



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

Thursday, February 2, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA  
Speaker

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*Debates Services:* D'Arcy McPherson, National Press Building, Room 906, Tel. 613-995-5756  
*Publications Centre:* David Reeves, National Press Building, Room 926, Tel. 613-947-0609

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## THE SENATE

Thursday, February 2, 2012

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

Prayers.

### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

#### SEAL APPRECIATION DAY

**Hon. Fabian Manning:** Honourable senators, today we are taking the time to acknowledge and show our support for the commercial seal industry in Canada. Our Conservative government has spent significant time and resources defending the Canadian seal industry against the misguided, ill-informed and grossly irresponsible actions of the animal rights groups. For example, these groups continue to show videos of the killing of whitecoat seal pups, as if it is happening today, when the reality is that the killing of a whitecoat seal pup has been illegal in Canada since 1987.

Sealers are required to carry out a three-step process of stunning and killing, confirmation of unconsciousness, and effective bleeding. This process, originally recommended in 2005 by the Independent Veterinarians Working Group, is consistent with the recommendations of the European Food Safety Authority.

The coastal peoples of Canada have survived for hundreds of years on what Mother Nature provides. Sealing is an essential part of this particular way of life. Seals have been harvested for food, clothing, shelter and many other products, with new and innovative ideas being discussed each and every day.

Our Conservative government is standing up for sealers, including taking action under the World Trade Organization. Our government will continue to fight the myths and the misrepresentations with the truth and the facts of the Canadian seal industry. The bottom line is that Canada has a highly regulated, enforced and humane seal harvest. The actions of some of the animal rights groups have adversely impacted the social and economic well-being of many of Canada's remote communities, both of Inuit and of non-Native peoples, who rely on a viable seal trade for their livelihood.

Our Conservative government will continue to defend the interests of our sealers and will work with our provincial, territorial and industry partners to maintain market access for Canadian seal products. Sealing is a way of life that we are proud of and a way of life that we will continue to support and fight for.

[Translation]

**Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette:** Honourable senators, it is my great pleasure today to speak to an issue that is very close to my heart. Some of my new colleagues may not know that I learned to hunt seals in Newfoundland, and that I have hunted seals in Nunavut.

Today, together with nearly all of my Liberal colleagues, I would like to express my strong support for seal hunters in Atlantic Canada, Nunavut and the Magdalen Islands, as well as their families.

These Canadians are a living part of our history and our future.

For the past 40 years, our fellow citizens have been caught up in turmoil brought on by multinationals that engage in constant confrontation so they can profit at the expense of the people they manipulate. These multinationals attempt to impose their anti-speciesist ideology, an essentially humanophobic messianic movement seeking to convert society to its moral vision of the human-animal relationship.

It is clear from their websites how these groups work and how they are organized.

For a long time, our fellow Canadians resisted silently, out of the media spotlight, the undeserving targets of insults and slander as the world, and in particular film star Brigitte Bardot, cast accusing eyes on them.

That time has ended.

For the past few years, I have been involved in the fight to restore our compatriots' reputation through initiatives such as the Universal Declaration on the Ethical Harvest of Seals, which has the support of the three provinces and territories in which the seal hunt occurs, and the first seal dinner in the parliamentary restaurant.

I am therefore pleased that my campaign has resulted in the government's official engagement. I would like to congratulate the government on creating a symbolic seal appreciation day in support of seal hunters.

This cause goes beyond the seal hunt. It is about respect for our fellow Canadians who live in isolated regions and engage in a noble occupation. They deserve our continued support.

Today, we salute their courage, their ethics and their environmental responsibility.

[English]

#### THE NEWFOUNDLAND RANGER FORCE

**Hon. Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to the 204 members of the Newfoundland Ranger Force, a police force created in 1934 in Newfoundland by the British Commission of Government that administered Newfoundland from 1933 to 1949. The Newfoundland Ranger Force was modeled after the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and policed rural areas of Newfoundland and Labrador not served by the provincial police force, the Newfoundland Constabulary.

The Ranger uniform closely resembled that of their RCMP trainers and the Ranger badge was a solid brass disk adorned with a caribou head and inscribed with the word "Ubique," which means "everywhere." Everywhere they were enforcing laws and providing many government services. A number of authors have written about the Newfoundland Ranger Force, including Newfoundland-born author Darrin McGrath, who has recorded the history and lore of the Rangers in his book published in 2005.

Entering the Newfoundland Ranger Force in the 1930s and 1940s was an attractive career choice for educated Newfoundlanders at a time when good paid work was hard to come by. So attractive was the Newfoundland Ranger Force that at least 22 members of the Newfoundland Constabulary transferred to the Rangers, including the first Ranger, Brian White.

Rangers in Newfoundland and Labrador acted as welfare officers and social workers in the rural areas of the province, which included the issuing of relief payments. That was during the "dirty thirties," and much of rural Newfoundland's population was impoverished. Having to decide who would receive the payments was no easy task for the young ranger. As part of their duties under the health and welfare department, rangers could also be charged with escorting patients to the hospital in St. John's. When World War II started, the ranger took on extra duties of patrolling coastlines and scanning for suspicious activities. In October 1942, when the passenger ferry, the *SS Caribou*, was torpedoed by a German submarine in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, between Port aux Basques and North Sydney, rangers assisted with the retrieval and burial of victims.

• (1340)

Perhaps one of the most important functions of the Ranger was to act as mediator between rural communities and the Commission of Government because, under the Commission of Government, there were no elections and no democratically elected representatives.

In 1949, when Newfoundland joined Canada, rangers were given the opportunity to join the RCMP. Fifty-five rangers transferred, including my own father. I am very proud of the fact that my father spent nine years in the Newfoundland Ranger Force and then served in the RCMP for many years. The experiences of a number of Rangers have made it into the history books of Newfoundland and Labrador. I have had the privilege of meeting many of these brave men.

In 1980, a memorial plaque listing the names of the 204 Rangers and their regiment numbers was unveiled in front of the Colonial Building in St. John's, thus ensuring that their names will forever remain a part of the history of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Today, Canada's national police force patrols the outports and rural areas of Newfoundland and Labrador, but we recognize and celebrate the pre-Confederation service of the 204 Newfoundland Rangers and their contribution to the province and the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador.

[ Senator Marshall ]

## MATERNAL HEALTH

**Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer:** Honourable senators, for many years I have worked in various maternal health clinics in Uganda. On several occasions, I have shared my experiences with you. According to the World Health Organization, every 90 seconds a woman dies from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Ninety-nine per cent of these maternal deaths occur in developing countries. Honourable senators, I firmly believe that maternal health is a human right, one that all women in all parts of the world are entitled to. That is why, in June 2010, at the G8 and G20 summits, when our government decided to pledge \$1.1 billion for maternal health, I was extremely proud to be a Canadian. I thank Prime Minister Harper for leading the way on the issue of maternal health around the world.

Last year, while I was in Uganda, I visited a maternal health clinic located near a neighbourhood where I was raised. I have visited this clinic for a number of years. Recently, I spoke to honourable senators about how this clinic was extremely overcrowded, forcing two women to share a single bed. I spoke about how there was no electricity or running water in the clinic, which meant that women who delivered their children in the evening gave birth by candlelight.

I also drew the attention of honourable senators to the fact that women would only be allowed in the clinic if they brought their own "mama kit," which included a candle, a piece of plastic for the mother to sit on, sutures and gloves.

Honourable senators, this past January 2012, I was in Uganda, and I returned to this same clinic. I was very pleasantly surprised. I was informed that the clinic now had electricity and water so that mothers no longer had to receive sutures by candlelight. I was informed that mothers were no longer asked to provide their own mama kits and that there were more beds available for bench patients. When I asked the doctor what brought about such great change, he informed me that the clinic had countries such as Canada to thank, as it was initiatives like the one that our country championed in 2010 that were responsible for these improvements.

