



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

---

1st SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 148 • NUMBER 51

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, February 14, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA  
Speaker

## CONTENTS

(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

*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

---

Published by the Senate  
Available from PWGSC – Publishing and Depository Services, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5.  
**Also available on the Internet: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

## THE SENATE

Tuesday, February 14, 2012

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

Prayers.

### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

#### TRIBUTES

##### THE LATE HONOURABLE FRED J. DICKSON

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, it is with a heavy heart and much sadness that I rise today to pay tribute to one of the kindest and most sincere gentlemen I have ever had the privilege of knowing, the late Honourable Senator Fred Dickson.

Both Senator Cowan and I were instructed by Senator Dickson that he did not want a lot of tributes. We are respecting his wishes, but we did agree that we could not let the moment pass without acknowledging Fred's passing and his contribution.

I first met Fred Dickson back in the Stanfield days in the early 1970s. When I did meet him I soon realized that there was no greater champion of Atlantic Canada and no more loyal Conservative who did every conceivable job on behalf of the people of Atlantic Canada, particularly Nova Scotia, and of course the Conservative Party. His motto was, and I can remember him saying to me at one point, "You do what has to be done." If that is not typical of what Fred would say, I do not know what is.

A lifelong Nova Scotian, born and raised in Glace Bay, Fred passionately believed that Atlantic Canada could prosper to enjoy a dynamic and stable economy. In addition to over 40 years of practising law, he played an instrumental advisory role during many milestones for his home province of Nova Scotia and the Atlantic provinces, including the Atlantic Accord and the building of the Confederation Bridge, linking Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick.

Fred wholeheartedly believed in Canada's Maritime provinces, and he showed unwavering dedication to issues and concerns of his fellow Nova Scotians. All of his work in that regard is truly admirable.

In fact, during his time in the Senate, as before, Fred was a strong advocate for improved energy infrastructure in Atlantic Canada. His work and the benefits for Nova Scotia are well documented. Fred continued that work here in the Senate on the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources.

Until his final days, Fred also worked continuously on sustainability of Canada's health care system. As a matter of fact, during one of the ceremonies in the Senate I happened to sit

in Fred's desk. Underneath the desktop was the Kirby-LeBreton report, the Senate report on health care, which I noticed he had read very carefully because it was dog-eared.

The energy issue and the health issue were very important to Fred. I would hope, honourable senators, that his good work on both of these fronts, about which he was so passionate, will be continued here in his name in the upper chamber.

As I mentioned earlier, Fred was actively involved in both the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia and the Conservative Party of Canada. Much like his dedication to Atlantic Canada, he was a staunch Conservative committed to working in the best interests of Nova Scotians, Maritimers and Canadians.

The halls of Parliament and certainly the Senate Chamber will be a little less bright without Fred's warm smile and kind heart. On behalf of all my colleagues here in the Senate of Canada, I wish to extend our most heartfelt and sincere condolences to Fred's wife Kaye, his children Ian, Colin and Kathryn, and their entire family.

**Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I want to join Senator LeBreton in paying tribute to my good friend and our late colleague, Senator Fred Dickson.

Shakespeare wrote the following:

And do as adversaries do in law,  
Strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends.

Honourable senators, that is good advice for all of us in this place.

Senator Dickson and I regularly found ourselves on opposite sides; in our law practices in Halifax, in election campaigns in Nova Scotia, and most recently here in the Senate. We strove mightily for our clients and for our causes, but we always ate, drank and especially talked as friends.

Bill Casey, the former MP for Cumberland-Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley, got it right. He said that Senator Dickson was "the ultimate gentleman in everything he did."

Fred was deeply, passionately committed to Nova Scotia, to Canada, to the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia and to the Conservative Party of Canada. He understood and loved politics, not as an end in itself but because of what politics could do and could achieve for his province and for his country. He believed, as I do, that there is a positive role for government to play in people's lives.

Fred Dickson achieved a great deal, as Senator LeBreton has said. He was a key player in Canada-Nova Scotia offshore oil and gas agreements in the 1980s. He was deeply involved as an adviser

to the federal government in the building of the Confederation Bridge, linking New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island — quite fitting I think because he was indeed exceedingly good at building bridges of all kinds throughout his life.

He was a strong and long-standing supporter of former premier, and then senator, John Buchanan. They knew one another from Cape Breton, where they both grew up, and in fact they started a law firm together in the 1960s, which Senator Oliver would remember as well as I do.

Senator Dickson went on to manage all of Premier Buchanan's election campaigns, to my chagrin, since I was actively working to elect a Liberal government. His efforts were much more successful than mine, and he helped to elect John Buchanan Premier of Nova Scotia four times in a row. I did not like the result, but I always admired Fred's skill. Who else could run a fourth campaign using the slogan "John Buchanan and the New PCs?" It worked.

• (1410)

Honourable senators, he ran elections the way he did everything, with integrity and an overarching, absolute respect for the democratic process. He had high standards as to how things should and should not be done, and he held true to them.

He had too short a time here in the Senate — just three years — and he was battling cancer the whole time. However, his dedication to public service never flagged. He was a member of our National Finance Committee when it was studying the 900-page omnibus budget bill in 2010. The committee sat well into the summer, in long, marathon hearing days. Fred Dickson was there, actively studying the bill and listening to and weighing the testimony of every witness.

An issue that he was particularly devoted to was health care. His son Ian described how active his father was right to the end advocating for improvements to our health care system. Indeed, just a few days before he died, his son came to the hospital to find his father on the telephone with someone in the Prime Minister's office, pressing for better home care options for those in palliative care. As Ian said, "He thought people should have a choice, and how much better it would be if you could pass peacefully at home." Even cancer was not going to stop Fred Dickson from arguing for a better way for others.

Fred Dickson was a good friend, a fine Nova Scotian, and a great Canadian. I liked looking across the aisle and seeing him there — as usual, on the opposite side — working hard for what he believed in but never losing perspective and never sacrificing friendship. He will be truly missed. On behalf of all senators on this side, I join Senator LeBreton in expressing our deep condolences to Kaye, to his children and to his grandchildren.

## OCEAN RANGER DISASTER

### THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

**Hon. Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall:** Honourable senators, 30 years ago tomorrow, February 15, 1982, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians witnessed the worst offshore drilling accident in

Canadian history, with the loss of 84 lives. While undertaking exploratory drilling near the Hibernia oil field, 170 nautical miles east of St. John's, the *Ocean Ranger*, the Titanic of semi-submersible oil rigs, capsized and sank in a severe weather storm. All 84 crew men, including 56 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, were lost. It was Canada's worst maritime disaster since the Second World War, leaving the entire population of Newfoundland and Labrador shattered to its core.

The *Ocean Ranger* was a massive oil rig, touted as unsinkable and able to drill in areas too dangerous for other rigs. On Sunday, February 14, 1982, an intense storm developed south of Newfoundland and made a path toward the Grand Banks. By sunset that day, winds had gusted to 90 knots, and seas were building rapidly. Around 7 p.m., with seas reaching over 30 metres high, the *Ocean Ranger* reported to its St. John's shore base an exceptionally huge wave. Shortly after that, it reported that the giant wave crashed over the rig, smashing a porthole in the ballast control room. At 1:30 a.m. on February 15, the *Ocean Ranger* signalled that it was sending its crew to lifeboats. That was the last time anyone heard from them.

Two hours later, at 3:38 a.m., the Coast Guard and other rescuers watched their radars as the *Ocean Ranger* disappeared. Despite every possible effort, all rescue attempts failed, and all crew members on the *Ocean Ranger* perished. A permanent monument to those who died was erected on the grounds of the Confederation Building in St. John's, the seat of the provincial government. Every anniversary, a ceremony takes place there to remember all those who lost their lives in that terrible disaster of February 15, 1982.

## FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

**Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck:** Honourable senators, family violence can affect anyone. It pays no attention to age, gender, ethnic origin or socio-economic status. It comes in many forms, from harassment to verbal abuse to threats, to injury to pets, to physical abuse. The most recent Canadian statistics show that an estimated 6 per cent of women and men in a current or previous spousal relationship experienced spousal violence during the previous five years. About 20 per cent of women and 14 per cent of men also reported being victimized by a former partner.

In my home province of Prince Edward Island, the primary emergency shelter for abused women and their children, Anderson House, admitted 58 women and 32 children between April 1, 2010, and March 31, 2011. Almost 60 per cent of these women received emergency shelter at Anderson House for the first time.

This week is Family Violence Prevention Week in my province. Islanders are coming together to create greater awareness of this serious issue, and to learn how to prevent and to stop family violence around them. The P.E.I. Advisory Council on the Status of Women has launched the "Islanders Stand With Us" poster campaign. Islanders have been invited to submit photos of themselves, which are published on a poster. Each poster says, "I stand with you to end violence against women and children." Wednesday, February 15, is Wear Purple Day, when all Islanders are asked to wear purple to remember victims of violence and their families. Silent Walks Against Violence are being held in communities across the province throughout the week.

In 1995, the province developed a five-year family violence prevention strategy. We appointed a working committee, the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention, made up of community and government officials. I am pleased that the Action Committee remains a driving force in the fight against family violence on Prince Edward Island. I am told that the model has been duplicated in some other provinces. In fact, the Premier's Action Committee is presenting town hall meetings this week to provide information for Islanders on how to respond to and help prevent violence in our communities.

Honourable senators, family violence occurs every day, in communities large and small across the country. I would like to commend all those who assist and support victims of violence and who work toward the elimination of family violence. We must do everything in our power to help those who live with violence within their homes and families and stand with them to ensure an end to family violence.

### SCOUTS CANADA

**Hon. Consiglio Di Nino:** Honourable senators, for over 100 years, tens of thousands of Canadian men and women have committed themselves to serving the youth of our country through Boy Scouts of Canada and, more recently, the new co-ed Scouts Canada.

Today is Scouts Canada Day on the Hill. You will have seen a lot of them running around and doing their thing, some of them visiting your offices. Scouts of all ages are meeting members of both houses to remind us of the many benefits the organization has provided and continues to provide to Canadian youth, their families and our communities. They are joined by a number of adult volunteers, without whom Scouts would not exist. Volunteers drive the organization, and it is them I wish to highlight in my brief remarks today.

Scouts Canada has influenced all walks of Canadian life. From Scouts have come some of this country's most successful corporate and business leaders, accomplished professionals in all disciplines, sports legends, and political leaders, as well as distinguished Canadians in all other endeavours. The unsung heroes in this tale are the men and women who dedicate a large part of their lives to building confidence, character and determination in our youth.

Honourable senators, please join me in extending our thanks and gratitude to all Scouts Canada volunteers across our nation, for they have played an important role in developing Canada's leaders. Their nurturing, their mentorship, and their sound counsel have indeed helped to make Canada a tolerant, compassionate and successful nation, envied by the world. I invite all colleagues to a Scouts Canada reception this evening at 5:30 p.m. until probably after 8 o'clock in room 160S, to personally extend your thanks and gratitude to many of the volunteers who will be there today.

[Translation]

**Hon. Dennis Dawson:** Honourable senators, today we are welcoming members of Scouts Canada and the Association des scouts du Canada. These two organizations constitute the largest

youth movement in Canada. The scouting movement was founded on values like commitment and helping one another. Its mission is to help young people become more responsible, independent, charitable, mature and engaged.

• (1420)

Today, the Association des scouts du Canada has over 17,000 francophone Canadian members from coast to coast to coast.

Created in 1907 by Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the Scout movement now has over 100,000 members in Canada.

Many of you are invited and have already received your invitation, but I would like to reiterate Senators Di Nino's invitation for everyone to join us at 5:30 p.m. for a reception to pay tribute to them.

[English]

### NEW BRUNSWICK HERITAGE WEEK

**Hon. Carolyn Stewart Olsen:** Honourable senators, this week is New Brunswick Heritage Week. Forgive me if I am prejudiced, but I believe that New Brunswick is the most beautiful province in Canada, having a rich heritage that began long before Confederation. For instance, Chaleur Bay in northern New Brunswick still carries the name that Jacques Cartier gave it in 1534. When Cartier arrived, the land was already peopled by the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet nations. Our first European settlement was established by Samuel de Champlain on Saint Croix Island in 1604. Sadly, these first settlers were not prepared for the privations of the Canadian climate and many died from cold and hunger.

