



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

Thursday, October 29, 2020

The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,  
Speaker

## CONTENTS

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

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## THE SENATE

Thursday, October 29, 2020

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

Prayers.

[*Translation*]

### THE SENATE

CATHERINE PICCININ—TRIBUTE ON DEPARTURE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to take a moment to inform colleagues that one of our table officers Cathy Piccinin, Principal Clerk of Chamber Operations and Procedure, will retire from the Senate after a long and distinguished career. Cathy began working for the Senate 32 years ago, and has served as a page and in Committees, the International and Interparliamentary Affairs Directorate, Table Research, and the last two years in her current role.

I want to thank Cathy for the diligence and dedication she showed throughout her time at the Senate.

On behalf of all senators and staff, I thank you, Cathy, for your professionalism, your dedication and your many years of loyal service to the Senate.

I wish you and your husband, Morgan, all the very best as you enter this next chapter of your life.

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

[*English*]

### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I received a notice from the Leader of the Opposition who requests, pursuant to rule 4-3(1), that the time provided for the consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable David Braley, whose death occurred on October 26, 2020.

I remind senators that pursuant to our rules, each senator will be allowed only 3 minutes and they may speak only once and that the time for tributes should not exceed 15 minutes.

## SENATORS' STATEMENTS

### TRIBUTES

THE LATE HONOURABLE DAVID OSBORN BRALEY, O.C.

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I rise to remember a former colleague and friend who passed away on Monday, the Honourable David Braley. A proud Hamiltonian, he represented the province of Ontario here in the Senate. Although Senator Braley served just three years in the Senate, he left a lasting impression on all who knew him in this place, and he will be greatly missed in Hamilton, Ottawa and indeed all across our great country.

David Braley moved from Montreal to Hamilton as a small child, and from that point on, Hamilton would remain a major focus of his life's work and charitable efforts. Evidence of his philanthropy is everywhere in that city. The David Braley Health Sciences Centre at McMaster University, the David Braley Cardiac, Vascular and Stroke Research Institute at the Hamilton General Hospital, and the David Braley Athletic and Recreation Centre at Mohawk College are just a few examples.

In his youth, David Braley was such a tough competitor while playing sports that he earned the nickname "Elbows." His fierce determination served him well in business, as he acquired the company which would become Orlick Industries, a leading auto parts manufacturer. It is safe to say, however, that David Braley's name is most connected with football in Canada. His impact on the Canadian Football League cannot be overstated, and it is difficult to say just where the CFL would be today if not for him. He was the owner and chair of the BC Lions, and also an owner of the Toronto Argonauts and the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. His teams raised the Grey Cup four times, most recently in 2012 when the Argonauts won the historic 100th Grey Cup. That same year, David Braley also received the well-earned induction into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame.

After being named to the Senate on the advice of the Right Honourable Stephen Harper in 2010, he was a member of several Senate committees and served as deputy chair of the Rules Committee. For all of his tremendous success in business and his triumphs in sports, he remained a kind and compassionate man with a wicked sense of humour. As a senator, he displayed the generosity of spirit that took him so far in life. One year, to thank the Senate pages for a job well done, Senator Braley took them all to a CFL football game in Toronto, where they watched the Argonauts take on the BC Lions. This is who David Braley was.

Almost a year ago, Senator Braley was named an Officer of the Order of Canada, a fitting recognition of his contributions to the CFL and a lifetime of leadership in his community. On behalf of the entire Conservative caucus, and on behalf of all honourable senators, I offer sincere condolences and best wishes to his wife Nancy and their children on the loss of this remarkable man.

**Hon. Yuen Pau Woo:** Honourable colleagues, while I did not have the pleasure of working with former Senator David Braley, I rise today on behalf of the Independent Senators Group to pay tribute to a man whose impact across Canada, and particularly in my home province of British Columbia, will not be soon forgotten.

In 1997, David Braley became the owner of British Columbia's CFL team, the BC Lions. His long history of success in business quickly translated to success on the field as the Lions captured the Grey Cup in 2000, their first of three under his ownership. David Braley collected a total of four Grey Cup wins during his time as an owner in the CFL. Under his leadership, the Lions became known as one of British Columbia's model corporate citizens, a team active in charitable and community programs, focused on health and wellness, public education and the development of amateur football.

While he is best known for his contributions to the CFL, David Braley was also instrumental in keeping professional soccer alive in British Columbia when he took ownership of the Vancouver 86ers from 1997 to 2000, allowing the club to thrive today as the Vancouver Whitecaps.

• (1410)

David Braley was appointed to the Senate by former Prime Minister Harper in 2010, when he represented the province of Ontario until 2013. He was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2019, "for his contributions to the Canadian Football League, and for his entrepreneurial and philanthropic leadership in his community."

Rick Dhaliwal, Contributor on TSN 1040 and writer for The Athletic Vancouver said:

My last conversation with David, he kept talking about what was best for the Lions, what was best for Vancouver, what was best for the CFL.

Nobody cared more about 3 down football than David.

One of the best owners this city will ever see.

He will be missed.

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

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, it's with a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to an iconic Canadian, our former colleague and friend the late Honourable David Braley.

David was a football enthusiast to the core. Born in Montreal and moving to Hamilton at a young age, he played football growing up and became a regular at Tiger-Cats games. After attending McMaster University, he began his business career with General Motors Acceptance Corporation in Hamilton, before joining London Life Insurance.

He entered the CFL in 1989 as the owner of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. He later became the CFL club's owner ahead of the 1997 Canadian Football League season, fulfilling a dream that I'm sure any boy who grew up with the love of football would have had.

Senator Plett has talked about Senator Braley's achievements as a club owner of both the BC Lions and the Toronto Argonauts, with four Grey Cup championships, but I want to add that the three, in 2000, 2006 and 2011, were all with the BC Lions — a hometown favourite and, of course, with legions of fans across the province.

His love for sports did not end there, as he also owned soccer's Vancouver 86ers and later the A-League's Vancouver Whitecaps until 2000. He also served as chairman of the 2003 World Cycling Championships in Hamilton and was a director of Ontario's successful bid to host the 2015 Pan American Games.

As a British Columbian and a fellow sports enthusiast, I'm grateful to our beloved former colleague for his generous contribution and commitment to the B.C. franchises on behalf of their fans, including my father-in-law and husband, to be able to see a team like the BC Lions do so well and really be a place for a community to come together — people of all ages. And as Senator Woo mentioned, I know the BC Lions partnered with EVA BC, a charitable organization focused on ending violence against women. It was a very successful campaign that became a model for other organizations.

In 2010, David began a new chapter in his life when he was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and proudly served Ontario for three years in this esteemed chamber. I had the honour, like many of us, to work alongside David and to serve Canadians above all.

As deputy whip at the time, I recall sitting in front of him or near him in our chamber, and of David being a very valued member of our caucus. He was loyal, kind and someone whom we could depend on from beginning to end.

To his wife family who will mourn his passing, we mourn with you. You are part of our Senate family, and we will miss and remember David Braley going forward.

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

**Hon. Jim Munson:** Honourable senators, I rise on behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, and I'm thinking of what Senator Plett just said about David and his very important comment about McMaster University. I began to scribble early this afternoon, and one of the notepads I picked up is from McMaster University. It's one I like, a nice binder, and it's a very good school, of course, and he gave so much to that school. We can talk about football, but David was a good man.

As I put my notes down, I kept thinking of a giant of a man, which obviously means that we never saw eye-to-eye on many things except the love of football. We always seemed to be walking down the stairs together into the old Senate Chamber. After seeing it yesterday, I really miss that place.

We had conversations about football, we talked about his love of football and about his family and the love of his children. He talked about his children and how he loved his children so much. He talked modestly that he was a reasonably wealthy man, so at one point during our conversations I asked if he could adopt me. I said I'm a humble reporter who spent too many Friday nights at the National Press Club and didn't save a cent.