Honourable senators, that was a very proud and important moment for me as I saw firsthand the difference that Canada, as a nation, can make in the world. Canadian policies really can change the lives of people around the world. According to a World Health Organization study, maternal mortality dropped by one third between 1990 and 2008.

Honourable senators, I am certain that if Canada continues to take leadership roles on important issues such as maternal health, we will make even more differences in the world.

[Translation]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### JUSTICE

#### STATUTES REPEAL ACT— 2012 ANNUAL REPORT Tabled

**Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2012 annual report on the Statutes Repeal Act.

[English]

### INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

#### FIFTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE Tabled

**Hon. David Tkachuk:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration which deals with the annual report on internal audits for 2010-11.

[Translation]

### CANADA-FRANCE INTERPARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

#### ANNUAL MEETING, AUGUST 31 TO SEPTEMBER 7, 2011—REPORT Tabled

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Delegation of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, regarding its participation in the 38th annual meeting of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, held in Paris, Normandy, and Pays de Loire, France, from August 31 to September 7, 2011.

[English]

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

#### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY REGARDING IRAN

**Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk:** Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(a), I give notice that, later this day, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to examine and report on Canadian foreign policy regarding Iran, its implications, and other related matters; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than June 30, 2012 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until July 31, 2012.

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Would the honourable senator explain the need to rush? Why

must honourable senators deal with this matter today rather than at the next sitting of the Senate?

**Senator Andreychuk:** This is a very timely topic and the committee unanimously agreed to study Iran. We cannot proceed to hear from witnesses if we cannot proceed now. Some witnesses are tentatively available or unavailable, and so we wish to proceed to this subject on Wednesday, when we have available space. To wait until Tuesday to adopt this motion would not be fair to the witnesses. We want to be technically correct and as fair to the witnesses as we can, so this is why we were asking for the indulgence.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** So ordered.

#### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "CHARTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH"

**Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to study and report on the establishment of a "Charter of the Commonwealth" as agreed to by the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Perth, Australia, in October 2011 and its implications for Canada; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than April 13, 2012 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until April 30, 2012.

• (1350)

### INVOLVEMENT OF FOREIGN FOUNDATIONS IN CANADA'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

#### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Nicole Eaton:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the interference of foreign foundations in Canada's domestic affairs and their abuse of Canada's existing Revenue Canada charitable status.

[*Translation*]

## QUESTION PERIOD

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

#### SECOND-LANGUAGE TRAINING— LINGUISTIC DUALITY

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The government recently announced the elimination of nearly 200 second-language teaching positions at the Canada School of Public Service. Linguistic duality is one of the defining features of Canada's federal public service. These cuts deprive the public service of resources and tools that help ensure that Canadians receive services in the official language of their choice and help cultivate institutional bilingualism within the public service.

The government is saying that these cuts are not part of the austerity measures. If that is the case, why is maintaining second-language teaching positions not a priority for this government, in order to keep these valuable tools and resources within the public service?

[*English*]

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have stated on many occasions in this place the government's strong commitment to our linguistic duality and our full support of the Official Languages Act.

With regard to the Canada School of Public Service language training, the government's commitment remains ever strong in the teaching of Canada's official languages. Language training will continue to be provided for all those who need it. The private sector, universities and colleges have the ability and the expertise to provide training to the public service at a high level of service and at a much more reasonable cost for the taxpayer.

[*Translation*]

**Senator Tardif:** Although the government has reiterated that the cuts will not affect the provision of language instruction, I believe that it is quite normal for Canadians to wonder about the government's commitment to the linguistic duality of our country.

Recent cuts at the Canada School of Public Service are just the latest in a long list of decisions that have raised questions about the government's commitment to bilingualism: the appointment of a unilingual justice to the Supreme Court, changes in hiring criteria for senior public servants — such as the chair of the CRTC — where bilingualism is no longer essential, the appointment of a unilingual auditor general, the abolition of half of the positions at the Official Languages Centre of Excellence, among others.

In view of this record, why should Canadians believe that the cuts are not just another step on the road to gradually dismantling bilingualism?

[*English*]

**Senator LeBreton:** The honourable senator can list a litany, as she just did. We all know the situation with regard to the Supreme Court of Canada. It was fully debated in this place. The arguments for the Supreme Court of Canada not being under the Official Languages Act are well known. That provision was put in place by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, for very good reasons.

With regard to the Auditor General, he is now in his position. He has appeared before committee. He made a report on the status of his language training, and he is very committed to functioning in both of Canada's official languages. I think it behooves all of us to take him at his word. He is acting in good faith, and I do not know why we should doubt for a moment his resolve in being successful in this area.

With regard to the head of the CRTC, I do not know of what the honourable senator speaks. This is a designated bilingual position. I do not know whether the honourable senator is speculating on who the next person will be. Obviously, Senator Tardif knows something that I do not, but I think the record speaks for itself.

The government is firmly committed. We have expended considerable resources on the road map. We are fully committed to Canada's linguistic duality. However, when we are going through the various agencies and departments of government, our commitment is to find savings. This particular decision is not part of this process now. It was a part of a process before, where the department concerned felt there was better use of taxpayers' dollars and very good training for those who require French- or English-language training in other schools and universities. That does not in any way take away from the commitment of the government to all aspects of the Official Languages Act.

[*Translation*]

**Senator Tardif:** I can give the minister another example. Last week, a Federal Court judge ordered the Minister of Labour, Lisa Raitt, to appoint a bilingual arbitrator with labour relations experience to supervise arbitration proceedings between Canada Post management and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

The minister had appointed a unilingual arbitrator. That appointment was challenged by the union. The decision handed down last Friday by the Federal Court in Montreal confirmed that the individual in question could not and should not have served as arbitrator, mainly because he did not speak French.

[*English*]

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, I must confess that I am not aware of the situation the honourable senator describes. I will take the question as notice.

[Translation]

**Hon. Marie-P. Poulin:** The minister assures us that for years now the government has been quite meticulous in its responsibility to ensure that every piece of legislation and every decision must reflect the importance of bilingualism in Canada.

The thing that worries Canadians, and what Senator Tardif illustrated so well with her list of decisions, is that there seems to be a gap between what the government says and what the government does. How can the minister assure us that this gap will disappear as soon as possible when we keep seeing decisions being made that fundamentally do not seem to recognize that French is just as important as English in Canada?

[English]

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, I take issue with that comment. The actions of the government absolutely prove that we strongly and fully support linguistic duality in our country. This is a bilingual country, and I would argue aggressively that we have delivered on this commitment.

We are providing unprecedented support, unlike any government before, in the *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality*. We are in year three of a five-year commitment of the road map. Today, over 80 per cent of the commitments our government made to this road map have been confirmed and fully funded. Our support includes new translation programs for book publishing, community radio, and funding community groups that need support to operate. This is welcome and was very much needed, and the government has delivered on this.

[Translation]

**Senator Poulin:** If the government is truly committed to ensuring that its decisions respect the French-speaking community as much as the English-speaking community, can the minister assure us that the person who is appointed president of the CRTC will be able to hear and understand presentations made to the CRTC, in a field as important as communications and telecommunications, in the country's two official languages, even though the official job posting lists bilingualism as an asset and not a mandatory qualification?

• (1400)

[English]

**Senator LeBreton:** I have already addressed that question in response to Senator Tardif. I was curious when the honourable senator mentioned this position because the government has made it very clear that the head of the CRTC should be fluently bilingual in both of our official languages.

[Translation]

**Hon. Maria Chaput:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The government, as Senator Tardif just mentioned, justified its decision to abolish the second-language training program by saying that it had become too expensive, but that bilingualism remains a priority.

Since bilingualism remains a priority for the government, can the Leader of the Government in the Senate explain what directives have been sent to the federal departments in terms of more affordable resources that are available to employees who want to learn either official language?

[English]

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, the government is fully committed to our language training program. It was decided that the services of the Canada School of Public Service language training could be provided by our schools and universities and have the same ability to turn out the same number of students at a lower cost to the taxpayer.