[Translation]

The Acadian settlers would be much more successful.

[English]

They established farms built on land reclaimed from wetlands with a series of dikes.

[Translation]

Many of these dikes can still be seen today in the Tantramar Marshes.

[English]

With its rich forests, bountiful farmland and calm harbours, New Brunswick prospered. Many of our towns were established well before the province was officially founded in 1784. There is a great sense of history in all our towns; many are very old with rich histories.

This year, Sackville is celebrating its two hundred and fiftieth anniversary. Sackville was a thriving town when Washington existed only on paper. Over the years, the people of Sackville were involved in events that shaped Canada's history.

In 1776, during the American Revolution, a local militia unit repelled a force of American invaders at Fort Cumberland. Christopher Harper, an ancestor of our Prime Minister, was part of that defending militia. Without these militiamen, Nova Scotia, which included New Brunswick, might have become the fourteenth colony of the United States.

Sackville was a thriving shipbuilding port for many years. Today it is home to Mount Allison University and was named the Cultural Capital of Canada in 2008.

Many notable people have called Sackville home, and I will name a few: Grace Lockhart, the first woman in Canada to receive a university degree, from Mount Allison University; John Peters Humphrey, author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; George Stanley, who designed the Canadian flag, and our honoured Canadian artist, Alex Colville.

This year, Sackville will host a year-long birthday celebration, and I invite all honourable senators to come and share the fun.

[*Translation*]

### INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST THE USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS

**Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire:** Honourable senators, when a sergeant and his unit entered a village that, less than an hour before, had been completely destroyed by a rebel faction, they found that the chapel was still intact and that people were inside. After forcing the door open, they estimated that about a hundred people were still alive. The sergeant contacted my headquarters requesting transport to secure the group. At that moment, from the edge of the village, 30 or so boys and girls, 9 to 16 years old, opened fire on the sergeant, his unit and the people they were protecting. As they were trying to protect themselves, another group of about 20 girls around the same age, some of them pregnant, emerged from the other edge of the village. They were being used as a human shield. Behind them, more boys and girls, 8 to 16 years old, opened fire on the sergeant, his unit and the people they were protecting.

What was the sergeant to do? What order should he have given? Should he have ordered his soldiers to kill the children who were killing, who had been taken from their families, taken from their schools, forced to take drugs, brainwashed by unbelievably irresponsible adults, sexually abused and used as weapons of war? Is that the only solution?

That is why Canada led the way to including children's rights in the protocol to prevent the involvement of children in armed conflict.

On February 12, we saluted the efforts of over 150 countries around the world to stop the other 30 countries that use over 250,000 children as child soldiers, children as young as seven or eight.

I would like to read a short excerpt from the convention:

[*English*]

The protocol establishes an obligation upon parties to take all feasible measures to prevent the direct participation in hostilities by individuals under the age of 18. It prohibits

[ Senator Stewart Olsen ]

the compulsory recruitment of persons under the age of 18 into the armed forces and also obliges parties to raise the minimum age of voluntary recruitment of persons into the armed forces above the age set by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It further requires parties to establish safeguards relative to the voluntary recruitment of individuals under the age of 18. The protocol also prescribes the recruitment of persons under the age of 18 years by armed groups that are distinct from armed forces of a state. Finally, the protocol sets forth an obligation upon parties to report to the committees on human rights and child abuse and its implementation.

Not only have we seen the threat of child soldiers, but now our forces are also facing the threat of child pirates. Clearly over 60 per cent of the pirates now being employed in the world are children or youths well under the age of 15, whom our forces are faced to confront with lethal force.

It is a requirement for us to argue to advance the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and to work not only at sea to try to stop these youth from being used as child pirates, but also to go to the nations that use them and bring those subversive elements before the International Criminal Court in order to stop this impunity.

### OCEAN RANGER DISASTER

#### THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

**Hon. Norman E. Doyle:** Honourable senators, it is indeed an honour and a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to stand here today and deliver my first few remarks in the Senate of Canada.

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

**Senator Doyle:** It is also an honour to be here among so many distinguished people — people who have made their own unique contributions to the well-being of their communities, their provinces and their country.

I want to take a moment to thank a number of people who have helped in the last few weeks to make my transition from private to public life a relatively painless event. First of all, I want to thank the Prime Minister for the appointment. I must say that I have always had a great deal of faith in his good judgment. I want to thank the Leader of the Government in the Senate, the Honourable Marjory LeBreton, for her guidance and direction. I want to thank Senator Marshall, the Government Whip, who has been generous with her time and of course my colleagues from Newfoundland and Labrador, Senator Cochrane and Senator Manning, who have been very helpful. Senator Cochrane, thank you for sponsoring me.

Honourable senators, there are many more people I should mention, however, I, like my colleague from Newfoundland and Labrador, must draw attention once more to the very important anniversary that will live forever in the hearts and minds of all Newfoundlanders and indeed all Canadians.

Tomorrow, February 15, will mark the date of one of the greatest ocean-going tragedies in the history of our province: the sinking of the *Ocean Ranger*. Every year at about this time, we remember these brave workers as they tried to launch lifeboats into the face of a vicious 190-kilometre wind and in 65-foot seas from the deck of an oil rig that was the height of a 35-storey building.

• (1430)

This tragedy is forever fixed in my memory for a number of reasons, but especially because of where I was working on that bleak, dark morning — in Premier Brian Peckford's office, waiting for the official word on the fate of the *Ocean Ranger* to be made manifest. In the final analysis, a broken porthole window, which allowed water to get into the *Ocean Ranger* ballast control panel, would send the largest oil rig in the world, with 84 of its workers, to the bottom of the sea on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.

Tomorrow, February 15, we will see many sorrow-filled ceremonies held back home in many of our churches and town halls, marking this sad anniversary. It has been 30 years since that terrible event occurred; however, time can never erase the sorrow that Newfoundlanders, and indeed all Canadians, feel for the families who know only too well how desperately weak we really are when confronted with the unbelievable power of the raging sea.

Again, honourable senators, we send our heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of these 84 brave men who will remain forever in our memory.

#### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Mr. Yusuf Mohamed Ismail, the Somali Ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Council and Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva. He and his colleagues are here in our gallery and are guests of the Honourable Senator Meredith.

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

[*Translation*]

#### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

##### PARLAMERICAS

BILATERAL VISIT TO THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC  
OF VENEZUELA, NOVEMBER 13-18, 2011—  
REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Pierrette Ringuette:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canadian section of

ParlAmericas respecting its participation in the bilateral visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which was held in Caracas, Venezuela, on November 13 to 18, 2011.

[*English*]

#### CANADA-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

U.S. CONGRESSIONAL MEETINGS,  
MARCH 1-2, 2011—REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Janis G. Johnson:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group to the U.S. Congressional Meetings, held in Washington, D.C., United States of America, from March 1 to 2, 2011.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTHEASTERN  
UNITED STATES-CANADIAN PROVINCES ALLIANCE,  
JUNE 12-14, 2011—REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Janis G. Johnson:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group to the Fourth Annual Conference of the Southeastern United States-Canadian Provinces Alliance, held in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, from June 12 to 14, 2011.

WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL  
MEETING, JUNE 29-JULY 1, 2011—REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Janis G. Johnson:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group to the Western Governors' Association Annual Meeting, held in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, United States of America, from June 29 to July 1, 2011.

---

#### QUESTION PERIOD

##### NATIONAL DEFENCE

F-35 AIRCRAFT PURCHASE

**Hon. Wilfred P. Moore:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate and it relates to the F-35 aircraft program.

The Joint Strike Fighter program has suffered further setbacks this week. The Pentagon has suggested a \$1.6 billion cut to their purchases in the next fiscal year. It has also advised that the United States should cut purchases by 2 this year, 13 the next year, and delaying the purchase of 179 until post-2017.

Further, the British have delayed a decision on even purchasing the jet until 2015, and reports are that they will cut their original order from 140 to 40. The Turks have halved their original order. Australia has rescheduled its original purchase of the 14 aircraft. The Dutch have put off making a decision on their purchase until after 2015. The Italians have signalled a cut in their original purchase of 131. The speculation is that this could now be as low as 38 units. Norway has yet to make a decision on their order.

Honourable senators, the price of these aircraft is literally rising daily.

During the last election campaign, Mr. Harper claimed that he had in writing the fact that Canada would pay the lowest price, at \$75 million per airplane. Would the Leader of the Government in the Senate please table that letter in the Senate?

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, first, it is important to point out that the Royal Canadian Air Force plays an important role in protecting our sovereignty and defending our interests at home and abroad. We do have obligations to our partners.

The other important thing to point out is that Canada's CF-18s are nearing the end of their usable lives, and it is the duty of the government to ensure that Canada's air force is properly equipped for the job we ask of them.

With regard to the honourable senator putting on the record the situation of other countries in the world, that is all public knowledge. We, as a government, as well as the Associate Minister of National Defence and the Minister of National Defence, are always involved in discussions with our allies and partners in the multinational Joint Strike Fighter Program. As I believe Senator Moore is aware, Minister Fantino is planning to host a meeting with several of Canada's partners. This will provide an opportunity for Canada and its partners to receive an update on the program's progress to date.

With regard to the honourable senator's specific request that I table a letter, I do not know whether I am in a position to do so. I will simply take note of that request and get back to Senator Moore.

**Senator Moore:** Honourable senators, I am struggling with how to respond. In the face of all that is going on, and in the face of this program, there is uncertainty as to the delivery date. The price is unknown. The Pentagon now says it will be \$156 million per airplane. It is clear that Lockheed is developing the plane as it is trying to produce it. It may not even suit Canada's needs. How does the leader justify continuing with this purchase plan in the face of those obstacles?

**Senator LeBreton:** That is Senator Moore's opinion, that they may not suit Canada's needs. The fact is that at this moment there are F-35s flying, and there are more coming off the production line this year. As these planes are rolling off production lines, they are going through testing. Areas needing improvement are being identified and addressed. All of this is taking place long before Canada takes delivery of any of these aircraft.

[ Senator Moore ]

I believe, honourable senators, the government feels that when the F-35 replaces the CF-18 years from now, it will be a mature, tested aircraft. The fact of the matter is, as I mentioned, Minister Fantino, the Associate Minister of National Defence, is meeting shortly with our partners. Collectively they are staying on top of the developments with regard to this aircraft. Currently, Canadian companies are involved in the development of this aircraft, and these are important jobs to Canadians.

• (1440)

**Senator Moore:** *Aviation Week*, a trade journal out of Washington, D.C., reported last Wednesday that a sizable amount of the increased costs of this airplane has been attributed to China's cyber-theft of technology.

Honourable senators, this has come to the attention of Lockheed Martin, and they have admitted that six of the subcontractors working on the program were hijacked and left "totally compromised."

The journal reports:

... Chinese hackers actually sat in on what were supposed to have been secure, online program-progress conferences, the officials say.

Has the Department of National Defence been briefed on these developments? Has cabinet been made aware of this? Is there any concern at all regarding our national security in light of these compromises?

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, I cannot comment specifically on an article that appeared in an aviation magazine. I will take the question as notice.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

### CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS—SECURITY

**Hon. Wilfred P. Moore:** Last week Mr. Harper was in China dealing on our natural resources.

**Senator Mitchell:** Finally. It is about time.

**Senator Moore:** He was following the team Chrétien example, which is commendable.

What I would like to know is, while we were beating up the Chinese with regard to their human rights record, did Mr. Harper raise the matter of the Chinese hacking into security programs in the United States?

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** The Prime Minister was indeed in China. I think all reports and evidence indicate it was a very successful trip. I dare say that it stands light years ahead of the trips Mr. Chrétien made. I would point out to honourable senators that the trade figures between Canada and China actually fell after the trips that Mr. Chrétien took.



In any event, honourable senators, as I was here, I was not privy to the discussions that the Prime Minister, government ministers and government officials had with Chinese officials. I cannot answer that question, but I will take it as notice.