Senator Braley wasn't here long enough. He was a man of common sense, he had strong conservative values, and there's nothing wrong with that. That's what we view as a man. His real love was family, and I want to emphasize that.

Senator Klyne from Saskatchewan sent me a note, and I want to read it. It was from the *Regina Leader Post* written by Rob Vanstone, a columnist, talking about the true champion he was. It says:

The Saskatchewan Roughriders registered the victory. David Braley got the save.

Such was the storyline on Nov. 26, 1989, when the Roughriders outlasted the Braley-owned Hamilton Tiger-Cats 43-40 in the greatest of all Grey Cup games.

It goes on to talk about his life. He was only 79 when he passed away but, as he says in this column, "without him, there might not be a league," the teams he owned and what he did. Yes, he was a philanthropist, but he was a good man who really loved three-down football, which I loved, and it was near and dear to his heart. He goes on to say:

One can only imagine how many tens (hundreds?) of millions of dollars he sacrificed to allow the Tiger-Cats, Lions and Argonauts to remain in business.

I'll leave the last quote to Roughriders president-CEO Jim Hopson, like Braley a member of the builders' wing of the Canadian Football Hall of Fame. He said this two days ago:

He was passionate about football and the CFL — a lifelong fan. He was a very principled person — a straight shooter who held himself and those around him accountable. He could be intimidating, but there was a warm, generous and gracious side to David.

Rest in peace.

**Hon. Larry W. Smith:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my former bosses and former Senate colleague the Honourable David Braley. David was successful in every sense of the word. His determined spirit and principled character allowed him to build a business empire started in finance, moving into the automotive parts business and continuing into professional sports.

His passion, as has been outlined here, for the Canadian Football League was unwavering. I saw this first-hand during my time as Commissioner of the CFL. He fiercely believed in grassroots support for the league, the idea that every Canadian could grow to love the CFL and that the league could be a permanent part of what it means to be Canadian. It's no secret

that the CFL faced many challenges over the years, but David's commitment to the league allowed it to weather some of its biggest storms.

As an aside: In 1997, two men saved the league. One of them was David Braley through the purchase of the BC Lions; the other was Bob Wetenhall through the purchase of the Alouettes. At that time the league was within minutes of going bankrupt, and so it was quite an experience trying to be the commissioner of this league.

David's love of country and community was evidenced not only by his service in the Senate, but also by his generous donations to his local communities, which has been mentioned today. His awe-inspiring life culminated with being named to the Order of Canada, capping off a life full of service to his country.

On behalf of my Senate colleagues, I wish to offer my sincere condolences to David's family and friends during this difficult time.

David, thank you for all you've contributed to Canada and your community, and I think he'd appreciate it from you.

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

**Hon. Salma Ataullahjan:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to my former seatmate Senator David Braley.

When I was first appointed to the Senate I had the good fortune of being seated next to David.

• (1420)

When I took my seat next to him, we kind of sized each other up. We couldn't have been a more unlikely pair, but we soon realized how much we had in common despite our different backgrounds.

We had many heartfelt discussions about our roles in the Senate. He took the time to teach me valuable lessons that have served me well.

David was a humble and down-to-earth man who every sitting day would say to me, "Time for my glass of milk. Watch my seat, Salma." I would joke with him, and he would chuckle so much that Senator Jaffer asked me one day, "What do you say to Senator Braley? I have never seen him laugh that much."

I later learned about all the amazing charity work he quietly did. After I got to know David, he shared his childhood story with me. What I heard shall remain private. They were shared in confidence. My admiration for him grew even more when I realized all the obstacles that he had faced.

The level of success David had, most people will never achieve that in a single lifetime.

David, I hope, wherever you are, you're enjoying a glass of milk, looking down on all the lives you have touched. I was fortunate to have you guide me, and I will never forget the most valuable lesson you taught me: "Salma, don't speak all the time, or people will get used to the sound of your voice and stop listening."

Today, I speak to remember you, David. May you rest in peace and joy, my dear friend and mentor.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I would ask that you rise and join me in a minute of silence in memory of our former colleague.

*(Honourable senators then stood in silent tribute.)*

[Translation]

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Thank you very much, esteemed colleagues.

[English]

### SHOW YOUR 4-H COLOURS DAY

**Hon. Robert Black:** Honourable senators, I have risen in the chamber on a number of occasions to highlight the important role 4-H Canada has played in my life. As a 4-H alumnus, a former staff member at the provincial and national levels, a past president of the Canadian 4-H Council and an honorary member of 4-H Canada, I can confidently say that this life-changing experience is the reason that I am in the Senate of Canada today.

For over a century, 4-H clubs across this country have been some of the most highly respected, positive youth development organizations in Canada, with close to 25,000 members and more than 7,600 volunteer leaders today.

Their goal is to help young Canadians “Learn To Do By Doing” in a safe, inclusive and fun environment. They believe in nurturing responsible, caring and contributing youth leaders who are committed to positively impacting their communities across Canada and around the world.

Next week on November 4, members of 4-H will celebrate Show Your 4-H Colours Day to kick off the month-long awareness campaign where youth members, volunteer leaders, alumni and 4-H friends and supporters wear green to demonstrate their pride in the good work of 4-H, which is performed in communities across this country.

Show Your 4-H Colours Day is 4-H’s biggest annual event here in Canada. The campaign celebrates the 4-H movement and highlights the incredible things 4-H youth are doing in communities in Canada and how the 4-H program is helping to create responsible, caring and contributing young people.

In celebration, landmarks across Canada will be lighting up in green in support of Show Your 4-H Colours Day. As an alumnus, this month-long campaign presents an amazing opportunity for supporters of 4-H in Ontario to join members of 4-H from the other provinces to celebrate, share experiences and build stronger communities. While we won’t be able to celebrate this November as we usually do because of the ongoing pandemic, we can share 4-H stories virtually and show our colours on social media.

Show Your 4-H Colours Day is also a chance for me to share with you and others my respect and admiration for and commitment to the 4-H program. As I stated earlier, I would not

be sitting in the chamber today but for this important leadership development program. For 107 years, 4-H has been an integral part of Canadian communities with the simple mission of helping develop the potential of young people and ensuring that they have the tools to become responsible, caring and contributing leaders.

The sense of community and interest of many in supporting our youth is why this program continues to thrive. And 4-H members pledge their heads to clearer thinking, their hearts to greater loyalty, their hands to larger service and their health to better living for their club, their community and their country. For me, part of what it means to be a Canadian is embodied in this 4-H pledge as it outlines values I think we can all believe in. Thank you very much. *Meegwetch.*

### THE LATE ALINE CHRÉTIEN

**Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer:** Honourable senators, I rise today to honour the life of Aline Chrétien. In addition to being the wife of former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, Madame Chrétien was a highly respected Canadian, and I am very proud to have the honour and privilege to call her my dear friend.

Sadly, on September 11 of this year, while surrounded by her family in her preferred place — Shawinigan, Quebec — she passed away peacefully. It is well known to Canadians that Madame Chrétien was a pillar to our Prime Minister Chrétien, her three children France, Hubert and Michel, as well as her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Following the passing of Madame Chrétien, there was an outpouring of tributes from Canadians all across the country giving testament to what an elegant, authentic, intelligent and warm person she was. Everyone who had the privilege of knowing Madame Chrétien had a story they could tell about her dedicated service to Canadians.

I would like to share with you my experiences with Mr. and Mrs. Chrétien. In 1993, while accompanying them on the campaign trail, we travelled to the interior of British Columbia. I remember clearly, just before Mr. Chrétien was about to speak at an event, Madame Chrétien took him aside to encourage him. I observed she would always give him frank and often tough but constructive commentary. Mr. Chrétien truly saw her as an equal partner. I really admired that. Mr. Chrétien deeply respected her opinion and often sought her sage advice.