I think all of us, when we conduct ourselves, regardless of the area we are working in, obviously want quality work conducted by professionals. The individuals who are training our senior public servants or people who require language training, the fact is if they are working in a university or in a language training school, why would one think that the level of training and expertise would be any less than what was part of Canada School of Public Service?

[Translation]

**Senator Chaput:** Do I understand correctly that the public servants who until just recently were taking language training have been redirected to other resources. When will they be able to resume their training?

[English]

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, I think the training is ongoing. The government is using other resources for this language training. I fail to see any break in the ongoing language training program. The fact is that it is necessary to have qualified people. Obviously, through our universities and language training schools, these people are available. Public servants who require language training are getting it. They are not receiving training at the Canada School of Public Service but from other experts.

[Translation]

**Senator Chaput:** Honourable senators, has the government compensated for this significant reduction by taking other concrete measures that are immediately accessible and available to public servants who want to learn an official language?

[English]

**Senator LeBreton:** This is available right now through universities, colleges and other language training facilities. There is no break in the availability of language training to those public servants who, by virtue of their positions, require this training. Who is teaching the public servants should not be a concern, as long as the teaching is continuing.

[Translation]

**Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool:** Honourable senators, I have a supplementary question, which does not necessarily pertain to training schools. Could the leader tell us — and perhaps I should

know this but I do not — who funded the report that the Fraser Institute published recently on the cost of bilingualism in Canada? Where is the funding for such a study or for such research coming from?

[English]

**Senator LeBreton:** That is not a question that should be directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. This is something that should be directed to the private enterprise that is conducting the report. My responsibility is to answer for the government, not for every think tank and institute, from no matter where they are on the political spectrum. That is something I am incapable of doing.

[Translation]

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

### POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

**Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government. Recently, we received statistics on the number of soldiers who were wounded or killed during operations in Afghanistan. The figures are particularly relevant. A total of 13.2 per cent of the 40,000 Canadians who participated in operations overseas suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Today, 6,732 veterans who participated in this mission are receiving help from the Department of Veterans Affairs; this does not include veterans who participated in all of the other missions before Afghanistan.

The report indicates that 158 soldiers were killed in Afghanistan — 138 in action and 20 in theatre but not in action. These cases involve at least two suicides. Where are the statistics on all those who committed suicide after their return to Canada because of the post-traumatic stress injuries they sustained while they were participating in the mission in Afghanistan?

[English]

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I will take the question as notice. I am certain that the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of National Defence would probably be able to provide me with the information Senator Dallaire requests, but there is no question that the mission in Afghanistan, as well as other missions, have resulted in an increased number of operational stress injuries.

As honourable senators know, there has been a massive increase in the services provided by Veterans Affairs to treat these individuals and also assist members of their families who are obviously dealing with the very serious disorder of post-traumatic stress.

I believe there are 17 specialized clinics across the country dealing with our returning soldiers and veterans. I do not have available the numbers affected and being treated in these clinics.

[ Senator Losier-Cool ]

[Translation]

**Senator Dallaire:** You are absolutely right. We have made great strides since the modern warfare era began with the first Gulf War in 1991. For at least 15 years, before Afghanistan, there was very little support for these people.

Once those who committed suicide because of psychological injuries due to operational trauma have been identified, will their names be added to the list of the 158 service people who gave their lives for the operation in Afghanistan? They could receive the same recognition for having paid the ultimate price while serving their government and their country.

• (1410)

[English]

**Senator LeBreton:** Obviously the circumstance of which Senator Dallaire speaks is a great tragedy. I do not know exactly what steps have been taken or what kind of system they have in place to monitor and count these individuals, but I will take the question as notice.

## CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

### CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY AT SUN NEWS NETWORK

**Hon. Jim Munson:** Honourable senators, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

The Canadian Press today reported that at least six federal bureaucrats participated in a citizenship reaffirmation ceremony staged at the Sun News Network studio on October 18, 2011. The event purportedly featured ten new Canadians reciting the citizenship oath. Six of these new Canadians, however, were actually employees of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The event was arranged by civil servants in Toronto at the request of the minister's office, and officials were unable to find ten new Canadians who were willing or able to participate.

The ministry's Twitter feed nevertheless reported, "10 new Canadians are reaffirming their citizenship live at the Sun TV studio in Toronto right now." Talk about taking a photo op to another level.

I wonder if the Leader of the Government in the Senate could explain why the government agreed to arrange this special ceremony and why it actively misinformed Canadians about its nature.

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I was as interested in this story as Senator Munson apparently is. This is an unusual situation, and it is unfortunate that it ever took place. It was done so without the knowledge of the minister or the minister's staff.

Senator Munson refers to the Twitter feed. It was obviously believed by everyone that they were in fact people being sworn in. It is an unfortunate incident. The fact of the matter is the minister and his staff did not direct it and were not aware of it.



With that said, I do not know the circumstances surrounding this. It happened last October. I do not know what the lead-up circumstances were, but I would hope that this unfortunate incident does not in any way take away from the very important role and the solemn seriousness of the citizenship ceremonies that are held across the country.

Suffice to say, honourable senators, I was as surprised as Senator Munson was, and obviously this was done without the knowledge of the minister or his staff.

**Senator Munson:** Honourable senators, there is communication that goes back and forth on this access to information, and one of the quotes is from Mr. Bolland of Sun Media talking to Mr. Kenney's spokeswoman, and she seems to agree, that "It would seem that both of us have a little egg on our face." I think maybe a lot of egg on their faces would be more apropos.

What will happen to those bureaucrats, if it is —

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Order.

**Senator Munson:** It is not for me.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I must remind all honourable senators that the rules prohibit the presence in this chamber of electronic devices that make noise. I think there is one here that is making a noise.

**Senator Munson:** Maybe that was Sun Media; I am not sure.

Be that as it may, that notwithstanding, as I was saying, one of the spokespersons for Sun Media did say to Mr. Kenney's spokeswoman, "It would seem that both of us have a little egg on our face." Apparently, the staff member is apologizing on behalf of the minister. It always seems to be the bureaucrats' fault. I am curious now, what will happen to the bureaucrats?

**Senator LeBreton:** The Speaker intervened and said there should not be any noise from electronic devices in the chamber. For a moment I thought, "Why is he calling Senator Munson an electronic device?"

In any event, honourable senators, clearly this was and is an unfortunate incident. Other than, as Senator Munson said, there being egg on a few faces, I do not imagine there will be much more repercussion than that, except that I again want to point out that the citizenship ceremonies held across the country are wonderful ceremonies welcoming new Canadians into the country, and I would hope that this incident does not in any way undermine the importance and the seriousness of those ceremonies.

**Senator Munson:** Just to set the record straight, the reason the Speaker called me an electronic device is that I have been wired most of my life.

I think, honourable senators, I will not ask the leader another question because she answered them appropriately.

**Senator LeBreton:** I will not touch the honourable senator's comment about being wired for most of his life.

[*Translation*]

#### DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

**Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Chaput on November 1, 2011, concerning funding for official language minority community health research.

#### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

##### CANCELLATION OF FUNDING FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGE MINORITY COMMUNITY HEALTH RESEARCH

(*Response to question raised by Hon. Maria Chaput on November 1, 2011*)

In 2004, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) boosted its efforts to develop capacity and promote research into the health of Canadians in official languages minority communities (OLMC) by developing the OLMC research initiative.

Since 2005, CIHR has invested approximately \$2.6M in this area of research, both through the OLMC Initiative and through CIHR's open competitions.

CIHR's decision to terminate the OLMC initiative was taken in order to improve the alignment of CIHR's programs to its five-year strategic plan. CIHR undertook a broad consultation process with Canada's research community in 2009 to inform the development of the plan. As part of the plan, CIHR is making more funds available through the Open Grants competitions, where proposals reflect the interests and expertise of Canada's top researchers.