**Senator Moore:** The leader is a member of cabinet. Was she aware of these breaches of security by the Chinese?

**Senator LeBreton:** As honourable senators would know, as a member of cabinet, I cannot and would not reveal anything that was discussed at the cabinet table.

**Senator Moore:** In view of the fact that it deals directly with the economy of Canada — it is driving up the cost of these aircraft, which are suspect at best — the government is doing this at the same time it will cut Old Age Security. What are the government's priorities? Did the Prime Minister know about these hacking occurrences before he went to China, and did he raise them while he was there?

**Senator LeBreton:** First, the honourable senator takes things in isolation. He and Kevin Page must be singing from the same hymn book.

The fact of the matter is the government's commitment to the Canadian electorate is jobs and the economy. Everything the government does is related to jobs and the economy.

With regard to the Old Age Security, the government will take measures to ensure that our Old Age Security is sustainable in the long term while not affecting people who are presently receiving it or about to receive it.

I cannot answer questions about personal meetings the Prime Minister had.

## HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

### OLD AGE SECURITY PENSION

**Hon. Art Eggleton:** Honourable senators, yesterday I was at a meeting that involved experts on pensions and services for seniors. There were advocacy groups there, health care providers, occupational therapists and economists, just to mention a few.

I also heard from hundreds of everyday Canadians who were joining in online in a webcast. They all agreed that cutting the OAS is unnecessary and that cutting Old Age Security today or in the future hurts low-income people the most.

The fact is that more than half of the seniors on OAS make less than \$25,000 per year. When Canadians are worried about the growing gap between the rich and the poor, why is this government insisting that these changes are needed?

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, why does Senator Eggleton insist on alarming senior citizens when he knows full well that the

intentions of the government regarding the Old Age Security system are in fact to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Old Age Security? The government will then be in the position, now and in the future, to ensure the OAS is available for seniors.

Honourable senators, Senator Eggleton knows full well — and I hope this has been properly communicated — that people presently on Old Age Security and people about to receive Old Age Security will not be affected.

I would urge the honourable senator to await the final decision of the government before he runs off scaremongering senior citizens.

**Senator Eggleton:** I am sorry, I did not go to Davos and give a speech about making a change in this, leaving it very uncertain as to why this change was necessary when experts say it is not or what the specifics of the changes are. This has many people upset. Poll after poll is showing they are upset, not because of what anyone on this side is saying, but simply because of what the Prime Minister has been saying.

It may not affect current people, but it will ultimately affect a lot of people, according to Mr. Flaherty's timetable. A lot of them are low-income people. A lot of them are in labour jobs, a very physical kind of activity, which not everyone will be able to extend to between 65 and 67 years in the workforce. It is the low-income people I am particularly concerned about here, and the government does not appear to be.

In terms of experts, now the Parliamentary Budget Officer has weighed in on this and has indicated, similarly to the chief actuary and other experts, that this has really not changed. He says that, relative to the size of the economy, the assumption that average benefits are indexed to inflation results in an increase in the cost of the program of only 0.8 percentage points of GDP from current time to 2031. Of course, after that it would fall off in any event. The evidence is not there.

Why does the government not stop the fear-mongering and tell people they will not do it because they do not need to?

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, for every person who says it is not a problem, I could provide 10 who say it is.

Incidentally, the honourable senator's own Paul Martin anticipated this in the 1990s and obviously backed away from it. Now the government is confronted with a situation where by 2030 Canada will have twice as many retirees supported by half as many working Canadians. On its current path, Old Age Security will become unsustainable without changes. Even Paul Martin recognized that, even though he backed away from it. That is a dangerous course of action. I do not think it is an action that any responsible government would take.

The goal of the government, which we are committed to, is protecting retirement income for today's seniors, for people about to retire and for future generations. We are simply working on a plan to make our Old Age Security system sustainable over the long term. It is the responsible thing to do; it is called leadership.

**Senator Eggleton:** The plan was sustainable back in Paul Martin's day, since the leader raised his name. What was not sustainable at the time was the Canada Pension Plan. That, in fact, was rectified.

The OAS is a different plan, and the numbers are not the same. The experts say, in fact, it is sustainable.

**Senator LeBreton:** Actually, it was both, honourable senators, and Senator Eggleton knows that. It was not only the Canada Pension Plan, which is now on strong financial footing.

To give credit where credit is due, the Martin government took the right decisions with regard to CPP, but we are not talking about CPP. Mr. Martin also foresaw the difficulty with the Old Age Security.

• (1450)

We are simply saying that, in order to ensure that our Old Age Security system is on sound footing and is sustainable well into the future, actions have to be taken now. With that said, it has absolutely nothing to do with people who are presently receiving the Old Age Security or people who are about to receive it.

**Senator Eggleton:** One final question: Will the leader advocate with her colleagues that people of low income be protected, including the poor — the people who will in fact suffer the most from this — people who cannot go to the 67-years-of-age mark or need this kind of assistance, the GIS and the other things that go with it, many of whom are women? Will the leader advocate for them in terms of the final conditions of this change?

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, I did not hear any accolades from the honourable senator's side as we have been advocating them for six years.

Certainly single seniors and people with limited or no income have benefited greatly from the policies of our government, but I will put them on the record again.

Budget 2011, just last year, enhanced the Guaranteed Income Supplement with a top-up of an extra \$600 for low-income senior singles and an extra \$840 for low-income senior couples, improving financial security for over 700,000 seniors in 2012, which happens to be the year we are presently in. It was the largest increase in the GIS in 25 years.

The budget extended the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers to support training and employment programs. Over 10,000 seniors have been helped since 2007.

The budget also increased funding for the New Horizons for Seniors Program, which was something I was involved in when I was Minister of State (Seniors), building on the results of our government for seniors since 2006. I will list a few more.

We have twice increased the age credit, providing tax savings to 2.2 million seniors. Pension income-splitting was introduced in 2007. We increased the age limit for RRSPs from 69 to 71, and 85,000 seniors have been removed from the tax rolls completely.

We raised the GIS earned income exemption — which was not the case under the honourable senator's government — from \$500 to \$3,500. We introduced automatic renewal for GIS for eligible seniors so they do not have to file year after year. Last year, 96 per cent of seniors in Canada had GIS renewed automatically.

We launched a national awareness campaign on the very serious issue of elder abuse, including financial abuse. Of course, we were the government that established in the first place a Minister of State (Seniors) and a National Seniors Council.

I think, honourable senators, we need no lectures or lessons from Senator Eggleton on looking after our seniors, especially those with lower incomes.

[Translation]

## ENVIRONMENT

### ECO-ENERGY RETROFIT PROGRAM

**Hon. Pierre De Bané:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Canadians are disappointed that the government is putting a premature end to the popular eco-ENERGY retrofit program, despite the fact that less than half the budget dedicated to the program has been used and the program is still in high demand.

**Senator Ringuette:** It is because the election is over.

**Senator De Bané:** Senator Ringuette is saying that it is because the election campaign is over, and she is right. These cuts are doing away with concrete measures that help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while creating employment and generating savings on home energy bills. I understand that the government wants to reduce the deficit that it has created since it came to power. However, I maintain that we must invest money in making Canadian homes more energy efficient because this is a priority and because all governments must do their share to combat climate change.

[English]

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, unfortunately Senator De Bané is mistaken. We did not cut this program. We designated \$400 million to the program, and the program is fully subscribed. All of the money the government put out in the budget for the program has been fully subscribed. The program will provide a quarter of a million Canadian families with up to \$5,000 to make their homes more efficient. This program is expected to generate \$4 billion in economic activity across Canada, creating and protecting thousands of jobs.

It was a matter of the program being there and Canadians taking full advantage of it. That is a fact.

The other fact, honourable senators, is that when this program was introduced in the other place, Senator De Bané's colleagues voted against it. Our government is very proud that we actually carried on with it and it has been a great success.

**Senator De Bané:** Honourable senators, the government claims it has a strategy to reduce greenhouse gases. Yet we learned yesterday that even the petroleum lobby believes Canada has no effective strategy to combat greenhouse gases and has urged the federal government to deliver real climate change solutions to restore the country's sagging environmental reputation. Cancelling the ecoENERGY Retrofit — Homes Program ahead of schedule sends another dismal message about this government's commitment to fighting climate change.

I ask the leader again, with her government's poor reputation on the environment, with many homeowners still interested in the program, and with economists warning about a contraction of the economy, could she please explain why the government thinks it is not a good investment to maintain this program, which would help so many local economies and reduce greenhouse gases?

**Senator LeBreton:** Honourable senators, I answered that question. We did not cancel the program; we budgeted \$400 million for it. It was fully subscribed. Canadians have taken full advantage of it. It is assisting a quarter of a million Canadian families to upgrade and retrofit their homes, and it has created billions of dollars in economic activity with all these small businesses participating.

We did not cancel it. We put \$400 million out. It was fully subscribed. It is like anything else. Senator De Bané may decide he wants to spend \$1,000 on an appliance. He buys the appliance and spends a thousand dollars, but it does not mean he cancels his plan because he has his appliance.

[Translation]

## FINANCE

### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

**Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Last weekend, *La Presse* reported that the small Canadian mining company UraMin was at the heart of a political and financial scandal in France. The French state corporation Areva bought UraMin in 2007 for \$2.5 billion believing that UraMin owned significant uranium reserves in Africa, in particular.

Four years later — just recently — Areva reported a loss of \$2 billion because the uranium reserves were completely inaccessible or overvalued.

• (1500)

The article in *La Presse* also states that the Bank of Montreal acted as a financial advisor to UraMin in its transaction with Areva. Considering that the implication of a Canadian bank in this scandal, which is common knowledge in France, has the potential to harm Canada's international reputation, can you guarantee to this chamber that the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions will look into the role and actions of the Bank of Montreal in this affair?

[English]

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I am not in a position to comment on stories about UraMin in *La Presse* or to cast judgment on any organization, let alone a Canadian bank. I cannot answer. I do not know about the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, so I will simply take the question as notice.

**Senator Hervieux-Payette:** As a supplementary question, just to prove my good faith, senators probably remember the Bre-X scandal in the 1990s. That proved that the mining sector was extremely vulnerable to speculation and fraud. Fast forward to 2012 and UraMin begins to look like déjà vu.

Considering that there is reason to believe that UraMin might have engaged in insider trading and other fraudulent activity, after the declaration of Commissioner Paulson of the RCMP who said that his crime unit has to do more, would the leader recommend to the government that the RCMP financial crime division start an investigation immediately into UraMin's dealing with Areva and clean up Canada's reputation?

**Senator LeBreton:** The honourable senator is asking me, as a member of the cabinet, to do something that would be unwise. I will not recommend any such course of action. Other than what I read in the media, I cannot comment on this, but I will make the honourable senator's views known to my colleagues.

[Translation]

## DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have the honour of presenting delayed answers to the oral questions raised by the Honourable Senator Dallaire on November 22, 2011, and February 2, 2012, regarding suicide in the Canadian Forces.

[English]

I also have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Jaffer on December 16, 2011, concerning the Muskoka initiative.

[Translation]

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

### NUMBER OF SUICIDES OF SOLDIERS IN THEATRE—POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

(Response to questions raised by Hon. Roméo Antoniou Dallaire on November 22, 2011 and February 2, 2012)

The Canadian Forces (CF) take the issue of member suicide very seriously. Great efforts are made to identify members at risk for mental health problems and to provide them with assistance in the form of treatment, counselling, and other types of support. The death of even one member of the CF family by suicide is one too many.

When a suicide occurs in the CF Regular Force or the Reserve Force, a Significant Incident Report is generated. CF policy also requires that all member suicides be investigated by a Board of Inquiry (BOI) and by a Medical Professional Technical Review process. In the CF, suicides are tracked by the Director of Casualty Support Management. There are currently no identifiable gaps in the tracking system.

When the CF began tracking casualty statistics for Afghanistan, it was decided that any death of an individual, regardless of the cause, that occurred while that individual was on Special Duty Operation or in a Special Duty Area would be counted as an Afghanistan death. It follows then that deaths not meeting this criterion would not be counted as an Afghanistan death. This decision was intended to keep the casualty statistics as focused on Afghanistan service as possible. In addition, unless an individual leaves a suicide note, it is virtually impossible to understand the reasons for the suicide. For this reason, it is not possible to tie the death to Afghanistan service with any degree of assurance.