Madame Chrétien was a very loyal friend to me, particularly in my role as President of the Women’s Liberal Commission. When I was running for a second term, I was confronted with several challenges. During this time I was a beneficiary of Madame Chrétien’s sage advice. I believe it was her confidence in me that allowed me to be successful in my campaign for a second term. I will never forget what Madame Chrétien did for me.

When I was appointed to the Senate, she wanted to make sure I felt at home in Ottawa. Many times she invited me to her home for lunch or a cup of tea. During those visits, I found out what an accomplished pianist she was, as well as being quadrilingual: besides English and French, she spoke Italian and Spanish. Aline

Chrétien was truly an amazing woman. She gave her all to Mr. Chrétien, their family and all Canadians. We are all privileged to have been served by her.

[*Translation*]

Madame Chrétien, you were so dear to me and to Canadians. I will miss you very much, Rest in peace, my friend. Thank you.

## TEACHERS

### IMPORTANCE OF THEIR WORK DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**Hon. Chantal Petitclerc:** Honourable senators, many of you have highlighted the extraordinary contribution of our essential workers during this pandemic. Allow me to add to this group of heroes some extraordinary individuals who are making a big difference behind the scenes. There are more than 700,000 of them across Canada, and every morning their mission is to welcome, guide and educate our country's young people. Of course I am talking about our teachers and I want to thank them.

Being a teacher is hard enough under normal conditions. In the midst of this pandemic, it is a colossal challenge. There is the curriculum to follow, of course, but that is just a small part of their responsibilities. Our teachers have had to adapt very quickly and urgently to new health measures, new instructions, and new ways of teaching on site or remotely. They rose to the challenge with excellence.

Dear teachers, in the face of adversity you continue to be positive, dynamic and cheerful. Our children truly need this sense of normalcy. Your role is extremely important.

• (1430)

We can see how the pandemic is negatively affecting young people, and you are clearly part of the solution to minimize that impact. I thank you for that.

[*English*]

UNICEF Canada says it clearly:

How many children recover, how quickly and how well, from the pandemic depends on the current response to the crisis . . . .

And our teachers are a central aspect of that response.

We know it's not easy. Even last night, "The National" had a feature on teachers under strain. Our world today looks very different than it did at the beginning of the year. Dear teachers, this is not what you signed up for, but you are doing it regardless, and you are doing it well. Because of you, children across this

[ Senator Jaffer ]

country are staying safe and are thriving, healthy and happy. This is no small task, and it is certainly one of the most important things that we can do for Canada right now.

[*Translation*]

I want to thank all teachers, from the bottom of my heart.

[*English*]

## THE SENATE

### CATHERINE PICCININ—TRIBUTE ON DEPARTURE

**Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, it is with mixed emotions that I rise today to extend my deep appreciation and thanks to Cathy Piccinin, Principal Clerk of the Chamber Operations and Procedure Office. I am saddened because this week marks the end of her outstanding career, but I'm filled with gratitude for having had the opportunity to benefit from her professionalism — the unflagging professionalism she gave to all our offices, particularly to the scroll group.

Cathy has had a remarkable career at the Senate. For over 30 years, she embodied its values and contributed to achieving the highest standards of excellence, in the beginning as a Senate page and finally crowning her career as a principal clerk. Such a career arc is quite exceptional in this day and age, and likely in any age.

[*Translation*]

On a more personal note, I want to thank you, Cathy, for all the support you've given me since I took on the role of Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate. The support your office provided to the Senate, under your leadership, has played and will continue to play a huge role in keeping our democratic institution running smoothly.

Frankly, without you, we could not do our jobs.

[*English*]

Most recently, Cathy has been integral to the progress made on hybrid sittings at the Senate. Without Cathy's diligent planning, hybrid sittings would not be a reality today. Although she is leaving us before our first official hybrid sitting, we will not forget her contribution in getting us through these unprecedented times.

I wish Cathy all the best in her retirement and that she savours a nice glass of white wine when she begins to look back on her wonderful career. On behalf of all senators and staff, I wish to extend my deepest appreciation to you, Cathy. You will be missed. Thank you.

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



**THE LATE RIGHT HONOURABLE DONALD  
MAZANKOWSKI, P.C., C.C.**

**Hon. Pamela Wallin:** Honourable senators, I'd like to thank the Progressive Senate Group for sharing their time with me today so that I might pay tribute today to the Right Honourable Don Mazankowski, who has left us at the age of 85.

Don was first selected in 1968 and then another six times, evidence that he was a trusted and admired politician, and that is said of only a few. In my years as a journalist, we had literally hundreds of conversations, on air and off, he as a member of the opposition, or as the Finance Minister or Deputy Prime Minister.

He was direct, fair, informed and always a voice of reason. He brought common sense to Parliament. Former prime minister Brian Mulroney described Don's political and personal skills by saying, "He never broke a bridge."

He was also the chief operating officer of government, and anybody knew that if you wanted anything to happen, you were to check it with Maz first. He knew his files; he was politically astute; and, most importantly, he liked people and therefore he understood this country.

He was inspired by Diefenbaker's beliefs that the West should have a meaningful role and voice. He offered wise counsel in many corporate boardrooms, and later in life, he and I served together on the board of what would become the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute at the University of Alberta Hospital, run by Dr. Arvind Koshal, a protege of our former colleague here, the Honourable Senator Dr. Willy Keon. On his name and reputation, Don created a true centre of medical excellence in the Prairies for the West, and I know this to be true. The doctors and nurses at the institute saved my father's life and gave us many good years that we cherished.

Today, our hearts are with you, Lorraine, and the family — today and going forward. And to Don, thank you for your service to Canada in all its forms, through all the years and in so many different ways. You were loved and respected, a rare feat and an amazing legacy.

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

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[*Translation*]

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**MODERN SLAVERY BILL**

**BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING**

**Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer,** with leave of the Senate, for the Honourable Senator Miville-Dechéne, introduced Bill S-216, An Act to enact the Modern Slavery Act and to amend the Customs Tariff.

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

[*English*]

**GIRL GUIDES OF CANADA BILL**

**PRIVATE BILL—FIRST READING**

**Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer** introduced Bill S-1001, An Act respecting Girl Guides of Canada.

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

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• (1440)

**QUESTION PERIOD**

**FINANCE**

**FISCAL UPDATE**

**Hon. Elizabeth Marshall:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Senator Gold, prior to the proroguing of Parliament in August, the government was providing a biweekly financial report on its COVID-19 spending. The House of Commons Finance Committee posted each report on its website so we could access it. The last report was posted on August 6, almost three months ago.

It was the one piece of current financial information that was available to members of the Finance Committee, parliamentarians and Canadians.

Can you tell us when we can expect the government to start providing this biweekly report again?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank for your question, senator. I do not have a precise date, but I will make inquiries and am happy to report back.

**Senator Marshall:** The government is providing very little financial information, and I've spoken about it in this chamber many times. Both parliamentarians and Canadians in general are looking for this financial information. I usually go to the Department of Finance website to see what's there. If you look at

it now, the most recent fiscal monitor shows financial results for July 2020, three months ago. The most recent budget, Budget 2019, was released on March 19, 2019, 19 months ago. We have not seen a budget or fiscal plan since.

Under the heading of “Latest” on the Department of Finance website, it displays the most recent Public Accounts for the year ending March 31, 2019. This would be for the 2018-19 financial year, also 19 months ago. Senator Gold, yesterday you said this government is being transparent, but it’s not being transparent. We cannot get current, up-to-date financial information. Why is the government refusing to provide current financial information to parliamentarians and Canadians in general?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for the question. I don’t, respectfully, accept the premise that the government is refusing to provide information. These are extraordinarily challenging times and the government remains committed to not only providing information in an appropriate and timely fashion, but also continuing to work as it is doing to provide support to Canadians during these very challenging times.