In the future, CIHR will continue to support OLMC research through the Open Operating Grants Program and through its relevant Signature Initiatives such as the Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research. In fact, a number of very productive meetings have been held with relevant stakeholders to discuss how best to integrate the needs from the official languages communities across its programs which will have greater impact in terms of outcomes in the longer run. The agency invites OLMC researchers to continue to apply to CIHR through these programs.

[English]

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### FIRST NATIONS ELECTIONS BILL

#### SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Patterson, seconded by the Honourable Senator MacDonald, for the second reading of Bill S-6, An Act respecting the election and term of office of chiefs and councillors of certain First Nations and the composition of council of those First Nations.

**Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston:** Honourable senators, I am pleased to speak today on Bill C-6, the First Nations election act. I can safely say that this bill is an improvement on the current situation and is broadly supported by my colleagues on this side of the chamber. I would not go as far as Senator Patterson, the sponsor of the bill, and call it a milestone achievement, but it is a vast improvement over what is. It is an incremental improvement, a stepping stone, perhaps, to what First Nations are really seeking, which is a First Nations-controlled and -designed election system based on their inherent right to self-government.

With that said, I commend the government for listening to First Nations, particularly those represented by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs. They undertook a lot of the work, and their report on improving the system for First Nations elections forms the basis of this bill.

Also note that the bill is consistent with some elements of the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples' report, *First Nation Elections: The Choice is Inherently Theirs*, which was tabled in May of 2010.

As we often observe, between the process of consultation and the production of legislation, there are always a few slips. Perhaps that lies in the inherent nature of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Justice. However, I think we can find solutions to these problems. It will be up to the committee studying the bill to listen carefully to witnesses and to deliberate on what those solutions might be.

Senator Patterson did an admirable job at describing the merits of the bill. It is an opt-in bill that provides an alternative to the election provisions of the Indian Act. For First Nations who become part of it, the bill extends the terms of chiefs and councillors from two to four years and permits groups of First Nations to have common election dates if they so wish. This will provide greater stability to communities and allow for longer-term planning at both the local and the regional level.

• (1420)

The bill also removes the minister and the department from the appeals process. Instead, the Federal Court will be the primary avenue to pursue election appeals.

The bill also establishes clear rules for conducting elections and sets out penalties for corrupt and fraudulent practices. These are all good things and should be supported by honourable members.

It is what the bill fails to do that is of concern. The Senate committee heard from a wide range of witnesses when it was dealing with the issue of elections that resorting to the courts for election appeals is an expensive and time-consuming process.

What is needed is a First Nations institution, an electoral and appeals commission that can both support the election process and provide a transparent and low-cost appeals process. It could be used both by First Nations under this act and by those who adopt a customs election code.

That was the conclusion of many experts and First Nations. That was the conclusion of the Senate committee.

This bill does nothing to move us in that direction. I am not suggesting that Bill C-6 could be changed to create such a commission, nor should it. That would require a collaborative effort between Canada and the First Nations organizations, but the bill might include measures requiring the minister to initiate such a process or at least to report back on progress on further reforms to First Nations elections.

Another conclusion reached by the committee was that Canada should do all it can to help First Nations who wish to develop custom election codes to reflect their specific situation and history and fully exercise their inherent right to self-government. Although nothing in the bill actively assists First Nations to move in this direction, section 42 provides for First Nations to be removed from the schedule if they adopt such a code. I trust the committee will take a close look at these clauses to ensure that they do not create an undue impediment to moving to First Nations-designed electoral systems.

It is significant that a First Nation requires only a band council resolution to come under this act but a community vote with a double majority requirement — that is, a majority of voters and a majority of votes — to leave it. Although generally this bill will apply only to those First Nations whose council requests it, there are provisions that allow the minister to add a First Nation to the schedule if it determines that a protracted leadership dispute has significantly compromised governance.

Concern has been raised about this new power of the minister, especially about the undefined nature of the words “protracted leadership dispute.” This is another area the committee should look at closely.

Clause 24 of the bill requires that in the event of a tie in an election, the electoral officer must conduct a draw to break the tie. Derek Nepinak, the new Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, has called this process inappropriate. The committee will need to hear why he objects.

However, I will point out that federal, provincial and territorial elections require that in the case of a tie a new election be held. Only in municipal elections are ties settled by lottery. As First

Nations frequently point out, they are not municipalities but self-government nations. Federal legislation that purports to move away from the paternalism of the Indian Act should treat them as such.

Although I believe there are areas where this legislation can be improved, I do agree it represents a significant improvement on the status quo and a useful step in the right direction. I trust senators on the Aboriginal Peoples Committee will take a close look at the provisions of the bill and recommend appropriate amendments.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**The Hon. the Speaker** *pro tempore*: It was moved by Senator Patterson, seconded by Senator MacDonald, that the bill be read the second time.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time.)

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

**The Hon. the Speaker** *pro tempore*: Honourable senators, when shall the bill be read the third time?

(On motion of Senator Patterson, bill referred to Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples.)

#### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of the family members of the Honourable Senator Meighen. His wife, Kelly Meighen, his sons Ted and Max Meighen as well as his daughter-in-law, Holly Meighen.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY CANADIAN  
FOREIGN POLICY REGARDING IRAN

**Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk**, pursuant to notice of motion earlier this day, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to examine and report on Canadian foreign policy regarding Iran, its implications, and other related matters; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than June 30, 2012 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until July 31, 2012.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

• (1430)

[*Translation*]

#### RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF BOMBER COMMAND DURING WORLD WAR II

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Michael A. Meighen**, pursuant to notice of December 14, 2011:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the unconscionable delay, despite the resolution of this Chamber passed unanimously on June 18, 2008, of the awarding of an appropriate theatre decoration for the brave Canadian flyers and crew who served in Bomber Command during World War II, without whose efforts, courage and sacrifice the war and its destruction would have continued for many more years.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today with a great deal of emotion regarding my notice of inquiry to call the attention of the Senate to the unconscionable delay of the awarding of an appropriate theatre decoration for the brave Canadian flyers and crew who served in Bomber Command. Without their efforts, their courage and their sacrifice, the Second World War would have continued for several more years.

It has been nearly four years since the Senate unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the government to act on this matter. We must not allow bureaucratic obstacles to continue to delay this important honour, which is owed to so many Canadians.

When called upon to serve Canada, these brave soldiers did not hesitate to step forward. As Canadians, we are failing in our duty to recognize them for their bravery if we allow a few administrative difficulties deprive these heroes of this national recognition.

I know the government is working diligently on this file, but I urge it to redouble its efforts.

[*English*]

I also rise on a personal matter. I wish to formally advise honourable senators that I will be stepping down as a member of the Senate.

My health is good; my spirits are high; and my confidence in the future of Canada is undiminished. It is time to explore new chapters. It is time for new challenges.

Before I go any further, I, too, wish to acknowledge the presence in the gallery today of my beloved wife, Kelly, our sons Max and Ted and our daughter-in-law Holly, together with other friends — a brother-in-law, a sister-in-law, and friends from other occupations — who are here today with us. I very much appreciate their presence. Unfortunately our son Hugh is working out of the country in Dubai and cannot be with us.

As senators know, it is not only the actor in public life who has a role to perform. Families and life partners, in particular, often face the more difficult task. For the Meighen family, it has meant it fell often to Kelly to serve in both parental roles while our boys were growing up. When I was on the road with committee or here in Ottawa, she was the one who performed daily family miracles that garnered no headlines.

To our three sons, I cannot adequately express my pride in each and every one of you. You have done — and are doing — your mother and I proud. As your father, it is my hope that I have lived up to your expectations. While I was indeed often away from home, know that I tried to set the best possible example for you every moment I was here in Ottawa. In my own small way, I have tried to perform my public duties in the manner your great-grandfather did.

In his final address, Arthur Meighen said:

There is only one boast I can ever make. Not a boast in any triumphant success — not at all — but I think I can say this, which not all could say, that I never rose there and sat down without having done the best that was in me.

I am already confident that years from now, when each of you find yourselves in exciting and vital careers, different though they will undoubtedly be — different from me and different from each other — you will be able to stand like your great-grandfather, having done the best that was in you.