It should also be remembered that being counted as an “Afghanistan” casualty creates no tangible benefits for families affected by suicides. Any death attributable to service creates CF and VAC benefits for family survivors — regardless of the location of the death.

Until recently, there was no ongoing surveillance within the CF or within Veterans Affairs Canada for suicide among veterans. To address this, the Department of National Defence (DND) and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) began working with Statistics Canada to develop the capacity to look at cancer incidence and mortality, including suicide-related mortality, in members and in veterans (including Reservists) who served since 1972. This process involves linking CF personnel records with the national death and cancer registries on a periodic basis. The initial report of the CF Cancer and Mortality Study was released in May 2011. The results of this study will be used to inform research, policy and program development.

Ongoing surveillance also contributes to the CF focus on continually improving suicide prevention programs as well as caring for ill and injured CF personnel, veterans and their families.

The CF has an extensive suicide prevention program that includes primary prevention programs, clinical intervention, non-clinical intervention, and mental health education.

Tremendous strides have been made in recent years in supporting military personnel who suffer from deployment-related mental health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder. The CF have appointed a Special Advisor for Operational Stress Injuries and skilled mental health teams across Canada provide clinical social work, psychiatric and psychological services. As of January 2012, the CF have over 378 full-time mental health professionals

and are working to hire more. In fact, when compared to our NATO allies, the CF has the greatest ratio of mental health care workers to soldiers.

The CF provides mental health care through 38 primary care clinics and detachments and 26 mental health clinics across Canada, and support is provided throughout the entire career and deployment cycle of a CF member. The CF now has 24 Integrated Personnel Support Centres across Canada that bring together a number of important Veterans Affairs and CF services to better serve ill and injured CF members, veterans, and their families. The Department has invested significantly in new technology and infrastructure to better support and care for our troops, and has dedicated funds to further enhance these efforts in the years to come. In addition, the CF and Veterans Affairs work together to ensure that current and former military personnel receive continuity of care throughout the treatment process.

[English]

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

### FOREIGN AID FOR MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

*(Response to questions raised by Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer on November 23 and December 16, 2011)*

At the 2010 G8 Summit, the Prime Minister made two commitments totalling \$2.85 billion to support maternal, newborn and child health efforts in developing countries. Canada’s contribution to the Muskoka Initiative is \$1.1 billion of new money over five years to support programs to save the lives of women and children in developing countries. The Prime Minister also committed to maintain existing funding levels of \$1.75 billion between 2010 and 2015.

To date, the Government has disbursed over \$228 million of its \$1.1 billion commitment, and nearly \$562 million of its \$1.75 billion commitment. Updates on the Government’s progress on meeting these commitments are available on the Canadian International Development Agency’s (CIDA) Open Data website: [www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/CAR-616141241-PD4](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/CAR-616141241-PD4).

Canada’s \$1.1 billion Muskoka Initiative commitment will support comprehensive and integrated approaches that provide necessary health services for mothers and children, particularly those at the local level. Overall, 80 percent of the funding is going to countries in sub-Saharan Africa, given the great need in the region. Through this effort, Canada is investing in three types of partners:

- Ten developing country partners: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Haiti, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sudan and Tanzania. To date, over \$136 million has been disbursed to projects and programs supporting these countries efforts to improve maternal, newborn and child health.

- Multilateral and global partners: In supporting multilateral and global partners, Canada will reach a broader range of countries where the need is greatest. Examples include: the GAVI Alliance to distribute vaccines against pneumonia and diarrheal disease, and the Micronutrient Initiative to deliver essential vitamin and mineral supplements around the world. To date, over \$88 million has been disbursed to these types of partners.
- Canadian development organizations working in developing countries: Through the Muskoka Initiative Partnership Program, which was announced by the Prime Minister in September 2010, 28 projects from Canadian organizations will be undertaken to achieve concrete development results that will reduce maternal, newborn, and child mortality over the next five years. To date, over \$4 million has been disbursed to these partners.

To date, projects and programs representing over \$830 million of Canada's \$1.1 billion commitment has been announced. Details about all of Canada's maternal, newborn and child health programming can be found on CIDA's website: Overview of Canada's efforts: [www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/MNCH](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/MNCH). List of projects and programs funded through Canada's Muskoka Initiative commitment: [www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/FRA-623144748-Q2X](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/FRA-623144748-Q2X).

---

[Translation]

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PRESIDENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

ANNE-MARIE ROBINSON RECEIVED  
IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

On the Order:

The Senate in Committee of the Whole in order to receive Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as President of the Public Service Commission.

(The Senate was accordingly adjourned during pleasure and put into Committee of the Whole, the Honourable Senator Oliver in the chair.)

---

**The Chair:** Honourable senators, rule 83 states:

When the Senate is put into Committee of the Whole every Senator shall sit in the place assigned to that Senator. A Senator who desires to speak shall rise and address the Chair.

Is it agreed, honourable senators, that rule 83 be waived?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** I remind honourable senators that the Committee of the Whole is meeting pursuant to the order adopted February 8, 2012, which states:

That, at the end of Question Period and Delayed Answers on Tuesday, February 14, 2012, the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole in order to receive Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as President of the Public Service Commission.

That the Committee of the Whole report to the Senate no later than one hour after it begins.

I now ask the witness to enter.

(Pursuant to Order of the Senate, Anne-Marie Robinson was escorted to a seat in the Senate Chamber.)

**The Chair:** Honourable senators, the Senate is resolved into a Committee of the Whole to hear from Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as President of the Public Service Commission.

Ms. Robinson, thank you for being with us here today. I invite you to begin your introductory remarks, which will be followed by the senators' questions. You now have the floor.

**Anne-Marie Robinson, Acting President of the Public Service Commission:** Mr. Chair and honourable senators, thank you very much for inviting me here today. I am pleased to have this opportunity to discuss with you my appointment as President of the Public Service Commission of Canada, a singular institution with a remarkable history.

[English]

Over 100 years ago, Parliament passed legislation creating the first permanent commission responsible for safeguarding merit and non-partisanship in the federal public service. Under the Public Service Employment Act, my nomination as president requires the approval of both the House of Commons and the Senate. I met with the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates last week, and I value this meeting as an important part of that process.

I also went through an exhaustive selection process, which I am pleased to discuss with you today, and I am honoured to be recommended for this position. If I am confirmed, I look forward to bringing to my work a deep respect for Parliament, an in-depth knowledge of the commission and a good understanding of human resource management.

I also bring my recent experience as a senior executive in a large operational department and a profound sense of pride in the work that I do as a public servant on behalf of Canadians. I am also committed to excellence and looking for innovative ways to continually improve how the commission does its work. I am both humbled and happy to have had the opportunity to return to the commission.

My first job at the commission was Director General Policy at a time when it was moving forward with policy initiatives to help modernize human resource management in the federal public service. I am proud to have supported Parliament's work on the legislative reforms that eventually became the current Public Service Employment Act in 2003. Those changes had significant impacts on the Public Service Commission.

When I later became vice-president of the Corporate Management Branch, I was pleased to help develop a stronger oversight role in a fully delegated staffing system, a new political activities regime and a new approach for the delivery of its staffing and assessment services.

The commission put in place corporate systems and structures to support this transformation, for instance in the areas of communications, governance and protocols for reporting to Parliament.

• (1510)

I worked closely with Ms. Barrados in building these systems and I am very happy to see that they are still in place. I have spent the last three years at Health Canada as Assistant Deputy Minister, First Nations and Inuit Health, and then more recently as the Associate Deputy Minister. There I was responsible for overseeing regional operations and I played a key role in managing its investment planning and performance management.

Throughout my career, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to work on both the policy side and to have managed large programs and dealt with complex issues. For example, I have seen first-hand the role that recruiting and staffing play in the delivery of health care to First Nations and Inuit, and other vital services for Canadians. As well, I learned the importance of working with stakeholders and building relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

[Translation]

I would now like to discuss the mandate and activities of the Public Service Commission. The *Public Service Employment Act* sets out a staffing system based on values where deputy heads have greater responsibilities. The commission fulfills its mandate by delegating staffing to deputy heads, providing clear policy direction to support delegation, conducting effective oversight, and delivering innovative services. It protects the values of fairness, access, representativeness and transparency. I consider these values to be fundamental.

The commission is responsible for identifying and eliminating barriers in recruitment and staffing with the continued objective of promoting a public service that is more representative of Canadian society. The commission also contributes to maintaining a bilingual public service that respects Canada's two official languages. I have the privilege of working in an organization where bilingualism is well established. I strongly encourage everyone to interact with me in the language of their choice.

I am very aware of the commission's responsibility to report to Parliament on its activities and on the health of the staffing system. Ms. Barrados made an important contribution

[ Ms. Robinson ]

towards establishing productive relations with Parliament. Her appearances before the Senate committees on national finance, official languages and human rights have brought to light certain questions related to staffing and non-partisanship in the federal public service.

I hope to have the opportunity to work together with Parliament to review the budget documents, annual reports and any other issue of interest. I also look forward to participating in the discussions on the *Public Service Modernization Act* report recently tabled by the President of Treasury Board.

I would now like to discuss the priorities I foresee for the commission. In a delegated staffing system, the commission needs effective oversight to ensure that values are respected. This requires sound analysis based on objective data, studies, audits and investigations. The commission will be called upon to deliver its mandate while looking for ways to better utilize its centralized data.

In the coming months, the commission will be called upon to provide ongoing support to organizations as they undertake the implementation of their deficit reduction plans. I realize that this period will be difficult for both organizations and employees

If I am confirmed, I plan to provide deputy heads and employees with a priority administration system that functions soundly and to support selection processes that are transparent and fair.

I am also committed to working closely with our human resources partners. I intend to collaborate with the commissioners, once they are nominated, in order to pursue the work already undertaken by Ms. Barrados.

The role of the commission in regard to staffing values will be critical. Employment equity and official languages are also important issues. These issues will need to be kept in balance while the deficit reduction plan is being implemented. At the same time, the public service will need to continue to conduct targeted recruitment to ensure that the public service of the future has a skilled workforce that can deliver results for Canadians.

[English]

Mr. Chair, in concluding, the Public Service Commission has played a vital role in creating a public service that is a model for many countries. If confirmed as President of the Public Service Commission, I look forward to working with senators and other parliamentarians, as well as public service commissioners. I would also like to say that I deeply value the dedication and professionalism of the employees who work at the commission and I look forward to working with them in carrying out the commission's mandate.

I am also committed to fostering strong relations with all stakeholders, departments, as well as bargaining agents, so that Canadians will continue to benefit from a professional and non-partisan public service.

Thank you very much and I would be very pleased to respond to your questions.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you. Honourable senators, I have a list of senators who wish to ask questions.

[*English*]

**Senator Marshall:** Ms. Robinson, thank you very much for being here today.

I am a member of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance. Ms. Barrados has appeared before us many times. One of the areas I have raised, and I have always been interested in because I have worked at both the bureaucratic and the political levels, is the focus on making sure there is no political interference in the public service. However, one of the areas I have always been interested in is how to safeguard against bureaucratic interference. Could you speak to that? I am always interested in hearing the views of the Public Service Commission on that issue.

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you for the question.

Yes, with respect to that risk, I would say that is why it is necessary for the commission to have the audit role that it has. We do many things. Through the delegation instruments we set policies and we give guidance to departments on how to staff appropriately under the act. As part of that, we have — and this was very much put in place by Ms. Barrados — a robust audit program. Based on a risk-based analysis, we are able to go into departments and ensure that staffing is done in accordance with the values under the act. Then, from time to time, we can conduct investigations as well. We have powers to take corrective measures when necessary.

I would say, however, that this is a new staffing regime under the new law. We have been conducting audits over the last five to six or seven years and we have seen significant improvements. Departments are putting in systems that have much better human resource planning, and they also are developing their own systems for monitoring their staffing systems. There are always some risks with respect to that area. We do see problems from time to time, but that is why Parliament has given the commission the capacity to audit the activities of departments.

