proponent of the motion is able to speak to it.

Senator Callbeck will speak on debate to the motion that she has made, it will be seconded by, et cetera, and then we will come to Senator Comeau.

Senator Callbeck: Honourable senators, during the last session, I introduced a motion to have the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology begin a study on accessibility of post-secondary education in Canada. The motion was amended by Senator Cowan to include research and research funding mechanisms, which was later passed by the Senate.

The committee began its work on October 8, 2009. We held four meetings. We heard from 10 very knowledgeable witnesses before prologation.

I am introducing this motion again so that the committee can continue its work on this important study. The motion is the same as when it was passed by the Senate, except for one addition: I have asked that previous papers and evidence also be referred to the committee.

The motion allows the committee to study the accessibility of post-secondary education, including current barriers for potential students. It also contains a directive to examine the unique challenges facing Aboriginal peoples. In addition, it allows the committee to consider current funding mechanisms, social transfer payments, the potential for a dedicated post-secondary education transfer, scientific research and development, and commercialization of such research.

Professor Ross Finnie of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa was one of the first witnesses to appear before the committee. He noted the significance of post-secondary education:

It is important to individuals, but it is also fundamental to the future prosperity of the country. If we do not get post-secondary education right, the economy will not move ahead. We will not be able to compete globally and will fall behind.

Our committee has already heard from a number of excellent witnesses who have shared their valuable expertise and who have added new facts, figures and interpretations to the committee's evidence. It is a complex subject, as Professor Finnie explained:

We cannot just focus policy on ensuring that the student financial aid system and tuition fees and so forth are in place so that a young person who wants to go to university will be able to afford it. We understand increasingly that we need to get at young people early on in life because the determinants of who goes to post-secondary education is fundamentally related to a person's background, and that preparation and that orientation must start early.

Our witnesses so far have stated the determinants are varied. Finance is only one significant factor.

Mr. Richard Mueller of Statistics Canada noted that one of the primary factors in determining who does go and who does not go on to a post-secondary education is family background. That background can even be more important than income. He said:

That is not to say that financial factors or parental income are not important, simply — as we used to joke about when we were writing some of our papers — if you wanted to go to university and you had the choice to have a well-educated parent or a high-income parent, you had better choose the well-educated parent.

Professor Ben Levin from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto also spoke of non-financial barriers to access, and noted that personal perception can make a real difference. He said:

There is clear evidence that aspirations have an effect on participation, independent of ability and achievement. Whether people see themselves participating in post-secondary education is important. Whether others encourage them to see themselves as participating is important. Aspiration is an area that needs attention.

Even access to information can play a role. Professor Levin talked about the evidence showing that those least likely to participate are the ones who overestimate the cost and underestimate the benefits of participation. He went on to say:

People are making rational decisions, but they are based on the wrong information. They think it costs more and they do not understand the benefits economically and otherwise. Providing better information to people about what it actually costs and what the benefits are is critical.

This motion includes a focus on the unique challenges facing Aboriginal youth. Statistics show that non-Aboriginals are far outpacing Aboriginals in the area of university qualifications: 23 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population have a degree while just 8 per cent of Aboriginals do; 15 per cent of non-Aboriginals have less than high school compared to 34 per cent of Aboriginals. The one area where the playing field is more level is in the trade schools certification: it is 14 per cent for Aboriginals and 12 per cent for non-Aboriginals.

Nearly one half of the Aboriginal population is under the age of 25, so there is tremendous potential both for individuals and for the whole country within this rapidly growing group of people.

That is why we need to do more to correct these imbalances. The committee has already heard from some witnesses who spoke of the unique challenges facing Aboriginal youth. Roberta Jamieson, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, noted that the secondary school completion is a problem in Aboriginal communities. She said:

A fundamental issue, though, is that many of our young people do not believe they have a future. They lose sight of their dreams. They come to school excited and then something happens.

We have begun our study. Researchers have immersed themselves in the subject. Committee members have shown a keen interest in the subject matter. Last week at our organizational meeting, there was general agreement that this study should continue as soon as possible. The committee is ready to proceed, and I strongly urge the Senate to adopt the motion as soon as possible.

Hon. Jane Cordy: I want to thank Senator Callbeck for all the work she has done in the whole field of post-secondary education. The Social Affairs, Science and Technology Committee heard some excellent witnesses as we worked on this study of post-secondary education before Parliament was prorogued in December.

Would Senator Callbeck tell the chamber of our discussion at last Thursday's committee meeting, when she brought forward this proposal that we continue this study of post-secondary education for this parliamentary session?

• (1630)

Senator Callbeck: I thank the honourable senator for the question. We had a general discussion as to what the committee should be doing. Certainly, there was general agreement among senators on this side and the government side that this study would be the one that would go forward right away.