To my sons and to all members of their generation, it is my sincere hope that they will begin to reverse the decline in interest among today's youth in public and volunteer service. Whether at the neighbourhood, municipal, provincial or federal level, Canada will need your energy, optimism and ideas — and ideals — in the decades ahead.

If you choose to offer your name in politics, or through work in public or community service, I can guarantee you the following: You will discover that there is so much more to life, as Wordsworth reminds us, than just the business of “getting and spending.”

At the same time, I am confident of a few other things: You will not get rich; you will work long hours; and you will receive little public acclaim.

[ Senator Meighen ]

So why, youth might ask, would they consider such a future when the monetary rewards of the private sector are calling? The answer, while far from simple, becomes tangible, I think, as one gets older.

In public service one finds the private satisfaction every member of this chamber has felt by making a difference for Canada. The same holds true for volunteerism: the satisfaction of knowing that you have contributed to a cause greater than yourself; the satisfaction of knowing you have worked your hardest to make your country or your neighbourhood a better place; and the satisfaction of knowing that, at the end of the day, you answered your country's call in the best way you knew how.

In paying tribute in the 1930s to Sir Robert Borden, Arthur Meighen wrote:

Happier still are they who, as the shadows lengthen . . . enjoy the undimmed confidence of everyone who shared with them their struggles and anxieties, and who have just cause to hope that when all is over there will be heard from their fellow men the simple and sincere benediction: “He served his country well.”

As we continue in an era of economic instability and government restraint, I also ask young people — and my colleagues on all sides of the political sphere — to not lose sight of the richness that the arts bring to society. Like public service in its many forms, the value to our society from this sector and to us as individuals and as citizens is indelible.

The arts are not just good for us; they do not simply add to our quality of life. They are among the things that make life worth living. They are among the things that make us human.

If I were asked to name something in the human experience that compares to an engagement in the arts, there is only one thing I can think of — being in love. It can be perplexing. You can be disappointed in love many times before you find the real thing, but when you do find it, it changes your life.

Art is a way of examining and embracing all human experience, good and bad. It makes us more at home in the world — citizens of the world. It makes us feel that life has meaning after all and that it is good to be human.

Governments at all levels are embracing restraint; they have to. In this I have no quarrel. I do, however, ask youth and politicians alike to continue to look ahead when the number-crunchers present their options. Remember that for each dollar invested in the arts, three are returned.

[*Translation*]

Above all, let us not forget that society profits from the arts in ways that cannot be summed up on a balance sheet. Canada's collective imagination — regardless of the economic situation — will always need to be nourished, rekindled and articulated. The arts — and the artists whose talents enrich Canada — are, and will always remain, crucial to this national need.

[English]

I also ask my sons' generation to start re-engaging with political parties. As I look back today on my own career, I realize more fully than ever what I gained as an individual, and as a Canadian, from my involvement with a national political party.

I was born in Quebec, with family in Ontario and roots in the Maritimes. In this, I was privileged; but after joining what was then the Progressive Conservative Party, my knowledge and appreciation of our country grew and grew. Having been elected president of the party in the 1974, I came to know and love the Prairies, the North and British Columbia. I saw first-hand that solutions to national problems that seemed quite obvious from Montreal or Toronto or Halifax were not so simple when viewed through a western prism.

• (1440)

I also formed life-long friendships with Canadians from coast to coast, and as a member of Brian Mulroney's caucus in the 1990s and Stephen Harper's today, I have increasingly heard French spoken with an unmistakable Alberta accent, and English articulated as only someone born and raised in *le Québec profond* can do.

Through our national political parties, we have forged compromise and understanding. We have also forged a nation. That nation, Canada, must be continually renewed. Our political parties remain the best vehicle, in my view, for each succeeding generation to do just that: renew and build Canada in the best way we can.

I ask my sons' generation to never lose sight of the founding cornerstone of our country and of its future — the partnership between English and French that first united us in 1867. This partnership must remain central to their concerns as they move Canada forward. It must remain so because it is the place from where we came.

Honourable senators, this central tenet has little to do with numbers or percentages, whether in the past, the present or, indeed, in the future. It is, instead, about what we are and who we are as a people, and what we always have been and what we must remain.

Proud partisan that I am, I would still be less than honest if I did not say I have found the last decade disconcerting in some ways. Partisanship should be a way of uniting and building, not dividing. It is my hope that in the years ahead honourable senators will put aside the easy temptations of blind partisanship — to which I, too, have yielded during my career — and in this, as in a number of other appeals to you this afternoon, I echo the eloquent words of my friend of many years and our recently departed colleague, Senator Fox.

As some of you will know, my grandfather sat in this special place for a decade. He served as both government and opposition leader in the Senate, and also as Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition in the other place.

"The second chamber," he said in the 1930s, "should be a workshop and not a theatre."

He left history the following warning concerning the health of this body:

The Senate is worthless if it becomes merely another Commons divided upon party lines and indulging in party debates such as are familiar in the Lower Chamber, session after session. If the Senate ever permits itself to fulfill that function . . . then the sooner it is abolished the better.

To which I can only add, "Hear, hear!"

Despite my fears, I am also fortunate to look back at my involvement here and recall many examples when I experienced the Senate at its best, as a "workshop" indeed.

[Translation]

I believe that the Senate's best workshops are its committees. One of the highlights of my work during my years in the Senate was sitting on various committees.

In my years here, senators from both sides of the chamber, together with expert witnesses, Library of Parliament researchers and interested citizens from across the country have worked together in committee to create a better Canada. In doing so, they served the public interest and brought great credit to the Senate.

I look with pride upon the work of our Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, which I had the honour of chairing for the past three years, especially its study of the credit and debit card systems in Canada; its 10-year statutory review of the Business Development Bank of Canada; its study of retirement savings instruments available to Canadians; and its ongoing study of innovation and support for growth capital, which began in 2010.

[English]

I cannot leave public life without paying tribute to the leaders of my party under whom I have served: Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Joe Clark, Jean Charest, Kim Campbell, Brian Mulroney and Robert Stanfield. All have served our nation well. All have left their stamp on Canada's national story. All served with honour and distinction. I am proud to have stood with them.

I owe a particular debt of gratitude to our eighteenth prime minister, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney. Over 50 years ago, in Quebec City, a fellow law student at Laval approached me on my very first day. Like me, this young man had elected to study and live in an overwhelmingly French-speaking atmosphere, so it was not surprising that his first words to me were: "Do you speak English, too?" My reply: "Yeah, I get along in it. *Je me débrouille.*"

Our friendship has continued over the years. Thanks to the confidence he had in me, I was permitted, as a senator, to give back in a small way what Canada had given to me.

While I owe him a personal debt — one I can never repay — I also know that Canadians themselves owe our eighteenth prime minister a great deal. Whether through his tireless efforts battling

apartheid and helping to free Nelson Mandela, his vision in achieving the Free Trade Agreement with the Americans that later expanded to NAFTA, his battles to rid our continent of acid rain, and, most important, his valiant attempts to bring Quebec into the Constitution with “honour and enthusiasm,” he did the best that was in him.

I was proud to stand with Brian Mulroney in 1990 when I became a senator, and I am just as proud to stand with him today.

As I come to the close of my career here, I wish all senators well in the years ahead. I extend heartfelt thanks to our highly knowledgeable table officers, to the Usher of the Black Rod and to all Senate staff, Senate security personnel and committee clerks who perform their duties here in the Senate with such constant good humour and competence.

In particular, I wish to thank and pay tribute to my incomparable and irreplaceable executive assistant of over 21 years, Loren Cicchini. With considerable good humour, coupled with inexhaustible patience, skill and friendship, she has been crucial to any success that I may have achieved in this job. Heaven knows how I will survive on my own.