**Senator Marshall:** One of the risks identified when Ms. Barrados appeared before the Finance Committee is the issue of casual employees. It appears, based on the data provided, that many casual employees coming through the system, not through the normal process, actually ended up in permanent positions within the public service.

What do you envision for that group of people in the long term?

• (1520)

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you for the question. Yes, that is an area that the commission has followed up on periodically and that I would see us continuing to monitor. Casual employment is intended to serve short-term needs — temporary or seasonal

needs. We have the capacity in place to do follow-up studies to the study done by Ms. Barrados. I would say the key to seeing improvements in this area is, again, human resource planning in departments. Treasury Board has overall responsibility for human resource planning. I will work with them to share what we are finding through our audits and to work with departments to ensure that the better the planning tools they have in place, the better they can target the use of a casual and a permanent workforce in an appropriate way.

**Senator Marshall:** Thank you.

**Senator Jaffer:** Welcome, Ms. Robinson. As the chair of the Human Rights Committee, I am certainly looking forward to working with you. As you are aware, one of your responsibilities is employment equity in the Public Service Commission, which affects women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and visible minorities. I know you are aware that the three branches, the Public Service Commission, the Treasury Board and Canadian Human Rights Commission, are the pillars. I would like to ask you, since you have worked in the Public Service Commission before, how do you see the employment equity goals being achieved? It has now been 26 years, and we are still waiting.

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you for raising this issue because I, too, consider this a very important issue and a priority for me during my time, if I am nominated, at the Public Service Commission.

I would say that there are many things the commission can do. One thing I have seen since I arrived is that the commission has done very useful research in better understanding what types of things in a selection process could provide barriers for people from different equity groups being appointed to those positions. I am very committed to continuing that research. Then, when we find those best practices, it is critical that we share that information with departments so that they can incorporate it into their day-to-day planning and that we also ensure that they take targeted measures when necessary.

I think the key to being able to do that well is data. It is extremely important for us to work with the Treasury Board. Efforts have been made over the last while to collectively improve the way we collect the data so that we understand where we have gaps and can target interventions appropriately where we still have difficulties.

**Senator Jaffer:** I really appreciate your focus on the data because, as you know, every time Ms. Barrados appeared in front of our committee, the big issue was the lack of data collecting especially when it came to the issue of visible minorities and the self-identification issue. That has always been an issue. The last time she was here before our committee, she said:

Improved methodology and more reliable data are essential for getting a more accurate picture of employment equity in the public service and for reducing the reporting burden on organizations.

She went on to say that she would monitor how this data was collected. I look forward to your focus on collecting the data.

Another thing I am very concerned about, especially in this downsizing, is jobs. I understand that 50 per cent of the jobs within the federal public service are not advertised and 50 per cent are. I am wondering if you have given any thought to how you will be advising on this issue?

**Ms. Robinson:** I do not have the data about the proportions of positions that are advertised or not advertised, but I am very happy to do that research and send that information to the committee. I can say, though, that during the implementation of the deficit reduction action plan, the commission is already working with departments to ensure that the processes put in place in terms of our role for managing that will ensure that there are no barriers that could have a negative impact on groups under the Employment Equity Act.

**Senator Jaffer:** In 1984, Justice Abella said that equality and employment will not happen unless we all make it happen. We look forward to your leadership, especially with the employment equity groups. Thank you.

**Senator Mercer:** Ms. Robinson, thank you for being here. I have a series of questions. I first wanted to look at the annual report of 2010-11, Chapter 6, where there are statistics I found interesting. The number of active cases carried over from previous years was 180, and the total number of active cases in 2010-11 was 696. The number of cases completed was 490. That is a pretty good clearance rate. However, the number that I wanted to talk about is the number of active cases remaining as of March 31, 2011, and that was at 204, which is up 24 from the beginning of that year.

Have you been able to determine whether you will have enough resources at the commission to be able to help clear that backlog? If it is going to grow by over 10 per cent each year — if this is a trend — will this become problematic for the future?

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you. If I could ask the honourable senator for clarification, does that question relate to the priority system?

**Senator Mercer:** The investigations into the appointment process.

**Ms. Robinson:** The workload in that area does fluctuate from time to time, so I do need to watch carefully to ensure that we have the capacity to do investigations on a timely basis. When I met with my staff when I first arrived at the commission, I did discuss that question with the vice-presidents, and I was assured that the investigations branch does have resources to deal with the investigations that are now before it. However, I will monitor that closely. The commission, like other departments, does have the capacity, from time to time, to reallocate between priorities.

**Senator Mercer:** I appreciate that answer. I wish you well in that. Many of us from Atlantic Canada have a good deal of concern about how the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency has been managed and staffed. There have been numerous complaints about individuals who have been hired without a job posting and, in some cases, without even an interview. They have just been given a job and they showed up for work. There have

been allegations of political interference from the former Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the member for Central Nova, because a lot of these appointments all have a connection back to him and his office.

Last week or perhaps the week before, the current Minister for ACOA, Mr. Valcourt, was unable to answer a question in the House of Commons because he said the hiring practices of ACOA are under investigation by the Public Service Commission.

How broad of an investigation into ACOA's hiring practices is this? Is it going across the board, looking at all the hiring in the last number of years and, in particular, paying attention to whether the proper process was followed where jobs were posted, competitions were held, interviews were held and, in certain cases where testing was required, tests were held, and the successful candidate had a test score that put him or her in the bracket of the desired score?

**Ms. Robinson:** I can say that those investigations at ACOA are under way; because of the nature of that process, I am not at liberty to discuss the details of those investigations.

In terms of the timing, I expect they will be finished by the summer, and I will commit to present to Parliament the results of those investigations as soon as possible thereafter.

**Senator Mercer:** If your schedule is on time, we will get those results tabled at the fall session of Parliament?

**Ms. Robinson:** That is what I anticipate.

• (1530)

**Senator Mercer:** One of the problems, of course, is that your mandate does not cover the appointment of board members of agencies such as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, ACOA. When we talk about political interference and about the need for the process to be followed, one issue is that the board is involved in interviews of people at senior levels. We acknowledge that board members are politically appointed by the government of the day. Therefore, a group of people appointed by the government are interviewing people internally for positions within an agency such as ACOA; however, we do not have any oversight by you, or apparently anyone else, of the people conducting that process, that is, the board of an agency, again such as ACOA.

Do you think your mandate should be broadened to include reference to board appointments at agencies such as ACOA?

**Ms. Robinson:** I would start by saying that when we do an investigation, we do a thorough investigation and report those results to Parliament in a timely manner. It is early days for me to say that. I must admit that this is a new area for me, and I have not had a lot of experience. However, I have been assured by my investigators that we have sufficient powers to do the investigation that needs to be done at this time. It is possible that I could come back to Parliament at a different time and signal something different, but at this time, that is what I know.



[*Translation*]

**Senator Tardif:** Ms. Robinson, during your preliminary presentation, you indicated that respect for official languages is important and that it is imperative to ensure that public servants have the language skills they need to serve Canadians.

Nearly 200 French teaching jobs in the public service will be cut at the end of March and transferred to the private sector. Given that the Public Service Commission is responsible for the second language testing system and for ensuring that all public servants achieve the required results within a period of two years, how do you plan to closely monitor the success rate of public servants?

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you for asking that question. You are right when you say that the Public Service Commission is responsible for developing second language testing. It is also responsible for monitoring all test results.

We intend to continue to monitor and verify the success rate of our exams to make sure that it remains the same following the changes to public servants' training.

**Senator Tardif:** What type of follow-up do you intend to pursue if the success rate for exams and the state of bilingualism in the public service prove to be unsatisfactory?

**Ms. Robinson:** I would like to clarify the Public Service Commission's mandate and its three roles with regard to official languages. First, as I already mentioned, we are responsible for the development of second-language skills and for monitoring the exam success rate. If we notice a problem, we can work with the private sector and share information about our exams. We can also work with the departments and Treasury Board and share our results.

The Public Service Commission's other roles involve ensuring that people who are in non-imperative positions reach the level required by the position within a period of two years and ensuring that candidates who are participating in a selection process are able to do so in the language of their choice.

[*English*]

**Senator Meredith:** Ms. Robinson, thank you for appearing before us this afternoon. My first question is this: Why do you want to take on this presidency?

**Ms. Robinson:** I am a career public servant, and I care very much about the public service as an institution. I firmly believe that people are the biggest asset that we have in the public service and that any institution or organization in the modern world has today. Therefore, it would be an honour for me to have an opportunity to make a contribution to the staffing, the recruitment and the question of political impartiality, which we talked about here today.

It is a chance for me to support the public service and to have the workforce that we need for the future. Working at Health Canada over the past three years and delivering health care services with First Nations for First Nations communities allowed

me to see first-hand the role that public servants play. Therefore, I think it is important that we have the best people possible in the jobs and that we also give opportunities to Canadians to work in the public service because it is a wonderful place to work. Any role that I can play to support that objective would be an honour for me.

**Senator Meredith:** I am glad you mentioned the workforce. Senator Jaffer spoke to you about equity and the fact that we still have a disproportionate number of visible minorities who have yet to be promoted within the public service. How will you address the situation of the brick wall run into by visible minorities working for the public service in Canada? It is not even a glass ceiling because it is not transparent. How do you plan to fix that?

**Ms. Robinson:** I reinforce what I said previously. There are many steps to this and many things that the commission can do. Gathering the data is critical so that we understand where we have challenges and can target the tools we have to intervene in those cases. The commission does research on best practices, and we delegate staffing authority to departments. I need to work with departments and with Treasury Board, which also shares responsibility in this area with the commission, to ensure that we have good plans in place that are based on good data and good information.

I would also signal that as a public servant I have seen that clear leadership works very well; therefore, I will work with the deputy heads around town. I know they are committed to this issue and are willing to work with me and with Treasury Board to continue to make progress.

I was happy to note in the report tabled recently by the Treasury Board that there have been some improvements. That does not mean we are there, so we will continue to work hard on these issues until we see results and have a public service that is representative of Canadian society.

**Senator Meredith:** Going forward with your past experiences and the challenges that you will face in the public service, how will you deal with those challenges? The government is looking at austerity measures and attrition, and those individuals will be affected. How will you deal with those challenges as they arise?

**Ms. Robinson:** With respect to the implementation of the deficit reduction action plan, there are a few key roles that the commission needs to play. Specifically, we are responsible for administering the priority system, so it is a priority for me to ensure that the system functions well. That is the place where people who are declared surplus would go into the priority system, and the Public Service Commission helps them to find jobs for which they are qualified. That is a very important tool in the system.

As well, during a reduction exercise, the commission is responsible for the policy regarding selection for retention. It is a merit-based process such that when a work unit of 100 people will be impacted and has to be reduced by four or five people, the selection-for-retention policy is used to determine who is retained in the workforce. It is a merit-based process under the Public Service Employment Act.

• (1540)

I know that folks at the commission are out working with departments and actively ensuring that the guidance we give with respect to this is understood by departments. We are out at the front end of this exercise supporting departments to ensure things go as best they can.

**Senator Meredith:** Thank you very much. We wish you all the best and I look forward to working with you as a member of the Human Rights Committee.

**The Chair:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw to your attention that we have fewer than 25 minutes left and I have on my list the Honourable Senators Dallaire, Ringuette, Munson, Martin, Comeau and Moore.

[*Translation*]

**Senator Dallaire:** Ms. Robinson, are you responsible for ensuring that there is a balance between departments in the number of people occupying EX or higher positions? Are you responsible for ensuring that there is not an abuse of this level of responsibility in some departments compared to others?

**Ms. Robinson:** That is the mandate of Treasury Board and not the commission.

**Senator Dallaire:** Thus, the commission is not mandated to investigate or audit similar matters?

**Ms. Robinson:** Not when it comes to comparing the number of EX positions or senior managers in different departments.

**Senator Dallaire:** With respect to the development of executives, what are your views on professional development for executives at the EX level, on their leadership skills throughout their careers and when they are occupying this management position? Is there a formal education and development method for leadership?

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you very much for this question. I would first like to say that I support executive training because it is so important. The Public Service Commission is responsible, with deputy heads, for all executive training. The commission has a vested interest because we manage the staffing process in cooperation with the department. Therefore, it is important for the commission to work with the department to establish the proper competencies for the positions. Furthermore, the development program and processes are necessary to support public servants who would like to develop the skills required for an executive position.