## HEALTH

### TESTING FOR COVID-19

**Hon. Judith G. Seidman:** Honourable senators, my question is for the government leader in the Senate. In the first three months of the pandemic, more than 80% of Canada’s COVID-19 deaths occurred in long-term care settings. We must do all we can to prevent this from happening again during this second wave. The federal government announced on October 21 that Canada received the first delivery of 100,000 ID NOW rapid tests from Abbott labs. The government has also claimed that it is on track to receive 2.5 million ID NOW tests by the end of this year.

Senator Gold, I would like to know if any COVID-19 rapid tests recently received by the Government of Canada have been distributed in long-term care settings across the country. If so, how many, and where exactly have they been sent? As well, how many of the millions of rapid tests that will be received over the next two months are expected to be sent to long-term care settings?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question and for your ongoing attention to this matter. As your office would know, in response to your most recent questions, we were able to obtain the answers in a timely fashion — and I was delighted — which we passed on to your office rather than waiting. Once again, I don’t know. I’m sure you shared the delight with us that we’re finally receiving these tests in large numbers. As you would well know, there is a protocol for how they are distributed, but I don’t know exactly how many are, have been or will be targeted for long-term care facilities. I will inquire and hope to get the answers back as quickly as last time.

**Senator Seidman:** Leader, *The Globe and Mail* reported last week that delays in the turnaround of COVID-19 test results are preventing care homes from quickly identifying infected residents and staff, and from controlling the spread of infections.

Outbreaks in long-term care settings are growing across Canada. Just as an example, here in the City of Ottawa, Ottawa Public Health is currently reporting 16 open outbreaks in long-term care homes and 13 in retirement homes. I read this morning that there are two outbreaks at Quebec seniors’ homes worsening, with nearly 40 deaths. It’s quite jolting.

Leader, will congregate settings such as long-term care homes be prioritized to receive rapid tests as soon as they become available? If not, why not?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. I don’t know exactly how the priority setting will be undertaken and through which processes of consultation: federal, provincial or health care network. There’s no doubt that long-term health care centres remain, regrettably and tragically, centres of great concern. But others are of concern in the health care network as well. I have confidence that the government, in partnership with health care professionals and their provincial counterparts, will apply themselves responsibly to the difficult task of the triage and the prioritization of these important but still scarce resources.

## FINANCE

### ECONOMIC AND FISCAL SNAPSHOT 2020

**Hon. Tony Loffreda:** Honourable senators, please allow me to once again raise this important issue. My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate and it concerns keeping an effective control over our finances. Senator Gold, the Prime Minister stated on Monday that the government’s upcoming fiscal update won’t include a fiscal anchor to indicate to Canadians that the government has put in place a ceiling, or cap, on its public spending, deficit or debt level. However, numerous experts do agree there are many positives in doing so. To mention a few, it includes providing a measure of fiscal discipline inside government; ensuring that the government has the ability to respond to future economic shocks and unforeseen crises — the end of this crisis is nowhere in sight; retaining the confidence of lenders and global markets, which is also very important; and creating a positive investment climate for businesses that are all going through a very difficult time.

I appreciate we are in a pandemic, and more and more Canadians are relying on government intervention to make ends meet and to put food on the table. For many, the government’s various emergency response benefits have been a lifeline, and we should continue supporting Canadians where and when required. However, most Canadians also understand that we must operate within a budgetary framework. We don’t know how long this pandemic will last nor how quickly our economy will recover. We need to plan well and monitor our resources.

Senator Gold, as I mentioned to Minister Freeland during her last visit, many experts and Canadians would feel much more comfortable if the government would have a fiscal anchor and have an actual spending plan — a guide in place — despite the volatility of the situation. Here is a question and a challenge; I always like giving out challenges. Can you influence or encourage the government to include a fiscal anchor in its

upcoming economic update in order to give us a sense of direction and to keep an effective control over our finances while continuing to support Canadians?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. This is a subject that is much discussed, as you would expect, within government. The Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, recently addressed this issue in the first major speech that she gave. I would recommend it to all of you to get an idea of the current government thinking. The government believes strongly, as do many experts, that at this time, it remains appropriate for the government to continue to support Canadians through the various measures already in place, and are contemplating that this is not a time for austerity. The Deputy Prime Minister made it clear that the government is not proceeding as if deficits and debt levels do not matter. But it is premature to set artificial caps or targets on expenditures and investments that the government will continue to need to make to support Canadian businesses and families through these difficult times. There will come a time when it becomes more appropriate; and with the advice of experts, the government will act responsibly and provide that guidance going forward. We're unfortunately not there yet.

• (1450)

**Senator Loffreda:** I thank Senator Gold for the response. I'm glad that we are considering the risks. At this point, there are two things — debt level and capacity to repay — and we are fortunate that interest rates are very low at this point in time.

We do have the capacity to repay. We started at a good point with our debt-to-GDP before the pandemic, so I'm confident that the problem is not in the capacity to repay. The capacity to repay and the cost of managing the federal debt at this point, because of the low interest rates, is unlikely to become a huge concern or liability in the short term.

The problem, though — and as senators, taking the longer view — is that as the economy recovers, interest rates rise and debt-servicing costs increase significantly. The risk is that we won't be able to sustain this spending and the repayment of our debt becomes an issue because debt-servicing costs increase.

I do note that the Bank of Canada recently predicted that interest rates will stay at near-record lows until 2023, giving you an idea of the magnitude of this crisis. So we have to manage our resources well.

My question is this: Are you assessing the risk in the longer term? Are you acknowledging that risk? Is it a continuous government discussion? Because short term we're not getting an anchor, are we looking at the longer-term effect? And how will we mitigate this risk longer term? Hopefully our economy recovers and our interest rates increase, and the debt servicing may create an issue.

**Senator Gold:** Senator, let me reassure this chamber that the government is taking very seriously the implications and long-range consequences of the extraordinary investments we have been called upon to make to help Canadians through this. Indeed, it brings to mind the paper by David Dodge, to which Senator Harder referred, where there are a number of interesting

measures that we might consider going forward, in addition to debt-to-GDP ratios and other measures of control and accountability. This government is committed to acting responsibly, as it is right now, in investing in Canadians.

[*Translation*]

## JUSTICE

### MANDATORY MINIMUM PENALTIES

**Hon. Kim Pate:** My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Today, the Parliamentary Budget Officer stated that, with respect to mandatory minimum sentences, people who are more likely to have broken the law after experiencing racism and systemic inequality — particularly younger people, people with mental illness and women who were traumatized and abused — are the types of accused for whom judges might be inclined to consider alternatives to the most severe mandatory minimum sentence in Canadian law, the mandatory minimum sentence of life in prison.

[*English*]

Alternatives to mandatory life sentences could also free up approximately \$8 million that is currently spent on incarcerating some of the most marginalized — failing to respond to the individual and community circumstances in which crime exists, and creating more harm. Such resources could be better invested in supports like those called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls so that we can help address marginalization and therefore help prevent victimization and criminalization.

What is the timeline for implementing this Throne Speech's promise to address systemic racism in sentencing? And will this include action to address all mandatory minimum penalties, including mandatory life sentences?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. I've made inquiries. I cannot respond to the specific question about a timeline, and I regret that I don't have that answer today. However, the government remains committed to achieving a modern and efficient criminal justice system that addresses the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples and Black, racialized and marginalized Canadians. It also remains committed to advancing reform that will deal with inequities in our criminal justice system, while holding offenders to account and protecting victims of crime.

Finally, I've been further advised that the government continues its work with provincial and territorial partners — indeed, all actors in the criminal justice system — to ensure that justice is truly equal and fair.

[Translation]

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### BORDER SECURITY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais:** My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Next week, Alberta will be launching a pilot project for rapid testing of travellers arriving in Canada by air or by land. How telling that the bill is a provincial one, even though the country's borders are Canadian and therefore a federal responsibility. Once again, the government you represent has shown that it has no vision for travellers.