In my final words as a senator, I will not be quoting from Arthur Meighen. Instead, I will follow his example and turn to the words of his great and worthy opponent, Sir Wilfrid Laurier — a man he admired more than almost anyone he met through public service. Through the words of Laurier, Canada’s first and greatest French Canadian Prime Minister, I wish to again offer my advice to my children and their generation:

I shall remind you that already many problems rise before you, problems of race division, problems of creed differences, problems of economic conflict, problems of national duty and national aspiration. Let me tell you that for the solution of these problems you have a safe guide, an unfailing light if you remember that faith is better than doubt and love is better than hate. Let your aim and purpose, in good report or ill, in victory or defeat, be so to live, so to strive, so to serve as to do your part to raise even higher the standard of life and living.

Finally, honourable senators, Laurier said the following:

Canada first, Canada last, Canada always.

May those words guide each and every one of you in the years ahead.

*Merci.*

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, Kelly, the Meighen family, my old colleague Graham Scott and Gail Scott whom I see there in the gallery, I could get up today and speak for many a long hour about Michael Meighen but, in the name of our former colleague Senator Lowell Murray, I will keep my comments brief.

[ Senator Meighen ]

• (1450)

Honourable senators, I view Senator Meighen’s decision to take an early departure from the Senate with very mixed emotions. I am very sorry to see him leave this place, but happy for him and his family that he will now have more time to pursue the many worthy causes — although he always had time in the past — and as well for some quality personal time.

As Senator Meighen mentioned, he made some very long-lasting friends in politics. I am one of those who had the privilege of meeting him almost 50 years ago — as Michael, Brian Mulroney, and people like Joe Clark and myself were all part of the then Young Progressive Conservative Association — and having all these wonderful meetings in Ottawa that would not now stand the test of political correctness. In any event, we have known each other for a very long time.

I for one — and I know I speak for others — am truly grateful. I have great respect for you, Michael, and I am truly grateful for all of your many valuable contributions, freely expressed opinions, commitment to your country, to Parliament and to the country in a much broader sense of all your philanthropic work.

Senator Meighen’s decision to take leave of the Senate at this time is one that, although we wish it were not so, we fully respect. It is a vast understatement to say that he will be deeply missed by all honourable senators. Our side shall particularly miss his good and generous nature, his wisdom, and sound advice. I think it can be said about Michael more than anybody that I have ever met in politics, he is a true gentleman.

As a member of the Conservative caucus now, and for quite some time, Michael does have a long history in the party. He did run twice in his native Montreal in the general elections of 1972 and 1974. For a Conservative to run in Westmount in Montreal is quite a courageous act. Following that, he was elected president of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada and served in that capacity from 1974-77. Some of us remember that. One of the interesting things in the era of Michael’s presidency was the leadership convention; a huge leadership convention at that point. It was the first leadership convention where there was a modern media and a lot of coverage. Michael oversaw all of this. We had a huge convention and multiple candidates in the midst of a February snowstorm, which of course was called when our dear former leader Robert Stanfield had decided to leave the leadership of the party. Of course the leadership in 1976 resulted in the election of the Right Honourable Joe Clark as leader.

Michael, I think this is something you do not mention enough, but it was the first national leadership convention by any political party to come into the modern era, especially in Canada. Your leadership of that event is something that you should be very proud of.

As well as Michael’s political career, we all know and respect his career as a lawyer and a philanthropist. When honourable senators consider his contribution over 20 years in this chamber — and especially in committees — the service is exemplary, to say the least. His commitment to our men and women in uniform and our veterans is deep and unwavering, as

I mentioned a moment ago. Michael, even though you are not here I know that because of your efforts they will have a voice no matter what you do in the future.

Michael has challenged Canadians to place greater value, as he said in his very eloquent remarks, on learning more about the history of this great country. Senator Meighen, as we all know, has carried on with the legacy of the Meighen family throughout his parliamentary career. Even though he is the grandson of our great former Conservative Prime Minister Sir Arthur Meighen, Michael is his own man, has made his own mark and will be known as another great Meighen in the annals of the history of our Parliament.

Michael, as you know, I was truly hopeful that we could have resolved the Bomber Command issue before you left this place. I would have thought that would have been a fitting tribute in your honour. We will keep trying Michael, even though you are not here to press us on almost a daily basis. I am hopeful that when we do succeed in this area that we will really call it the Meighen initiative.

Honourable senators, I join with all of you and all of the members of the conservative caucus in wishing Michael and Kelly and their families, their sons Ted, Hugh and Max all of the very best. I am delighted they are in the gallery today to witness the departure of our dear colleague. Your gain is our loss. Thank you very much.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I would like to add my voice to that of Senator LeBreton in paying tribute to our friend, Senator Meighen, for his lifetime of service to this country and to say how much we will miss him here.

In Canada we do not have many family dynasties in politics, certainly not ones that trace their roots back more than a century. Senator Meighen is one of those rare exceptions, coming from one of Canada's great political families. His grandfather, of course, was the Right Honourable Sir Arthur Meighen, first elected to the other place in 1908, subsequently serving twice as Canada's Prime Minister and who sat in this chamber for more than 10 years. He was the only person, as Michael said a moment ago, ever to have served as Leader of the Government and Leader of the Opposition in both houses.

Prime Minister's Meighen's legacy is well known; the creation of the Canadian National Railway, his prominent role in ending the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 and the list goes on.

However Sir Arthur Meighen left another legacy for Canadians: the values of public service, political involvement, and fundamental rock solid respect for others that he instilled in his family, and which we have been privileged to witness in his grandson, our colleague, Senator Michael Meighen.

Senator Meighen has been a leader in his community, in his profession and his political party, supporting our great cultural institutions — he and his wife Kelly have been extraordinary benefactors of the Stratford Festival — to serving some of our

institutions of higher education. He served on the Board of Governors of his alma mater McGill University and is Chancellor to the University of King's College in my own home town of Halifax. Supporting community organizations in Atlantic Canada and throughout the rest of the country, Senator Meighen has never stopped working, quite simply, to make Canada a better place. I thought an article which appeared in the *McGill Reporter* a few years ago captured Senator Meighen quite accurately. The journalist wrote:

... after just a few minutes with Meighen it becomes evidence his is more than just the practiced warmth of a seasoned politician — Meighen likes people, pure and simple. Intelligent, forthright, self-deprecating and quick to laugh, Meighen quickly turns the 30-minute formal interview into a casual conversation.

She described his passion for and commitment to McGill adding:

And it is a passion.

I think all of us here can attest to that, and that his compassion and commitment has not been limited to McGill. Senator Meighen has worked tirelessly as a highly respected chair, deputy chair and member of a number of our standing committees, notably the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, and that committee's Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs.

Until just a few years ago, Senator Meighen served as counsel to the well known law firm of Ogilvy Renault — formerly Meighen Demers — and applied his legal skills directly to public service and his legal counsel to the groundbreaking Deschênes Commission on war criminals in the 1980s.

Senator Meighen has also been active in conservation efforts. He helped create the Meighen-Molson Professorship in Atlantic Salmon Research, which led to the establishment of the acclaimed Canadian Rivers Institute at the University of New Brunswick. He serves as Canadian Chair of the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, whose work he spoke about in this chamber the other day.

• (1500)

I must tell you, honourable senators, that as a Liberal I took great comfort in his speech. I could not help feeling some affinity for the endangered wild Atlantic salmon he spoke about. However, I was greatly encouraged by the optimism about their future — that, as a result of hard work and education, the wild salmon are being returned to their historic greatness in this country.

In Senator Meighen's words, the salmon "like other iconic animals or natural wonders that have come to represent Canada's distinctiveness, history and heritage" — again, colleagues, I feel a certain resonance in his words — are beginning to enjoy a resurgence. He pointed out that governments can play a vital role in achieving conservation.

Honourable senators, I must tell you that as Liberals we too are finding that the actions and inactions of this government are playing a vital role, and we appreciate the work that the government is doing in establishing the conditions that will lead to our own resurgence.

I know Senator Meighen understands the dedication of those of us on this side to a strong Liberal Party of Canada. He understands that because an essential part of his public service has been his dedication to his political party.