[*English*]

**Senator Dallaire:** Do you have an actual training and development program for people to achieve higher ranks of responsibility with regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed on the leadership side versus the management side of their duties?

**Ms. Robinson:** That is a very important question. When we work with departments to establish the competencies for positions, it is important that we do the right research and

[ Ms. Robinson ]

establish those competencies appropriately. Departments, working with the Canada School of Public Service, then work together to provide developmental opportunities and training so that managers can gain those competencies. Some of that is done through formal training.

Of course, in my career I have seen a lot of useful training done through assignments, through people being given projects to do, and through job shadowing and mentoring. I think we need a creative suite of things available to support people in developing these skills.

**Senator Dallaire:** When I was ADM Personnel with 22,000 civilian staff working for me, there was no system of developing leadership, as such. It was by osmosis and experience and not by formal education, particularly even in the senior cadres.

I am gathering from your response that there is still no set requirement, as people move up the chain, to achieve certain specific programs of development in order to go to the next level.

In that context, do you not believe that the program of moving EXs between jobs to gain experience has, perhaps, been overstated as the source of development and created instability in departments with regard to providing the necessary depth of advice people need to do the job?

**Ms. Robinson:** Yes. I would start by clarifying that it is the deputy ministers and the Treasury Board who have policy responsibility for training. I think you also made a comment about the mobility of public servants. That is an area that the commission has looked at in the past. Some of that was driven in the past where we saw the fast movement of people and where we had shortages in certain areas. However, many people have said — and certainly it has been my personal experience — that sometimes when that movement is too fast, people do not stay long enough in their jobs.

You said that you held those jobs yourself, so you would understand, of course, that when you are in senior director general jobs and assistant deputy minister jobs, you do not make progress in short periods of time. You have to stick with it for much longer periods of time in order to make significant impacts on a job or a program.

**Senator Dallaire:** Your job is to feed that information back to Treasury Board to reassess a program like that, correct?

**Ms. Robinson:** Yes, we have many central databases where we collect data, for example, on the mobility of people between jobs. We then work with departments and with Treasury Board to share that information. In many respects in the human resource area, while the commission is an independent agency that reports directly to Parliament, we do share a common business process. That is why I believe it is necessary for me to work closely with the departments and with Treasury Board on these types of issues.

**Senator Dallaire:** Is it still a fact that most departments hand in, at the end of the year, a fairly substantive amount of their training dollars for your civilian staff, because it has not been used up, to continue the development of their personnel?

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you for the question. I cannot respond to that question because that is not an area under the commission's mandate and I would not have that information.

**Senator Dallaire:** You have never audited that?

**Ms. Robinson:** No, and it would not be under our jurisdiction to audit that question.

**Senator Dallaire:** I see.

Have you overseen the policies that were introduced with regard to the employment of veterans in the public service and the assistance that they need to be trained to be competitive? Do you believe a policy across the board in the public service in all departments should be imposed on DMs to employ veterans on a priority basis?

**Ms. Robinson:** This is a new area for me. You mentioned the priority status given to these folks. The department has done some recent evaluations of this area. We will be coming out shortly with some different approaches to supporting people when they are making the transition into the public service.

With that said, I have noticed that we have had some positive results in placement, but we will continue to do follow-up in terms of ensuring that this is an important issue that all departments are paying attention to. The commission does have the capacity to work with departments in this area.

**Senator Dallaire:** Could I ask the chair that whatever report Ms. Robinson produces be made available to us sooner rather than later?

**Ms. Robinson:** Yes; absolutely.

**The Chair:** Honourable senators, we have fewer than 17 minutes left. Each senator has 10 minutes to ask their questions, and I still have Honourable Senator Ringuette, Honourable Senator Munson, Honourable Senator Martin, Honourable Senator Comeau and Honourable Senator Moore.

[*Translation*]

**Senator Ringuette:** Ms. Robinson, Ms. Barrados has left big shoes to fill. A great challenge awaits you.

• (1550)

The Public Service Commission is the recruitment agency for human resources for every federal government department. In the past few years I have noticed an increased use of private agencies in the recruitment process at various departments.

Could you tell this chamber what steps you are going to take in order to give the Public Service Commission its central and essential role back?

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you for that question. I can tell you that using casual employees should be reserved for satisfying short-term needs. The commission will continue to observe the use of casual employees and will work with the department to correct the situation and improve human resources planning if there is a problem.

**Senator Ringuette:** Ms. Robinson, I must say, you have not reassured me. If private sector recruitment agencies can provide employees based on the short-term needs of the various departments, why can the commission not do the same?

**Ms. Robinson:** The departments have been given the delegated authority. Normally, the deputy minister or the deputy heads can follow the necessary steps for staffing. I do not know whether you are asking me if it is necessary for the commission to hire employees the same way an agency would.

[*English*]

**Senator Ringuette:** Let me say this in English. The primary and central role, since the creation of the Public Service Commission, has been the hiring of human resources for the different departments of government. In the last few years, there has been a drastic increase in the usage of private placement agencies to hire through, most of the time, I would say, the back door and sidetrack the regulation of the commission to hire employees, be it casual or long term. They even go up to five years of employment.

The central role of the commission has been bypassed. My first question to you was, what will you do to reacquire that central function of the commission?

My second question is, if those private agencies, with very limited human resources and technology, can provide casual or short-term employees to the different government departments, why can the Public Service Commission, with all of its human resources and technology — five years ago we spent \$48 million on new computer equipment — be the agency to supply to all those government departments the human resources which would make up short term, casual term, long term, whatever?

This is a major challenge. I understand the importance of human resource audits to provide Parliament with data and where we are going. The essential and predominant role of the commission is a fair hiring process.

How — what tools and processes — will you undertake to ensure that the commission remains in and regains that position of the government departments' hiring agency?

**Ms. Robinson:** I would start by saying that, given the size of the public service, it was envisioned under the act that the appointment authority of the commission would be delegated to departments and departments would do the hiring. The commission's role, rather than doing the hiring directly, would be to use its oversight powers to survey how the authority was being used by departments.

I understand the concern that you have raised about the use of casual and contract workers. Many of the policies in those areas are under the responsibility of the Treasury Board. Again, I would point to the need for us to continue to do studies and understand how casual workers are being used.

One of the concerns the commission expresses about the use of casual workers is that sometimes they have an advantage in getting the permanent jobs in government. It is there that the commission has a key role to work with departments in order to ensure we have open access to hiring processes.

With respect to your third question about whether the commission itself would do the hiring directly, that is not a role the commission currently holds.

**Senator Ringuette:** I should have used the phrase “recruitment responsibility.”

**Ms. Robinson:** Thank you for the clarification. The commission does have a key role in recruiting people. We do an annual recruitment campaign with departments, but departments also, under the new act, do a lot of their own external recruitment. We tend to focus our activities now in the area of recruiting students.

**Senator Ringuette:** I have been watching what has been going on with regard to recruiting in the Public Service Commission. Ms. Barrados, the former president of the commission, and I had been very involved with regard to removing hiring barriers for all Canadians, removing the 50-kilometre barrier, the geographic limitation, that deputy ministers had put into any job posting just to remove the opportunity.

From your answer, I am beginning to get a little worried. These are regulations that Ms. Barrados worked on. I said, okay, the regulations will be there and I will not move forward again with the legislation to put that in place. Should I be worried?

If you agree that a department, a deputy minister, can bypass your organization to do hiring and recruitment, removing the equity issues that we were looking at, removing the fairness across the land that we have been working on in respect of removing the 50-kilometre requirement, I am becoming worried.

**The Chair:** Ms. Robinson, before you begin your response, may I say that the 10 minutes allotted to this senator have almost expired. You have a few seconds for response and I will go to the next senators.

**Ms. Robinson:** I would like to reassure the senator that it is not my intention to change the policies that are in place, including the national area of selection policy. I was at the commission when that policy was put in place, and I also supported the commission in developing the technology that was necessary to ensure that policy could be put into effect.

• (1600)

While I do make reference to the fact that it is the deputy ministers who do the administrative activity of staffing — they make their own human resource plans to manage their

operations — they must follow the policies of the commission. I would continue to keep those policies in place, and I will work to strengthen those policies where necessary.

**Senator Munson:** Very briefly, I would like to follow up Senator Jaffer and Senator Meredith on employment equity. It seems to me you are between a rock and a hard place. Here we have the prospect of downsizing in the public service, and I am curious to know what powers or mechanism you have right now? In the 2006 statistics, visible minorities represent 12.4 per cent. That is not good enough. How can you guarantee that the public service is truly representative of Canada’s population? It will be a lot more difficult now.

**Ms. Robinson:** I do acknowledge that during this period of transition things will be more difficult in the public service. However, where I think the commission can play an important role is that as departments in some cases have to reduce their workforces, they will apply the policy from the commission that I discussed a bit earlier called selection for retention, which is a merit-based process. It will be very important for us to ensure that when departments use that approach to select the employees to retain in their workforce, they respect our obligations around diversity.

The commission has done research around ensuring that those processes are barrier-free. We will work with departments to ensure that they have that information.

Of course, during that same period we expect recruitment to slow down as we are going through these transitions. I agree with the remarks of Ms. Barrados as well — I think from the last time she was before a Senate committee — when she said that notwithstanding this transformation we are going through, it will be very important for us as a public service to continue to recruit in some targeted areas. Coming from Health Canada, I know from experience that notwithstanding this adjustment we are going through we still have shortage areas in health care, certain areas of science and in other areas. We still will be out there recruiting students and working with departments in their recruitment campaigns. We have opportunities there to address these issues.

**Senator Munson:** In the spirit of cooperation, I will give up the rest of my time to my two Conservative friends.

**Senator Martin:** I think my question may be a little bit redundant, but it builds on what others have already asked. It is regarding employment equity, but looking at regional differences. From your previous answers to other senators, it is my understanding that, regionally, the best federal employees may be those who can meet the needs of that region. For instance, on the West Coast, bilingualism is alive and well. French immersion is very healthy, but so are Punjabi immersion and Mandarin immersion. I was curious about the recruitment and hiring within specific regions where the needs will be quite different from other parts of Canada. What is being done, and what role would you play as the president?

**Ms. Robinson:** I would say that the hiring in each region is determined by the different departments, based on their operational needs. Where the commission plays a role is that it

[ Ms. Robinson ]

is our job to ensure that staffing is done in accordance with the values in the act. When departments are staffing in these different geographic areas, they have information about whether they are meeting the requirements under the Employment Equity Act. That is where the commission can work with departments to ensure that positive measures and programs and other supports are put in place when necessary to make sure they meet their hiring goals.

**Senator Martin:** This is a question I had posed to Ms. Barrados and other officials regarding training in cultural sensitivity and how important that would be in those regions where interviews may be happening with Canadians. Those cultural differences can impact how things are interpreted and what happens thereafter. With processes in place, if there is a misunderstanding because of a lack of cultural sensitivity or awareness, it could really be burdensome on both sides, to the officials as well as the Canadians they are dealing with.

**Ms. Robinson:** I am very happy that you have raised this area. It is an area that I take a lot of interest in. The Public Service Commission has a very strong capacity in its Personnel Psychology Centre. We do a lot of work on trying to understand. We use different selection tools and instruments, including our language tests, for example. It is really critical that we ensure that instruments that are used in the hiring processes are barrier-free. As well, you mentioned the interview process. Training in awareness is done by departments, and I certainly will see myself playing a key role in promoting this with departments. You are correct that in an interview context it is important that cultural differences are understood and incorporated into part of the process. That is what a lot of the research by the commission has shown.

I will continue to support that research done by the commission, and then we share that information with departments as they do the bulk of the hiring.

**Senator Martin:** I, too, shall end here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Honourable senators, the committee has now been sitting for one hour. Pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on February 8, 2011, I am obliged to interrupt the proceedings so that the committee can report to the Senate. I know the honourable senators will join me in thanking Ms. Robinson.