Hon. Sharon Carstairs: Honourable senators, I just have a comment to make. It may be a little unusual for Senator Callbeck to have introduced this rather than the chair of the committee, but clearly this appears to be the will of the committee. Having said that, it is perfectly within Senator Comeau's right to want a day or two to discuss with members on his side whether they are in full agreement that this study should go forth. However, I do not see a great deal of difference between this and the decision made precipitously on the other side to deny Senator Cools the opportunity to do exactly the same thing and to stand up and make some comments about the Foreign Affairs Committee study.

Hon. Art Eggleton: I just want to point out, honourable senators, in response to Senator Comeau's concern, that the committee did discuss this at its first meeting last week. Members of the committee from both sides of the chamber felt that this study should proceed.

The reason I did not put it in my name as the chair of the committee, or in the name of the deputy chair, Senator Ogilvie, was because the original motion from the last session was initiated by Senator Callbeck. That gave her the opportunity to put it forward. It has been discussed at the committee and it has been agreed by both sides of the committee that it should proceed. I just wanted to clarify that point as to why that motion is coming from Senator Callbeck, as opposed to me as the chair, or the deputy chair.

Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie: Honourable senators, the issue here is one of having the opportunity to consult with our colleagues. I believe that nothing has been misrepresented in any large sense here, but I, for one, was caught by surprise at the beginning of the last day in the Senate. I indicated to my honourable colleague that I had not yet had the opportunity to discuss this with my colleagues and I could not guarantee the position of this side with regard to that issue.

I am absolutely confident that, with the opportunity to discuss this in the context of the motion, we will succeed in moving forward with debate on this very important issue.

Senator Comeau: I would first like to comment on what was said by Senator Carstairs regarding our side not wishing to recognize Senator Cools' motion. Had she been watching my reaction at that time, she might have made an entirely different comment, because I did not make any comment when Senator Cools tried to move the adjournment on the Aboriginal Committee.

Instead of speaking about one side or the other, what happened was that the chamber spoke. I did not necessarily speak, but the chamber spoke, and we have to respect that.

I agree entirely with the honourable senator that everyone in this chamber has the right to sometimes look a little more closely at motions before us. That is what I wanted to do in this case in order to be able to consult with members of the committee. I thought it was a little out of the ordinary that a member of the committee, and not either the committee chair or deputy chair, presented a request for an order of reference.

With that in mind, I did indicate that I had no problem with the issue of looking at post-secondary education. As I said, I worked in post-secondary education for many years. I have a great deal of time and respect for post-secondary education in Canada.

With that in mind, I would like to move the adjournment of the debate.

(On motion of Senator Comeau, debate adjourned.)

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY
CURRENT SOCIAL ISSUES OF LARGE CITIES
AND REFER PAPERS AND EVIDENCE SINCE
FIRST SESSION OF THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT—
DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Art Eggleton pursuant to notice of March 11, 2010, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology be authorized to examine and

report on current social issues pertaining to Canada's largest cities. In particular, the Committee shall be authorized to examine:

- (a) poverty, housing and homelessness;
- (b) social inclusion and cohesion;
- (c) urban economies;
- (d) models for collaboration and co-operation among governments;

That the study be national in scope, and include a focus on the largest urban community in each of the provinces;

That the study report include proposed solutions, with an emphasis on collaborative strategies involving federal, provincial and municipal governments;

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the Committee on this subject since the beginning of the First Session of the Thirty-Ninth Parliament be referred to the Committee; and

That the Committee submit its final report no later than December 31, 2011, and that the Committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

He said: Honourable senators, this is a motion to continue a study that goes back to the Thirty-ninth Parliament, looking at the social issues affecting our cities.

There are four parts to this multi-part study. The first one, on poverty, housing and homelessness, has now been completed and it is the subject of the next motion on the Order Paper, to which I will speak at a future time. However, there are still three components to this, and I would ask for the adoption of this motion.

The committee has not determined when exactly, in its process of work, this will come in. While I previously indicated that the committee felt priority for the matter of post-secondary education, this one, however, with other matters, will be considered by the steering committee, and ultimately by the full committee, as to when the subject matters will be undertaken. However, to get the matter back before the committee, I move adoption of this motion.

Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie: Honourable senators, this matter was, indeed, the subject of brief discussion at the first meeting of our committee last Thursday. However, it was my understanding that the steering committee would discuss the issue further before proceeding.

Therefore, in order to give the committee time to look at this and plan the next steps, I move the adjournment of the debate for the remainder of my time.

(On motion of Senator Ogilvie, debate adjourned.)

(The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.)

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