Can you tell us if the Trudeau government will assume its responsibilities or if it intends to make the provinces take on the physical and financial responsibility of the health security measures we will need if our borders reopen?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for this question. I do not wish to contradict you, but several of the premises of your question do not make sense. The Government of Canada has certainly assumed its responsibilities with respect to our border. That is very obvious from the results of discussions between Canada and the United States. For health and safety reasons, our border remains closed other than for well-known exceptions. We await with interest the result of the pilot project in Alberta, but the government takes its responsibilities concerning the border very seriously.

**Senator Dagenais:** So, what you are saying is that Alberta is assuming its responsibilities as a province? I'm finding it difficult to follow you. That argument does not make sense. I cannot agree with you. In other words, it's the province of Alberta that is taking the initiative to provide rapid testing to help travellers at the border. You say that does not make sense, but it is actually a federal responsibility.

**Senator Gold:** Thank you.

You misunderstood me, and that's mainly because of my flawed French. As you know, senator, the provinces are entirely responsible for everything relating to health. Health is an exclusive provincial jurisdiction. That's why I am not surprised that a provincial government is implementing measures to protect its citizens. I simply wanted to say that it does not mean that the federal government is not fulfilling its responsibilities with respect to the border. I gave a well-known example that clearly shows how the federal government fulfils its responsibilities.

[ Senator Gold ]

[English]

## HEALTH

### COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

**Hon. Patricia Bovey:** My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate and in a way follows the question of Senator Seidman.

As the second wave of COVID-19 continues to spike across many communities in Canada, the situation in many hospitals, like care homes, is quickly becoming dire.

In Winnipeg, for example, we've been warned by staff at St. Boniface Hospital that they are reaching the brink when it comes to the spread of the virus. As of yesterday, there were at least 25 patients who were infected, as well as 11 staff members. At Winnipeg's Victoria General Hospital, 21 patients and 19 staff members have been affected, and the numbers are rising.

As you can imagine, the stress on all those involved must be incredible. Staff, patients, families and front-line workers are bearing the brunt of this once again, and the challenges they're facing on personal and professional levels are immense. We know the Manitoba nursing vacancy rate is now at 15%. I hear about this every day.

• (1500)

While I'm aware of the provincial responsibility for the delivery of health care, I wonder if you can tell us what support the federal government is providing for these institutions under the COVID-19 response plan for this second wave?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Senator, thank you for your question and for keeping our attention — you and others — on the incredible work that our health care workers are doing to help keep Canadians safe throughout this pandemic. The government remains committed to working collaboratively with governments at all levels to keep Canadians safe.

In particular, the \$19-billion Safe Restart Agreement with the provinces and territories, which Manitoba accepted earlier this year, includes \$700 million to support health care systems' capacity; \$740 million to support infection-control measures, which could include staffing issues in long-term care, home care and palliative care settings; and \$500 million to support people experiencing challenges relating to mental health, substance abuse or homelessness.

I understand, senator, that Manitoba's allocation of its share of the Safe Restart funding includes \$43.58 million to support health care system capacity, and \$26.88 million to support vulnerable populations such as long-term care, home care and palliative care settings.

**Senator Bovey:** Thank you for this, Senator Gold. It's much appreciated knowing those numbers. I got some calls on the weekend, one in particular that I find very distressing, about a

woman whose husband was in the hospital, contracted COVID while in St. Boniface Hospital, and on his ward there was but one nursing assistant for the whole of Sunday for a full ward.

My subsequent question is: Will this allow for the federal government to assist with the staffing level so that patients can be assisted and families can even find out how their loved ones are, because this woman and many others are getting no responses at all?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you, and how distressing that story is for all of us. So many of us have loved ones in facilities of that kind.

The federal government's primary role in health care is to provide funds to the provinces, as we well know. In emergency situations, the federal government has mobilized units under its control, whether military or the Red Cross — perhaps not quite the same level of control — to assist in crises as in my home province of Quebec, as well as Ontario. But fundamentally, the federal government has neither the expertise nor the jurisdiction to enter into the staffing levels.

One certainly hopes that the money that is provided, that Manitoba now has available to it, will be used quickly to provide the services and the personnel that are needed.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### CANADA-U.S. TRADE

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** My question for the government leader concerns actions taken by the United States which suggest they may soon take aim at imports of Canadian blueberries. U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer recently asked the U.S. International Trade Commission to investigate whether American blueberry producers have been "... caused serious injury or threat ..." by increased blueberry imports.

While Canada may not be the target of any potential trade action, this is a concern as 98% of our blueberry exports go to the United States. British Columbia is one of the top blueberry producers in the world, and our province's blueberry producers have already experienced a terrible year due to weather-related issues and a severe labour shortage during this crisis that the government failed to manage.

So leader, have any cabinet ministers recently spoken to his or her American counterpart about this specific issue?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. I come from a province that also produces great blueberries. I'm unaware of this issue, I confess. I will make inquiries and certainly report back. Canada has a very robust interaction and presence with U.S. counterparts on this. We have been successful in so many ways, and I'm sure we will be prosecuting this case diligently.

**Senator Martin:** I trust your word that you will look into this, leader, but with 19 months and counting since the last details of our fiscal situation and a lack of a fiscal monitor — there are a lot of emergencies. We know the long-term care facilities and

other issues are really taking precedence. So it's not just the blueberry issue. There is a whole list of issues like aluminum, steel, dairy and raspberries that have been targeted by the United States in recent months.

The softwood lumber issue is another one which I have raised in the past but remains unresolved. So if the new NAFTA deal is as successful as you've claimed it is, why do we continue to see trade issues arise impacting our exporters? What will your government do to help ensure Canadian berries and other produce are not subject to U.S. tariffs? And specifically, have there been recent conversations and, if so, on what dates, and can we be assured that there will be such conversations?

**Senator Gold:** Again, I will make inquiries about the specific issue. The long list of issues that you raised are perennial issues between Canada and the United States. Our history in these discussions has proven how able our negotiators are and our government is in defending Canadian interests. Sovereign states can take actions. The benefit of trade agreements such as CUSMA — NAFTA 2 — is that they provide mechanisms for us to defend our interests, not only in the context of those trade agreements, but also by using other international fora and organizations which Canadians continue to use to our advantage.

### EXPORT OF DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY TO TURKEY

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** My question is for the government leader in the Senate. Senator Gold, in October of last year, Canada banned exports of defence technology to the Republic of Turkey following their invasion in northern Syria, and renewed that ban again in April of this year. My question is this: How does Canadian drone technology find its way to be exported to Turkey? Who made the decision to grant the exemptions on export weaponry that is now being used by Azerbaijan against innocent civilians in Artsakh? Was it at the direction of the Prime Minister? Was it brought up by President Erdogan in that discussion? And did Prime Minister Trudeau issue that exemption?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question and for your concern with the situation that's unfolding. I will make inquiries, senator, and I will be happy to report back when I get specific information.

**Senator Housakos:** I appreciate that, government leader. Foreign Affairs Minister Champagne has issued another ban on military exports to Turkey, given what's happened in Artsakh. I guess Canada is finally recognizing the atrocities that are going on and how Turkey is abusing and misusing Canadian technology, but it may be a little bit too late for the people of Artsakh.

However, Prime Minister Trudeau recently had another conversation, government leader, with President Erdogan about exports. What assurances can the government give us and what assurances can you, government leader, give us that this time around, Minister Champagne's ban will actually be respected and that no exemptions will be given to Turkey on this particular issue?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the discharge of his responsibilities, takes these issues very seriously. Again, I will make inquiries, and if assurances can be given, I will be happy to provide the information to the chamber.