Corry and Hodgetts, in their classic text on democratic government and politics, wrote that “There is ample reason for suspecting that political parties are somehow essential to the working of democratic government.” I agree with that, and I would go further and say that the best and healthiest democratic governments owe their well-being to the involvement and commitment of people like Senator Meighen.

Honourable senators, it is easy when times are good to find people to assume positions of leadership in a political party. It is not so easy when times are tough. Senator Meighen was there for his party through some very difficult times — as a candidate, as a party president and, of course, here in the Senate.

Despite, or perhaps because of, that deep commitment to his chosen party, Senator Meighen has always understood the equally deep commitment of those across the aisle and has forged true friendships that cross political boundaries. That, again, may perhaps be traced back to his legacy from his grandfather. Last November, Senator Meighen wrote an op-ed for the *National Post*, dedicated in honour of the memory of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He wrote:

Some might ask why I, a life-long and very proud Conservative, would encourage Canadians to take time out this week to honour Laurier, who, after all, was Canada’s greatest Liberal prime minister. In this, I take my lead from my grandfather Arthur Meighen, an opponent of Laurier’s who sat across from him in Parliament for more than a decade.

At the time of Sir Wilfrid’s death in 1919, my grandfather, a member of Sir Robert Borden’s cabinet, took my aunt Lillian, then only nine-years-old, with him when he paid his respects to Lady Laurier.

“You’re too young to understand,” he said to her, “but I want you to be able to say that you saw one of the finest men I have ever known.”

Honourable senators, I believe that kind of respect between political adversaries expressed by both the Right Honourable Arthur Meighen in 1919 and by Senator Michael Meighen a few months ago represents the best of Canadian politics. I am convinced that respect has contributed to making Canada the great nation that it is today, and it must be part of our collective DNA if we are to achieve our true potential as a nation.

Senator Meighen, I do not know how many Canadians take the time to think about the qualities that a good Canadian senator should possess — probably not many — but I believe that if they did they would come up with a list that is remarkably summed up in you. Dedication to your community, to your party and to your country — these are the qualities for which you have the admiration of us all.

[ Senator Cowan ]

It has been an honour to serve in this chamber with you. My best wishes to you and to Kelly, and to the members of your family, for the next stage of your life together.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

(On motion of Senator Carignan, debate adjourned.)

## THE SENATE

### MOTION TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO MODERNIZE AND STANDARDIZE THE LAWS THAT REGULATE THE MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY— DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Nancy Greene Raine**, pursuant to notice of January 31, 2012, moved:

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to modernize and standardize the laws that regulate Canada’s maple syrup industry, which is poised for market growth in North America and overseas, and which provides consumers with a natural and nutritious agricultural product that has become a symbol of Canada;

That the Government of Canada should do this by amending the Maple Products Regulations, in accordance with the September 2011 recommendations of the International Maple Syrup Institute in its document entitled “Regulatory Proposal to Standardize the Grades and Nomenclature for Pure Maple Syrup in the North American and World Marketplace”, for the purpose of

- (a) adopting a uniform definition as to what constitutes pure maple syrup;
- (b) contributing toward the development of an international standard for maple syrup, as it has become very apparent that the timing for the introduction of such a standard is ideal;
- (c) eliminating non-tariff measures that are not found in the international standard that may be used as a barrier to trade such as container sizes and shapes;
- (d) modernizing and standardizing the grading and classification system for pure maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade, thereby eliminating the current patchwork system of grades that is confusing and fails to explain to consumers in meaningful terms important differences between grades and colour classes;
- (e) benefiting both marketing and sales for an industry that is mature, highly organized and well positioned for growth;
- (f) enhancing Canadian production and sales, which annually constitutes in excess of 80% of the world’s annual maple products output; and



(g) upholding and enhancing quality and safety standards as they pertain to maple products.

She said: Honourable senators, in the interests of ensuring a vibrant maple syrup industry in our country, it is with great pleasure that I tabled a motion that calls on the government to amend the Maple Products Regulations.

On podiums around the world, the maple leaf — emblazoned proudly on our national flag — says “Canada” more than any other image. On kitchen tables around the world, maple syrup has become equally symbolic of our nation, for while other countries produce maple syrup, no one produces more than Canada.

Honourable senators, I have a confession to make: I love maple syrup. When I was ski racing we would often be in Quebec during the sugaring off season. I remember the experience of visiting a sugar shack and tasting maple taffy for the first time. I could see then, and still appreciate, the work it takes to produce real maple syrup.

What many people may not realize is that maple syrup is not only an iconic Canadian food, it is also a healthy food choice. Last March the American Chemical Society released a study done by the University of Rhode Island that identified 54 compounds in maple syrup from Canada, many with antioxidant activity and potential health benefits. The study indicated that these compounds may pack similar health benefits to those found in berries, tea, red wine and flaxseed.

Dr. Navindra Seeram, an assistant pharmacy professor at the university stated:

Not all sweeteners are created equal. When choosing a sweetener, pure maple syrup may be a better choice because of the range of antioxidant compounds not found in other sweeteners.

Considering all the benefits, however, our maple syrup industry should be even stronger. That is exactly what the proposed amendments are all about. Let me reflect on the challenges of the industry, and why changes to regulations are required.

Every year, depending on the weather and other factors, the North American maple syrup industry generates about \$400 million in sales. Canada produces a staggering 82 per cent of global output for maple products. In 2009 alone, we produced more than four and a half times as much maple syrup as the United States, which is the only other country to produce it.

While these figures are impressive, there is a huge capacity for future growth. Currently, pure maple syrup represents less than 1 per cent of the market share of common sweetener sales in North America. In order to penetrate this lucrative market, the merits of maple syrup must be effectively sold.

Our industry knows that its success depends on close collaboration with counterparts in the U.S. to ensure the integrity of our common products. That is why, in 1975, North American producers founded the International Maple Syrup Institute.

[*Translation*]

Today, the International Maple Syrup Institute is focusing its efforts on maintaining the integrity of pure maple syrup and developing industry standards. In this way it will ensure that Canada and the United States continue to enjoy the social, economic and environmental benefits of the maple syrup industry in the long term.

• (1510)

That is why the institute has conducted extensive consultations with industry managers and consumers in recent years and has identified a number of serious problems.

[*English*]

First, there is no uniform definition of “pure maple syrup.” As a result, it is difficult for the industry to win the hearts of consumers who may continue to buy artificial sweeteners. Second, as honourable senators may well know, when consumers reach for a can or bottle of maple syrup, they face a confusing patchwork of grading systems. In the U.S. darker syrups are labelled “Grade B,” while in Canada, they have labels such as “Amber # 2” or “Amber # 3.” This has created a host of problems.

[*Translation*]

Consumers must first distinguish between Canadian and U.S. grades of dark maple syrup. They have to consider a set of letters, numbers and colours in order to determine as best they can the taste of the maple syrup. Consumers may falsely believe that a grade B is inferior to a category # 2. That is not the case; it is just a matter of taste.

[*English*]

Other challenges include the presence of off-flavoured or defective maple syrups in retail markets, which can hurt the reputation of the maple syrup industry. In addition, consumers have expressed a desire to know where their products are coming from. At present, there are no laws that require a producer to indicate the province, state or country of origin.

The International Maple Syrup Institute has come up with a plan to deal with these issues. First, it has proposed a uniform definition of “pure maple syrup.” Second, it has proposed that all pure maple syrup sold in retail markets be labelled “Grade A Maple Syrup.” Four distinct classes would describe colour and taste, such as “golden colour and delicate taste,” or “dark colour and robust taste.” Maple syrup that does not meet these requirements would not be permitted for sale in retail markets. These products would be known as “processing grade maple syrup” and, as such, would only be available for food processing. In this way, the industry can preserve the integrity of its products in the eyes of consumers. The institute also wants to see a requirement for product labels to include province, state or country of origin.