Honourable senators, is it agreed that I report to the Senate that the witness has been heard?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, the sitting of the Senate is resumed.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Hon. Donald H. Oliver:** Honourable senators, the Committee of the Whole, authorized by the Senate to hear from Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as the President of the Public Service Commission, reports that it has heard from said witness.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, continuing Orders of the Day.

#### MOTION TO APPROVE NOMINATION ADOPTED

**Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government),** pursuant to notice of February 7, 2012, moved:

That, in accordance with Subsection 4.(5) of the *Public Service Employment Act*, S.C. 2003, c. 22, ss. 12, 13, the Senate approve the appointment of Anne-Marie Robinson as President of the Public Service Commission.

(Motion agreed to.)

[English]

#### LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

##### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Leave having been given to revert to Notices of Motions:

**Hon. John D. Wallace:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That on Thursday, February 16, 2012, the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs have the power to sit even though the Senate may be then sitting, for the purpose of its consideration of Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, with the application of rule 95(4) being suspended in relation thereto.

• (1610)

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO REFER DOCUMENTS FROM STUDIES ON BILL C-15 DURING SECOND SESSION OF FORTIETH PARLIAMENT, BILL S-7 AND S-10 DURING THIRD SESSION OF FORTIETH PARLIAMENT AND BILL S-225 DURING SECOND SESSION OF THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT TO CURRENT STUDY ON BILL C-10

**Hon. John D. Wallace:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs during its study of Bill C-15, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament, and Bill S-10, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related

and consequential amendments to other Acts, during the Third Session of the Fortieth Parliament; and that the papers and evidence received and taken by the Special Senate Committee on Anti-Terrorism during its study of Bill S-7, An Act to deter terrorism and to amend the State Immunity Act during the Third Session of the Fortieth Parliament and by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, during its study of Bill S-225, An Act to amend the State Immunity Act and the Criminal Code (detering terrorism by providing a civil right of action against perpetrators and sponsors of terrorism), during the Second Session of the Thirty-Ninth Parliament, be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs for the purposes of its study on Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, during the current session.

### THE SENATE

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

On the Order

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

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;

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Nolin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Lang, that the motion be amended as follows:

- 1) By replacing the words "which is poised for market growth" by the words "which wants to pursue its dynamic development"; and
- 2) By replacing paragraph (d) in the motion by the following:

"Modernizing and standardizing the grading of pure Maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade which would explain more clearly to the consumer the classification and the grading system;"

**Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie:** Honourable senators, it is well known that Quebec is the leading producer of maple syrup in Canada, but I am proud to point out that Nova Scotia also has a vibrant maple industry.

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

**Senator Ogilvie:** Plus, I am delighted to support the motion before us which would set the stage for important amendments to Canada's Maple Products Regulations, amendments that would benefit the industry and consumers alike. The driving force behind the proposed changes is the work of the International Maple Syrup Institute, which includes among its members the Maple Producers Association of Nova Scotia.

Before I comment on the recommendations, I would like to paint a picture of the maple industry in my home province. I think that with greater understanding of the industry's challenges and opportunities in Nova Scotia, all honourable senators would appreciate why it is so vital to support the motion.

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, it is important to understand, first, that maple syrup is an agricultural product. In fact, it is the first product of the season offered by hard-working producers.

[*English*]

Honourable senators, Nova Scotia wants to keep producing safe and high quality maple products for years to come. Thus, to help ensure the long-term sustainability of sugar bushes and maple operations, the Maple Producers Association of Nova Scotia developed best management practices for its members. These covered issues such as sugar woods management, tree tapping, sap collection and storage, the processing of sap to syrup, personal hygiene, sanitizing equipment, labels, and recordkeeping.

With a record-breaking year in 2011, the outlook for Nova Scotia's maple industry seems positive. All told, 61 commercial producers generated some 143,000 litres of pure maple syrup last year from 371,000 taps. That means total production was the highest since 1994. Producers enjoyed the best yields since 2003, and the number of taps was also at a record high.

However, these numbers disguise a host of challenges experienced last year that highlight the importance the benefits of the motion will provide the producers. I am speaking of course to a confusing patchwork of grading systems that undermine the industry's visibility with consumers and that thwart attempts to expand into new markets. These are issues common to the maple industry throughout Canada and the United States, and that is why the motion before us is so timely and important.

The motion recognizes that maple syrup is a North American industry, one that demands an integrated, continent-wide approach. That is why the International Maple Syrup Institute, which has both American and Canadian members, is asking jurisdictions in both countries to amend their maple regulations. Given our country's status as the world's leading producer of maple syrup, the Government of Canada should take a leadership role to support the industry.

Let me look now at specific issues where the industry wants our support.

First, there is the question of what actually constitutes pure maple syrup. Currently, any common sweetener can be marketed as containing pure maple syrup. This is a travesty. A recent study 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. The study also found five new antioxidants that are found nowhere else in nature, making maple syrup a food unlike any other in the world.

Allowing companies to market sweeteners as products that contain maple syrup, even if 99.9 per cent of the sweetener is actually artificial, is not only unfair to the maple industry, but it sows confusion in the minds of consumers.

[*Translation*]

That is why the industry is proposing that a uniform definition be adopted as to what constitutes pure maple syrup so that all maple products meet specific production and processing requirements and are consistent with the regulations, standards and policies in effect within the federal and provincial governments and in the United States.

[*English*]

A uniform definition of pure maple syrup would create a level playing field among common sweeteners. Pure maple syrup represents less than 1 per cent of the market share of common sweetener sales in North America.

[*Translation*]

A uniform definition would enable the industry to market its product's virtues fairly and transparently, thereby attracting new consumers.

- (1620)

[*English*]

One of the most important components of a uniform definition would be a proper determination of grade and colour class. Currently, Canadian producers describe their product by colour and number, while their American counterparts use a letter system. In what amounts to a recipe for confusion, there is no way for consumers to know that Number 1 and Grade A are the same thing.

More than that, numbers and letters, even when combined with a colour code, tell consumers nothing about the most important quality of maple syrup — its flavour. Even worse, labels such as Number 2 and Grade B can suggest an inferior quality of maple syrup.

[*Translation*]

The industry has found a simple solution: a single grade with four distinct classes describing colour and taste.

[*English*]

For example, one type of Grade A syrup would be Amber Colour and Rich Taste. Another would be Dark Colour and Robust Taste.

At the same time, the industry proposes a second category — Processing Grade — for all maple syrup that does not meet the highest standards. To preserve the integrity of the industry, Processing Grade maple syrup would be kept out of retail markets. Instead, it would be available only for the food processing industry.

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, all of these changes would benefit consumers. A uniform definition would enable them to recognize pure maple syrup easily.

[English]

Simplified standards and nomenclature mean consumers could more easily choose the flavour that best suits them, and the industry's efforts to keep inferior product off the shelves would give consumers more confidence in whatever pure maple syrup they buy.

In Nova Scotia last year, for example, about 94 per cent of the syrup was, or will be, sold as actual syrup. Only 6 per cent was made into other products, such as maple cream, maple butter and maple sugar. Clearly, there is a great deal of room for growth, and it starts with approving the motion before us today.

Honourable senators, by its very nature, Canada's maple industry is familiar with uncertainty and adversity. Each spring, to make syrup out of sap, producers must contend with everything from wild weather to wild animals. The real obstacle, however, comes not from natural sources but rather from outdated regulations that weigh down the industry worse than a week of wet snow.

Honourable senators, I am proud to describe my own affinity for this marvelous product. For more than 40 years, my family has consumed over 10 litres of pure maple syrup annually. For 13 of those years, we lived in Montreal and enjoyed the wonderful elixir of the Quebec sugar bush. For the remainder, we have relished the equally fine product from Nova Scotian producers. More recently, we have mixed in our own fine syrup, drawn from several beautiful maples in our yard on the edge of the Bay of Fundy.

Today, we have an opportunity to ease the industry's burden. The International Maple Syrup Institute has a well-considered plan to modernize maple regulations in relevant jurisdictions across North America. For this plan to succeed, the institute requires the cooperation of the federal governments in both Canada and the United States, not to mention governments in affected provinces and states.

The industry is looking to the Senate of Canada for leadership and vision. I, for one, am not prepared to disappoint them. I urge all honourable senators to join with me in approving the motion before us and giving our maple industry the support it deserves.

[Translation]

**Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette:** Honourable senators, given the importance of this matter to Quebec, I move adjournment of the debate so that I may research it further.

(On motion of Senator Hervieux-Payette, debate adjourned.)

[English]

## HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

### INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Frum, calling the attention of the Senate to egregious human rights abuses in Iran, particularly the use of torture and the cruel and inhuman treatment of unlawfully incarcerated political prisoners.

[ Senator Ogilvie ]

**Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I rise to join the important inquiry launched by our colleague Senator Frum into egregious human rights abuses in Iran. I will speak now and, if it is agreeable to the Senate, Senator Munson will speak following me for the balance of his time, continuing on the remarks that he began last week.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**Senator Cowan:** Sarah Morgan and Andrew Apostolou, of the highly-respected NGO Freedom House, wrote an article for *Foreign Affairs Magazine* last November about the terrible human rights abuses in Iran. They proposed a strategy of highlighting these abuses on the world stage and actively supporting Iran's dissidents, in order to place "a new, more effective kind of pressure on Tehran and support the movement for democratic change from within." They called it the "Naming and Shaming Strategy."

This is what I believe Senator Frum is doing with this inquiry. I do not normally subscribe to "naming and shaming strategies," but in this particular situation I wholeheartedly support it. I think one of the greatest fears of a political prisoner must be that what they are doing will be in vain, that no one will ever know what took place. Silence is one of the most powerful allies of those governments that abuse the basic, fundamental human rights of their citizens, and that is what we are all working to combat.

We all watched and admired the courage of hundreds and thousands of Iranians as they poured into the streets to protest the 2009 election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, widely viewed as a sham victory. Then the security forces moved in. The Iranian authorities themselves admitted that they arrested more than 4,500 protesters. According to opposition groups, there are at least 1,000 political prisoners still in jail.

One young woman, Neda Agha-Soltan, an aspiring musician, was killed during those protests. Her murder was caught on video — and that galvanized the world.

Last year, 2011, again saw thousands of demonstrators in the streets of Tehran and other Iranian cities to support the pro-democracy movements in neighbouring countries and to protest the detention of Iranian opposition leaders. Once again, the government responded with violence. Once again, there were deaths and arrests.

Dozens of Iranians affiliated with opposition parties or student groups are in prison. The fate of others has been even worse.

As Senator Frum said, Iran has the highest per capita execution rate in the world. According to Human Rights Watch, in 2011 Iranian authorities carried out more than 600 executions, and, judging by last month, they may exceed even that horrific rate this year. My colleague, the Honourable Irwin Cotler, has described



Iran as being on “an execution binge.” Many of these executions were ostensibly for drug-related crimes, a category that has become a catch-all for the suppression of dissidents.

Iran has imprisoned more journalists and more bloggers than any other country in the world. The judiciary, in the words of Human Rights Watch, “works hand-in-hand with security and intelligence forces to harass, imprison and convict opposition and rights activists.”

Senator Eaton spoke of the arrest and imprisonment of Nasrin Sotoudeh, a lawyer and human rights activist. Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi said last August that at least 42 lawyers have faced persecution from the Iranian government since June 2009. Few, if any, independent rights organizations are able to operate openly in the country.

Senator Frum launched the inquiry by speaking of three Canadians currently imprisoned in Iran. One of these is Saeed Malekpour, a Canadian permanent resident who was born in Iran. Let me tell you a little more about Mr. Malekpour’s situation. He has been sentenced to death for crimes against Islam and spreading corruption on earth — a sentence recently upheld by the Iranian Supreme Court. He is a web programmer accused of supposedly creating pornographic websites in Iran. He maintains that he is innocent, but, honourable senators, even if he were guilty, which he says emphatically he is not, there can be no justice when one is given the death penalty for creating offensive websites.

• (1630)

When he was first arrested in 2008, Mr. Malekpour was taken to the notorious Evin Prison, about which we heard the other day. He spent a year in solitary confinement without charge, without access to a lawyer and without any visits. He was put on state television, where he was forced to confess, a confession which he says was extracted under pressure of physical and psychological torture. In his words, “While I remained blindfolded and handcuffed, several individuals armed with cables, batons, and their fists struck and punched me. At times, they would flog my head and neck.”