#### YEMEN—HUMANITARIAN AID

**Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer:** My question is to the leader as to what is happening in Yemen. How is our government supporting the humanitarian effort in Yemen?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you very much for your question. The government is deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict and its humanitarian impact on civilians, especially women and children. They continue to bear the brunt of the fighting. I've been advised that since 2015, Canada has provided over \$220 million in humanitarian funding for food assistance, clean water, sanitation, shelter and protection and health care, including sexual and reproductive health services. Indeed, in 2019, our support helped partners provide reproductive health services to more than 330,000 Yemeni women and girls. We remain committed to working with trusted partners to provide these services to those vulnerable populations.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** The time for Question Period has expired.

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• (1510)

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

#### SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I am prepared to rule on the question of privilege raised yesterday by Senator Dalphond concerning motion 37, which proposes a sessional order concerning certain aspects of committee business. Paragraph eight of the motion, which would affect the duration of committee memberships in some situations, was the focus of particular attention. The concern reflects the unfortunate situation

of the COVID-19 pandemic, which means that some senators are unable to participate in debate and vote on a motion that may have significant effects on them. Similar issues were raised in a very comprehensive manner in Senator Wallin's question of privilege, which was addressed in a ruling of June 16, 2020.

The question of privilege was raised without notice under rule 13-4, in light of the specific provision of rule 4-11(2)(a), which deals with a question of privilege relating to a matter on notice. The rule states that if an item is on notice a question of privilege may only be raised "at the time the order is first called for consideration".

As senators know, there are four criteria that a question of privilege must meet to be dealt with under the processes of Chapter 13 of the Rules. First, the issue must be raised at the earliest opportunity. In this case, the matter was raised several hours after the motion was first called for consideration. Rule 4-11(2)(a) suggests that the most appropriate time to raise the issue may have been when the notice was first called. This provision is, however, very rarely raised, so there may be understandable ambiguity about its application.

The second and third criteria require that a question of privilege must "directly concern the privileges of the Senate, any of its committees or any Senator", and must be raised "to correct a grave and serious breach". In considering these points, we must always take account of the fact that privilege exists to allow us to fulfil our duties as members of the Senate. This point has been made in various rulings, including those of May 23, 2013; February 24, 2016; and March 22, 2018. In the first of these rulings, the Speaker noted "... that the privileges and rights exercised by the Senate itself take precedence over those of individual senators". The rights and privileges of a senator can therefore be restricted by the Senate. Perhaps the most fundamental right of the Senate is control over its internal affairs, including the Rules and the management of Senate business. The Senate adopted its Rules, and the Senate can amend them, suspend certain provisions or temporarily alter their effect, which is what, in essence, the motion at issue proposes to do. On the particular issue on the unfortunate absence of colleagues, we must be clear that, when quorum is present, the Senate can exercise its powers. The decision as to when it will actually do this is in the hands of honourable senators.

The final criterion is that there must be no alternate parliamentary process reasonably available to pursuing a question of privilege. An amendment to motion 37 had been proposed shortly before the question of privilege was raised, and nothing would prevent another amendment. Colleagues can also continue debate, with the goal of persuading each other of their position. Eventually, the Senate can decide to adopt or reject the motion, and that decision would be an expression of its right to manage its internal affairs.

As already noted, a question of privilege must meet all four criteria of rule 13-2(1). Since that is not the case in this situation, the ruling is that the *prima facie* merits of the matter have not been established. Debate can therefore continue.

## ADJOURNMENT

### MOTION ADOPTED

**Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)**, pursuant to notice of October 28, 2020, moved:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 3, 2020, at 2 p.m.

She said: Honourable senators, I move the motion standing in my name.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

## COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CANADA BILL

### SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Moodie, seconded by the Honourable Senator Mégie, for the second reading of Bill S-210, An Act to establish the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada.

**Hon. Salma Atallahjan:** Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill S-210, An Act to establish the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada. While I rise today as critic of this bill, as someone who has spent most of my professional life advocating for women and youth, I welcome this important and long overdue initiative. The discussion surrounding the need for a commissioner of children and youth in Canada has been happening since the late 1980s.

In 1989, the UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which stipulates that children have a right to, first, protection from abuse, exploitation and harmful substances. Second, the provision of health care, education, adequate standards of living. Third, participation in a society through attention to their views and perspectives.

Canada signed the convention in 1990 and ratified it in 1991. However, Canada is lagging behind its international counterparts on the implementation of many of the recommendations of this convention. Specifically, the convention recommends the creation of an office for the commissioner of children and youth, which we are now debating in this chamber 30 years later.

In 2007, the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights tabled a report entitled *Children: The Silenced Citizens*. The committee undertook an intensive study of children's rights and

Canada's international human rights treaty obligations, and found that the upholding of our obligations and the implementation of these treaties had not been taken seriously. To quote our former colleague, Senator Andreychuk, the then-chair of the committee, she said:

At the ground level children's rights are being pushed to the side and even violated in a variety of situations — one only needs to take a brief survey of the issue of child poverty, or the situation of Aboriginal or special needs children to realize that this is true. The Convention has been effectively marginalized when it comes to its direct impact on children's lives. The Committee is deeply concerned about this situation, and . . . emphasizes the importance of living up to our obligations under international human rights treaties.

It is no surprise that the committee unanimously recommended the establishment of a children's commissioner at the federal level as one of its primary proposals.

In 2011, I was proud to propose another study to the Human Rights Committee which focused on the issue of cyberbullying in Canada, specifically regarding Canada's international human rights obligations under Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Throughout our in-depth study, we heard heartbreaking testimony from children and parents, alarming statistics from youth advocacy groups and policy proposals geared towards meaningful solutions. Many witnesses recommended a federal independent children's commissioner, highlighting the benefits it could provide in order to tackle cyberbullying specifically. Expert witnesses believed the establishment of this office could help encourage greater consistency among the various legislative approaches to cyberbullying. Some witnesses also suggested that a commissioner would allow for comprehensive data collection and the sharing of evidence-based research amongst the provinces, resulting in a less fragmented approach.

• (1520)

Perhaps most importantly, it was suggested that a children's commissioner could “. . . work more effectively with Aboriginal peoples in terms of understanding some of the special impacts upon our Aboriginal children.”

In our final report tabled in 2013, the committee — again, unanimously — recommended the establishment of a commissioner of children and youth. In 2015, the establishment of this office was a campaign promise of the Trudeau Liberals. Unfortunately, over five years later, there has been no movement on this crucial initiative from the government, even after numerous organizations have publicly called upon the Prime Minister to appoint a commissioner, including the Canadian Bar Association and the Canadian Council of Children & Youth Advocates.

Notably, the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls called for the establishment of a national child and youth commissioner who would also serve as a special measure to strengthen the framework of accountability for the rights of Indigenous children

in Canada. And still, there has been no action from this government. Sadly, colleagues, it is our children who are paying the price.

Over the past decade, according to UNICEF's rankings, Canada has slipped from twelfth to twenty-fifth place of all OECD countries in terms of child well-being. In a country like Canada, this is unacceptable.

It is worth noting some staggering statistics: One in three Canadian children experience abuse before the age of 15. One in five Canadian children live in poverty. One in three children do not enjoy a safe and healthy childhood. Suicide is the leading cause of death for 10- to 14-year-olds in Canada and the second cause of death amongst 15- to 17-year-old youth. Only one in five Canadian children are able to access the mental health services they need, and over 25% of children in Canada are overweight or obese.

Children First Canada, a youth advocacy organization, saw Canada sliding down the ranks and began looking at what the world-leading countries are doing and what their best practices have been in terms of policy. How have they protected children's rights, and how can they help the children in their countries thrive? They found that the common denominator was the presence of either a children's commissioner or an ombudsperson. These offices exist in more than 60 countries around the world and are a proven and effective strategy for advancing child well-being.