Honourable senators, the benefits of these proposed changes are manifold for consumers, industry and government alike. For consumers, a uniform definition of “pure maple syrup” would

distinguish the product from other natural and artificial sweeteners in North America and around the world. The new grade A standard for all pure maple syrup would end the confusion about the quality of darker syrups. The four different classes of maple syrup would make it easier for consumers to choose their preference because it is easy to understand the difference between golden delicate taste and dark robust taste. The removal of off-flavoured product from the shelves would strengthen consumer confidence in the purity of the maple syrup they purchase.

[*Translation*]

For the industry, a standardized grading and classification system would help to distinguish pure maple syrup from other competing sweeteners and to eliminate any prejudices about dark maple syrups. These changes would help the industry open markets and lower trade barriers within and between states and provinces, and, indeed, all over the world.

[*English*]

For government, the streamlining of maple product labelling and sales regulations would cut red tape and reduce duplication. Having a single grade would also make it easier for governments in Canada and the U.S. to enforce a standard of purity while improving coordination. Of course, as with any change, there would be short-term costs. However, the long-term benefits of expanding markets will far outweigh these initial expenses.

For these changes to occur, all existing maple regulations need to be upgraded and modernized in both Canada and the U.S. In our country, this would affect regulations administered by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. In advance of changes, the International Maple Syrup Institute is planning several market trials of the new standards in Canada and in the U.S. this year. Feedback from maple producers, packers and consumers will identify where the industry needs to focus its communication efforts. Ultimately, these trials should ease the transition to standard grades.

Honourable senators, the maple syrup industry is poised to expand its market share, but it can only do so with a more streamlined approach to grading and nomenclature in North America. The Government of Canada is just one piece of the puzzle, and it is vital that we step up and do our share to support the maple syrup industry. The institute is encouraging other jurisdictions to make the relevant changes to their laws and regulations for the benefit of consumers, producers and governments.

Honourable senators, the International Maple Syrup Institute has worked long and hard to prepare for these changes to their industry. It would like to see the new grades in place by this time next year. I believe it is in the interest of all to help make this happen. I urge honourable senators to support the motion before the house today.

**Hon. Terry M. Mercer:** Would the honourable senator take a question?

[ Senator Raine ]

**Senator Raine:** Yes.

**Senator Mercer:** This is an important industry in Canada, in particular in my province of Nova Scotia and other eastern Canadian provinces. Could the honourable senator tell us what effect she thinks global warming is having on the production of maple syrup?

**Senator Angus:** There is no such thing.

**Senator Raine:** I understand that the warming comes and goes. The interesting thing about maple syrup is that it comes from a unique area. Some people wonder why I have put forth this motion, but I can tell you, we have a lot of maple syrup in British Columbia. It is in our pantries, our fridges and our stores; and it is on our ice cream and our cereal. Maple syrup is truly unique and it takes a certain climate to produce it, and Ontario has had a very warm winter this year.

One thing has impressed me about the maple syrup producers: they follow the climate closely and maple syrup production is greater some years than other years. I am sure that has to do with the weather, not the climate; and they are prepared for that. I hope that I have answered the question.

**Hon. Pierrette Ringuette:** I have listened carefully to the facts that Senator Raine brought forward in respect of her motion. New Brunswick has many sugar bushes and syrup producers, as have Quebec and some portions of northern Ontario. My question is: Are producers in these provinces members of the International Maple Syrup Institute? Do they agree with this motion?

**Senator Raine:** I thank the honourable senator for the question. It is an excellent opportunity for me to address the regulatory proposal to standardize the grades and nomenclature for pure maple syrup in North America and the world marketplace, which has been submitted to all federal, state and provincial agencies with regard to maple product sales.

The institute came together about 15 years ago and has worked for a long time on many common interests of the industry. In Canada, members include the Maple Syrup Producers Association of Nova Scotia, the New Brunswick Maple Syrup Association, and Citadelle Maple Syrup Producers' Cooperative, in Quebec. Some members are individual producers and some of them are organizations of the provincial producers. They have all worked on this initiative and are unanimous in their support of it. It is interesting that the Americans have worked closely on this area as well, and bills are being introduced in some American state legislatures. This is a very good example of how the industry on both sides of the border and made up of like-minded people can come together and do something that takes the border out of the equation.

• (1520)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin:** Honourable senators, it would be unfortunate if a Quebecer did not speak about such a motion. I would like to draw attention to the fact that this was a tradition that existed long before the arrival of the Europeans.

It was the first inhabitants of Canada who developed this unique method of extracting maple sap, a product that is so appreciated by epicures, and doing so at a very specific time of year.

As a Quebec senator, I recognize Quebec's importance to the maple syrup industry in Canada. Not only is Quebec the largest producer of maple syrup in North America but it is also a driving force in strengthening the industry as a whole.

Quebec played a key role in developing the new standards proposed in this motion, and my colleague, Senator Raine, has referred to them. In order to put this motion in a broader context, I would like to talk about what the industry means to the Quebec economy and about the tremendous amount of work that the province has done to ensure that Quebecers and all Canadians continue to benefit from this industry. By so doing, I hope that all senators will understand why it is so important to support this motion.

The most recent figures on the world's production of pure maple syrup clearly illustrate the key role played by Quebec. In 2009, the United States produced some 2.3 million U.S. gallons of maple syrup from 8.6 million taps. Canada produced nearly 11 million U.S. gallons from 50 million taps.

In other words, Canada produced four and a half times more maple syrup than the United States. Think about it. In 2009, Canada was responsible for 82 per cent of the world's pure maple syrup production, which represents \$353 million. Quebec alone generated almost \$305 million of this production.

In 2009, Quebec was responsible for nearly 71 per cent of all of the world's maple syrup production. This is a remarkable achievement that can be attributed to the devotion and expertise of over 13,000 maple syrup producers in Quebec.

That being said, the commitment of Quebec maple syrup producers is not limited to sugar shacks. For a long time, Quebec producers have recognized the need to work with other maple syrup producers in Canada and in the United States, which is the main importer of maple syrup.

Simply put, the main competition for Quebec's maple syrup industry does not come from other producers. It comes instead from the range of less expensive natural and artificial sweeteners available in the marketplace.

Thus, Quebec has worked hard to help strengthen the market position of the maple syrup industry in Canada, North America and around the world. In the beginning a meeting in Montreal in 1974 led to the creation of the International Maple Syrup Institute, a non-profit organization made up of Canadian and American members.

Over the past few years, the institute has developed a uniform definition of pure maple syrup, as well as new standards and nomenclature. The motion before us, of course, is based on the institute's fine work. The proposed changes to maple syrup standards reflect extensive consultations with industry and consumers.

To produce its consumer research report, the institute teamed up with the Federation of Quebec Maple Producers and the

Citadelle Maple Syrup Producers' Cooperative. It is in that context that I move the adjournment of the debate in my name. I will use the rest of my time to propose a few amendments to Senator Raine's motion.

I spoke to her about it. There are a few little mistakes in the French version, which have nothing to do with the quality of the text. I consulted representatives from Citadelle and other producers. I wanted to be sure that the French version reflected the fact that Quebec is the heart of this industry and that Quebec's interests are crucial.

I will continue the debate next week and propose amendments to the motion.

(On motion of Senator Nolin, debate adjourned.)

[English]

## BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, before I call upon Senator Carignan to move the adjournment motion, I wish to invite all honourable senators to drop by the Speaker's quarters to meet the family of our colleague Senator Meighen.

Second, we will convene on Tuesday, February 7 at 2 p.m., but before prayers are read, it has been agreed by the leaders on both sides that the Diamond Jubilee Medal that has been specially struck will be available for distribution to all honourable senators and we can do that here.

Also, it is on that day, in the morning, that we, as our Senate Diamond Jubilee project, will be formally dedicating the stained glass window.

[Translation]

## ADJOURNMENT

### MOTION ADOPTED

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

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

That when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, February 7, 2012, at 2 p.m.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, February 7, 2012, at 2 p.m.)

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