My colleague in the other place, the Honourable Irwin Cotler, has been working for years now to fight the human rights abuses in Iran. He recently established an interparliamentary group for human rights in Iran, which he co-chairs with United States Senator Mark Kirk, to take up the cause of political prisoners in Iran. Mr. Cotler has pointed out that Mr. Malekpour’s death sentence was reportedly reinstated under pressure from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, which he describes as being the epicentre of Iran’s threat to human rights, peace and international security. In his words, they play “a central role in Iran’s domestic repression, international terrorism, incitement to genocide, and nuclear proliferation.” According to the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center at Yale, they are also responsible for the murder of political dissidents inside and outside Iran.

The Canadian government must sanction the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and list it as a terrorist entity. Mr. Cotler, with the support of many of his parliamentary

colleagues, has been calling for this for several years. He has done so by sponsoring a draft bill and by pressing the government in Question Period and in debate. The government has said it needed more time to consider and study the issue.

For the reasons articulated so well by honourable senators on both sides of this chamber, the time for study is over. It is time, overdue, actually, for the government to act and to sanction the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and list them as the terrorist entity that they are — not just a few members, as the government did a few weeks ago, but the group itself.

I mentioned a draft bill. Almost three years ago, on June 9, 2009, Mr. Cotler, as our party’s Special Counsel on Human Rights and International Justice, introduced a private member’s bill, the proposed Iran accountability act, in the other place. Its purpose was to hold Iran to account for its incitement to genocide, domestic repression and nuclear armament. It set out a road map of steps that the Canadian government could take to call attention to Iran’s human rights violations and attach meaningful international sanctions. Unfortunately, the bill did not proceed beyond first reading.

Today I think all honourable senators, and hopefully all members in the other place as well, recognize the wisdom of Mr. Cotler’s plan. I encourage all honourable senators to look at the draft bill.

There is one other document I must mention. In December 2010, the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development in the other place issued an important report entitled *Ahmadinejad’s Iran: A Threat to Peace, Human Rights and International Law*. That report, adopted unanimously by all committee members, contained a number of important findings and recommendations. It called for comprehensive sanctions targeting those engaged in the massive repression in Iran and for the listing of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist entity.

Honourable senators, I conclude by thanking Senator Frum once again for initiating this inquiry. It is an important step that shows we are all of one mind in defending basic human rights in Iran and in condemning those who would so flagrantly deny them.

**Hon. Jim Munson:** Honourable senators, I too congratulate Senator Frum on her inquiry condemning human rights violations in Iran. As heart-wrenching as it was to hear the stories many of our colleagues told last week of Iranian citizens unlawfully imprisoned and tortured, I am nonetheless thankful. Senator Frum’s inquiry to condemn human rights abuses in Iran could not be more relevant, and I appreciate her initiative as well as this opportunity today to express my revulsion with that country’s ruling power.

In 1987, as I said last week, and it is difficult to talk about those days, I was on assignment in Iran to cover the Persian Gulf War and the story of a Canadian engineer being held in Evin Prison. I stood outside the walls of that prison under the open sky, free to observe the activities taking place in front of me. While there

was certainly a difference between what I saw and what I was restricted from seeing on the other side of those walls, that difference was not as stark as you might assume.

Daily life in Iran is fraught with restrictions. What can it be like to live in a country where women and girls are not allowed to even choose what they wear and where you can be seized from your home, held, questioned and tortured, without even hearing your alleged crimes? What does it do to the human psyche to have to constantly conform to the government's socio-religious norms or risk punishment, and not just your own punishment because the risks extend to your family and friends?

As a reporter with the responsibility to get the story and share it, I felt conspicuous and wary. Whereas Iran's belief system was foreign and offensive to me, there I was, the foreigner; and 25 years later, Iran's human rights crisis is worsening every day. Despite the government's severe restrictions over independent reporting and monitoring, we have more than enough information to put together a clear and ugly picture. According to Sarah Leah Whitson, the Middle East Director of Human Rights Watch, the Iranian government crushes all voices of opposition while scoffing at the international community's growing concern over human rights.

*World Report 2012*, a publication of Human Rights Watch, provides overwhelming evidence of the systemic and ruthless nature of human rights abuses in Iran. As Senator Cowan mentioned, despite the urgings of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and four UN experts for a moratorium on the death penalty, Iranian authorities carried out more than 600 executions in the past year.

Limits on rights and freedoms abound, but as for limits on the horrible powers of Iranian authorities, there simply are none. Iranian law allows capital punishment for people who have reached puberty. What exactly does this mean? In Iran, people who have reached puberty, honourable senators, are 15 years of age for boys and 9 years of age for girls. In 2011, the Iranian courts allowed three children to be executed. What must it be like to grow up in a country where self-expression carries grave risks and to know right now that the situation in your country is getting worse?

Following the 2009 presidential election, the government issued a crackdown on anti-government protest. That crackdown is still in effect, and social activists, including women's rights advocates, lawyers, students and journalists, are being targeted. Honourable senators who stood last week to condemn human rights violations in Iran highlighted in their statements the ordeals of various individuals. We heard of men and women, all of them distinct in their personal and work lives, yet also connected because they are among those who have suffered and continue to suffer as a result of Iran's intense security sweep.

Now, as the country moves towards its next parliamentary elections on March 2, human rights advocates in Iran and

throughout the world are on high alert. Past and current experiences tell us that these elections will be a sham, yet another slap in the face of democracy. It could also lead to a violent conflict between police and protesters.

• (1640)

In the face of this crisis, we need to remember that it is the respect for human rights and freedoms that makes Canada and like-minded countries throughout the world strong. Iran's egregious system of government betrays a fear of its people. A government that spits on the rights of its citizens is a country propped up by cowardice.

This challenge can be met and Canada is among a formidable united group of nations and international mechanisms that can do it. We must pursue any and every reasonable avenue, including tightening sanctions. Iran's leaders may say what they want about self-reliance and resentment toward the West, but their words are bravado.

Speaking to a group of editors for *The New York Times* last week, Mohammad Khazaei, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, acknowledged that the sanctions are cutting deep. He said:

The good news is that we have learned very much how to manage with sanctions. But nobody can say that the sanctions are not hurting.

I am a firm believer that any official role Canada takes must be through the United Nations. Though we are starting to hear the drum beat of war, we must remain grounded and be careful about the role we will take.

The inquiry by Senator Frum is a good inquiry. It addresses the issue of human rights. An inquiry like this shows that senators on both sides of the chamber can and do agree. The Iranian Government is an abusive regime that kills and tortures its citizens. In their statements, Conservative senators were able to put faces to the abuses: real people trying to live real lives.

We must never turn our backs; we must never turn away from them. We must always voice our opinions and believe that one day Iran will recognize and guarantee the fundamental rights of its people and Iranians will be free — free to worship; free to think; free to love; free to wear what they want to wear; and free to know that, when they place their votes, they are helping to shape a better future for themselves and for generations to come and that they are creating a real democracy.

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

(The Senate adjourned until Wednesday, February 15, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

## CONTENTS

Tuesday, February 14, 2012

	PAGE		PAGE
<b>SENATORS' STATEMENTS</b>		<b>Environment</b>	
<b>Tributes</b>		eco-ENERGY Retrofit Program.	
The Late Honourable Fred J. Dickson.		Hon. Pierre De Bané . . . . .	
Hon. Marjory LeBreton . . . . .		1129	
Hon. James S. Cowan . . . . .		1129	
<b>Ocean Ranger Disaster</b>		<b>Finance</b>	
Thirtieth Anniversary.		Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions.	
Hon. Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall . . . . .		Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette . . . . .	
1130		1137	
<b>Family Violence Prevention</b>		Hon. Marjory LeBreton . . . . .	
Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck . . . . .		1137	
1130		<b>Delayed Answers to Oral Questions</b>	
<b>Scouts Canada</b>		Hon. Claude Carignan . . . . .	
Hon. Consiglio Di Nino . . . . .		1137	
Hon. Dennis Dawson . . . . .		<b>National Defence</b>	
1131		Number of Suicides of Soldiers in Theatre—	
<b>New Brunswick Heritage Week</b>		Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.	
Hon. Carolyn Stewart Olsen . . . . .		Question by Senator Dallaire.	
1131		Hon. Claude Carignan (Delayed Answer) . . . . .	
<b>International Day Against the Use of Child Soldiers</b>		1137	
Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire . . . . .		<b>International Cooperation</b>	
1132		Foreign Aid for Maternal and Infant Health	
<b>Ocean Ranger Disaster</b>		in Developing Countries	
Thirtieth Anniversary.		Question by Senator Jaffer.	
Hon. Norman E. Doyle . . . . .		Hon. Claude Carignan (Delayed Answer) . . . . .	
1132		1138	
<b>Visitors in the Gallery</b>		<hr/>	
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . .		<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
1133		<b>President of the Public Service Commission</b>	
<hr/>		Anne-Marie Robinson Received in Committee of the Whole.	
<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>		The Chair . . . . .	
<b>ParlAmericas</b>		1139	
Bilateral Visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela,		Anne-Marie Robinson,	
November 13-18, 2011—Report Tabled.		Acting President of the Public Service Commission . . . . .	
Hon. Pierrette Ringuette . . . . .		1139	
1133		Senator Marshall . . . . .	
<b>Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group</b>		1141	
U.S. Congressional Meetings, March 1-2, 2011—Report Tabled.		Senator Jaffer . . . . .	
Hon. Janis G. Johnson . . . . .		1141	
1133		Senator Mercer . . . . .	
<b>Annual Conference of the Southeastern United States-Canadian</b>		1142	
<b>Provinces Alliance, June 12-14, 2011—Report Tabled.</b>		Senator Tardif . . . . .	
Hon. Janis G. Johnson . . . . .		1143	
1133		Senator Meredith . . . . .	
<b>Western Governors' Association Annual Meeting,</b>		1143	
<b>June 29-July 1, 2011—Report Tabled.</b>		Senator Dallaire . . . . .	
Hon. Janis G. Johnson . . . . .		1144	
1133		Senator Ringuette . . . . .	
<hr/>		1145	
<b>QUESTION PERIOD</b>		Senator Munson . . . . .	
<b>National Defence</b>		1146	
F-35 Aircraft Purchase.		Senator Martin . . . . .	
Hon. Wilfred P. Moore . . . . .		1146	
1133		The Hon. the Speaker . . . . .	
Hon. Marjory LeBreton . . . . .		1147	
1134		Report of the Committee of the Whole.	
<b>Foreign Affairs</b>		Hon. Donald H. Oliver . . . . .	
Canada-China Relations—Security.		1147	
Hon. Wilfred P. Moore . . . . .		Motion to Approve Nomination Adopted.	
1134		Hon. Claude Carignan . . . . .	
Hon. Marjory LeBreton . . . . .		1147	
1134		<b>Legal and Constitutional Affairs</b>	
<b>Human Resources and Skills Development</b>		Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Meet During Sitting	
Old Age Security Pension.		of the Senate.	
Hon. Art Eggleton . . . . .		Hon. John D. Wallace . . . . .	
1135		1147	
Hon. Marjory LeBreton . . . . .		Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Refer Documents	
1135		from Studies on Bill C-15 During Second Session of Fortieth	
<hr/>		Parliament, Bill S-7 and S-10 During Third Session	
<b>Legal and Constitutional Affairs</b>		of Fortieth Parliament and Bill S-225 During Second Session	
Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Meet During Sitting		of Thirty-ninth Parliament to Current Study on Bill C-10.	
of the Senate.		Hon. John D. Wallace . . . . .	
Hon. John D. Wallace . . . . .		1147	
1147		<b>The Senate</b>	
<b>Human Rights in Iran</b>		Motion to Urge the Government to Modernize and Standardize	
Inquiry—Debate Continued.		the Laws that Regulate the Maple Syrup Industry—	
Hon. James S. Cowan . . . . .		Motion in Amendment—Debate Continued.	
1150		Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie . . . . .	
Hon. Jim Munson . . . . .		1148	
1151		Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette . . . . .	
<hr/>		1150	



*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Publishing and Depository Services  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5