As Children First Canada told the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology:

The U.K., for instance, going back several years ago, was lagging behind other OECD countries in children's well-being. They put in place children's commissioners in England, Scotland and Wales and established an independent office that had the mandate to promote the rights of children, listen directly to children, be able to conduct studies, hold government accountable and drive a national plan of action. In the case of the U.K., they rapidly moved up the OECD rankings for children's well-being by well over 10 points.

The vision for the mandate of a commissioner for children and youth is broad yet centred around a few key principles. One of the primary roles for an independent federal children's commissioner would be to listen to and involve children within their mandate, advocate for them and ensure that their voices are heard.

Perhaps equally important would be for the commissioner to be a source that children can rely upon for impartial, evidence-based information and resources. The federal commissioner would partner with provincial commissioners to help advance best practices and achieve national adoption.

It is my hope that the commissioner's office would be tasked with evaluating the specific ways public policy impacts children and communicating those impacts to Canadians, as the specific impact on children is often not considered to the extent it should be. For example, we have all seen recently the unique challenges faced by our children and youth in the wake of COVID-19 and

the subsequent shutdowns. The pandemic has shone a light on our vulnerabilities when it comes to the well-being of Canadian children.

As the Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology heard during their study on the government's response to the COVID-19 crisis this past spring, for 8 million children in Canada, their childhood was interrupted. The youth advocacy organizations that testified at the committee highlighted that while children have been amongst the least likely to fall seriously ill because of COVID-19, they have been most affected by the response.

Children's Healthcare Canada noted that beyond surgical and elective procedures delivered by our children's hospitals, many children, youth and their families continue to experience significant gaps in services. The majority of in-person visits have been postponed for children with medical complexities, as has their access to community-based services, including speech language pathology, physical therapy, occupational therapy and social work. While the disruptions were an inconvenience in the short term, many families now fear their children are experiencing an irremediable loss of functioning and are observing significant behavioural challenges, particularly in children with neurodevelopmental diseases.

Many noted the risks to healthy physical and mental development of children in the face of prolonged school and camp closures, as well as the stress of abrupt and profound changes to routines and structures. In fact, I have heard from mothers of young children, including one as young as 2 who was having a meltdown because she couldn't see her grandparents and cousins and couldn't go to daycare, and she couldn't understand why.

Kids Help Phone told the committee that since March, when COVID-19 became a stark reality across Canada, Kids Help Phone saw a steady increase in interactions, with demand for their texting service up by 61% and demand for professional counselling services up by 55%.

They also noted the issues young people were contacting them about had changed. Pre-COVID-19 issues like depression and suicide were among the top reasons young people reached out. Now those reasons are eating disorders and body image; isolation; emotional, physical and sexual abuse; grief; and substance use.

Colleagues, throughout this conversation on how the government's response has impacted youth, the need for a children's commissioner was raised numerous times. In fact, when Senator Seidman asked the organizations for their top two recommendations for the government in the context of COVID-19, Children First Canada recommended a children's commissioner. Kids Help Phone agreed with the recommendation, noting that children need a voice in these critical conversations. Parliamentarians were urged to consider the unique ways in which children have been impacted. Had a children's commissioner been in place prior to the pandemic, perhaps those considerations would have been better reflected in the response.



Honourable senators, to say that the implementation of this international obligation is long overdue is truly an understatement. We, as a country, pride ourselves on being a leader on matters of human rights, but on most measurable components of child welfare, we are at or below average compared to our international counterparts.

In 2021, Canada faces its next review by the United Nations on our progress towards the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Out of respect for our international treaty obligations, we need to make sure this bill finally crosses the finish line. As Senator Moodie has said, the data is clear. This proposal has the support of the provinces and the overwhelming support of Canadians.

I want to commend Senator Moodie and her staff for all their research, hard work and dedication to this important initiative. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill so we can give our children the voice and the representation they so rightly deserve.

(On motion of Senator Omidvar, for Senator Kutcher, debate adjourned.)

• (1530)

[*Translation*]

## CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—  
DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu** moved second reading of Bill S-212, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (disclosure of information by jurors).

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak at second reading of Bill S-212, which I introduced last Tuesday. It is the same as Bill S-207, which I had introduced before Parliament was prorogued.

This bill, entitled An Act to amend the Criminal Code, regarding disclosure of information by jurors, seeks to implement an important recommendation made by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. In its report entitled *Improving Support for Jurors in Canada*, which was released in May 2018, the committee issued recommendation number 4 regarding a more lenient secrecy rule for jury deliberations. It states the following:

That the Government of Canada amend section 649 of the *Criminal Code* so that jurors are permitted to discuss jury deliberations with designated mental health professionals once the trial is over.

It is important to remember that his recommendation was supported by all members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights during the Forty-second Parliament, regardless of political affiliation. This report was based on an eight-day study of the issue.

This bill is based first and foremost on humane considerations. Jurors are the backbone of our justice system. They must be given as much support as offenders receive.

On October 29, 2018, the member for St. Albert—Edmonton, Michael Cooper, tabled Bill C-417 in the House of Commons. The House of Commons voted in favour of the bill, which was sent to the Senate but died on the Order Paper with the dissolution of Parliament in September 2019.

Bill S-212 is about a non-partisan issue that has already been studied at length in the other place. It amends the Criminal Code to provide that the prohibition against the disclosure of information relating to jury proceedings does not, in certain circumstances, apply in respect of disclosure by jurors to health care professionals.

We all know that the mental health of jurors is a matter that transcends political allegiances. This bill will help build a more humane justice system, and it will help our jurors, the people who serve Canada's justice system. It is our duty to work together to assist them.

Mark Farrant, a former juror who now advocates for the right of jurors in Canada, said this:

Jury duty is the cornerstone of our justice system. Jurors are often exposed to disturbing and graphic evidence. It is fair to say that jury duty has not kept pace with the increasing demands of our modern world, and it has been my mission to ask for change. This bill, which is a simple amendment to the Criminal Code, will make an enormous difference to jurors seeking support long after their trials have concluded.

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights heard from former jurors whose lives changed forever after they did their civic duty. Because of the disturbing testimony they heard during terrible trials, former jurors developed mental health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder. Several former jurors became what I would call victims of our justice system because the system prevented them from getting effective therapy.

According to the former jurors who testified, the secrecy rule currently enforced on jurors under the Criminal Code prevents them from accessing the mental health services they truly need. Pursuant to section 649 of the Criminal Code, every juror who discloses any information regarding jury deliberations in their lifetime, even to a mental health professional, is guilty of an offence.

Being a juror in a criminal trial such as, for example, the Paul Bernardo trial can be one of the most stressful experiences in a juror's life. I met with Tina Daenzer, a juror who served on Paul Bernardo's trial. She told me about the post-traumatic stress suffered by those who served justice by becoming a juror at a criminal trial.

This is precisely the purpose of the bill. It aims to create an exemption to the secrecy rule to allow former jurors who experience mental health problems or have psychological needs as a result of their duties to talk about all aspects of their role

with a health care professional. The integrity of the secrecy rule will be protected because, once again, the juror will be disclosing information in a confidential setting after the trial. However, this exemption would allow former jurors to discuss essential topics with a health care professional. If there ever was an amendment to the Criminal Code that everyone could agree on, it would most certainly be the amendment proposed in this bill.

Consider someone who is part of a 12-member jury who has to watch and hear recordings and look at photos of murders, violent sexual assaults, children being abused or other heinous crimes. The whole experience can be devastating to one's mental health. In a way, these individuals protect our society from the criminals who are the subjects of those trials. They are the shields that protect the public from the bloodiest, most disturbing details surrounding crimes like the ones committed by Paul Bernardo.

Let's think about what might happen to the 12 people called to form a jury. They do their duty without any training, psychological preparation or experience. They are plunged into a macabre world. Then, after they have been sequestered and have deliberated, and after the ruling is handed down, the justice system sends them merrily on their way, at their most vulnerable and without any assistance.

Today I cannot help but think about the jury members who served in the trial of my daughter Julie's murderer. Those individuals were faced with the most horrific, unimaginable details. That is what I call surviving the unspeakable. Consequently, we must now ensure that Bill S-212 moves through the Senate. I am hopeful that this bill will have the support of all my Senate colleagues, no matter their political affiliation.

I thank the hon. Senator Moncion for her unwavering support of this bill. She has a particular interest in this bill because of her traumatic experience serving on a jury 30 years ago. Senator Moncion said, and I quote:

During the last Parliament, legal experts, mental health professionals and members on both sides of the House of Commons supported this bill because its merits transcend partisanship. In view of the interest generated by the proposed change, I believe it is vital that this legislation move through the Senate in the spirit of cooperation.

Honourable colleagues, today I urge you to adopt this bill at second reading as quickly as possible so that it may be considered in committee. Thank you very much.

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

(On motion of Senator Moncion, debate adjourned.)

[ Senator Boisvenu ]

• (1540)

[English]

## CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—  
DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson** moved second reading of Bill S-214, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (property qualifications of Senators).

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to a bill I'm honoured to sponsor, Bill S-214, which aims to remove the property and net worth qualifications for senators.

This is actually the third time I'm introducing this bill. The first time it died on the Order Paper due to an election. The second time it died due to prorogation, but I am reintroducing this bill because I solemnly believe in its importance.

I believe that we should not continue to exclude millions of Canadians from qualifying for a seat among us, in this august chamber, due to their inability to own land. Nearly 4.5 million households are held by renters in this country. The data from Statistics Canada revealed there was even a slight decline in home ownership overall, going from 69% in 2011, to 67.8% in 2016. The statistics also reveal that:

. . . home ownership rates declined in the Atlantic provinces, Ontario, British Columbia and Nunavut, while they increased in Quebec and the Northwest Territories.

Home ownership in Quebec and the territories was below the national average.

In my home region of Nunavut, very few people can afford to own their own homes. Why? Well, we don't have trees with which to build log houses or make lumber, and houses must be insulated from permafrost heave by steel or wooden piles. Serviced land is an enormous expense in the Arctic. Shipping materials from southern Canada and finding skilled tradesmen is prohibitively costly for most residents. In Nunavut, over half the population is living in public housing owned by the Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Housing Corporation, not the householder.

Further, of all the households in Nunavut, many of the rest of the homes are government staff housing. In fact, the Government of Nunavut controls 80% of the homes in Nunavut. The federal government owns or leases many other homes for federal employees in Nunavut. This means that only a fraction of homeowners in Nunavut own their own homes and are therefore eligible to sit in the Senate. I'm privileged to be one of those few people.

As the chamber of sober second thought, of course, we should strive to include the very best from all Canadians — bright, dedicated and driven individuals who are passionate about contributing to a better Canada. Citizens who rent their homes or live in homes on reserve, where typically the land is owned by

the Minister of Indigenous Services, should surely not be barred from serving in this chamber based on their ability to own property.

Yesterday, in this chamber, there was spirited talk about equality amongst senators, but let us look at equality from another angle. We have no equity amongst our fellow Canadian citizens because we are the privileged ones who own land and have a positive net worth. This requirement to own fee simple land comes from the medieval feudal era. Here are the words in the Constitution Act, describing that requirement. Listen to this:

He shall be legally or equitably seised as of Freehold for his own Use and Benefit of Lands or Tenements held in Free and Common Socage —

I'm sure everyone knows what that means.

— or seised or possessed for his own Use and Benefit of Lands or Tenements held in Franc-alleu or in Roture —

We all know that means.

— within the Province for which he is appointed, of the Value of Four thousand Dollars, over and above all Rents, Dues, Debts, Charges, Mortgages, and Incumbrances due or payable out of or charged on or affecting the same . . .

What on earth does this all mean? I had a really difficult time finding any expert in property law in Canada who could explain these ancient forms of land tenure. Why? It's an elitist anachronism dating from a time when only the landed gentry were deemed worthy of holding the privilege of advising the King.

Yesterday, we also talked about the worthy goal of modernizing the Senate, which of course, no doubt, most of us support. Well, let's start by getting rid of this elitist tradition and changing, for the better, who is eligible to apply to be a senator. Let's work on further diversifying the voices represented in this chamber.

In the 2014 Supreme Court reference on the Senate, the Supreme Court specifically ruled that Parliament alone could fix this archaic, elitist provision in the Constitution Act without needing to invoke the amending formula and involve provinces.

I would be remiss today in not paying tribute to our former colleague from Alberta, the Honourable Tommy Banks, with whom I had the privilege of serving, who launched a similar private member's bill, which faltered, on the question of whether the Parliament could indeed amend the Constitution Act in this way. When Senator Banks retired in 2011, I was grateful to get his blessing to carry on with his initiative.

So I ask you, honourable senators, why should a nun, a member of a convent, have to go through legal convolutions and be de facto partly exempted from her vow of poverty, through the transfer of a parcel of land from her order so she could be appointed to this chamber? Yes. That happened to Sister Peggy Butts from Nova Scotia. After legal convolutions, she was appointed to the Senate in 1997.

Why should a senator from Quebec have to buy a piece of what I heard described as swampland — and I don't mean to offend any of my colleagues from Quebec — sometimes far away from his or her home in that province, or buy or trade that piece of land with a retiring senator to qualify to sit in a designated district. If you live in the designated district in a fine home, and I know some of you do, then you don't have to buy a piece of swampland. Those districts were established based on now-outdated religious criteria.

I ask you also, what does it mean today to be required to own \$4,000 worth of land when that number was established in 1867? Is it still \$4,000 in 2020 dollars? If we were to calculate the inflation rate on that, the value would be over \$125,000 today.

I want to stress, honourable senators, that this would not remove the fundamental requirement for senators to live in the province or territory they represent. Representing all regions and minorities is one of the fundamental reasons the Senate was established. Can one not represent one's region or, for that matter, a minority, as a renter or through living on land on an Indian reserve? This bill would not impact that requirement in any way, but it would allow significantly more Canadians to be eligible to apply to become senators.

Additionally, it's a bit complicated because, as per the ruling of the Supreme Court issued on April 25, 2014, this would not easily apply to Quebec due to the unique requirements for senators to not only live in that province but also in one of 24 historic electoral divisions. It was deemed by the Supreme Court that:

Indeed, a full repeal of that provision would also constitute an amendment in relation to s. 23(6), which contains a special arrangement applicable only to the province of Quebec.

This special arrangement procedure includes a motion that I will seek, and that I will table, should this bill proceed to third reading. It would seek to remove the property requirements as well for Quebec senators. If adopted, the motion would need to be adopted in the House of Commons and again in the National Assembly of Quebec. It is the procedure outlined in section 46(1) of the Constitution, which states:

The procedures for amendment under sections 38, 41, 42 and 43 may be initiated either by the Senate or the House of Commons or by the legislative assembly of a province.

• (1550)

Honourable senators, this bill is not just about eliminating the property qualifications: It also aims to eliminate the \$4,000 net worth requirement for senators from all jurisdictions. In fact, the Canadian median income in 2018 was \$36,760. I think it's an archaic belief that only wealthy people and land owners are qualified to serve in our venerable institution. This provision should apply to all provinces and territories. Even if the Quebec National Assembly should decide not to endorse what I believe is a democratic and egalitarian approach, it should and can apply to all other provinces and territories.

Honourable senators, I prepared a briefing package for you regarding my bill that my office will be sending out shortly. I will also be reaching out, hopefully to each of you, to discuss my initiative. It's my sincere hope that my Senate colleagues believe, as I do, that every Canadian, regardless of their net worth or property ownership status, should have the right to qualify to represent their province or territory in the Senate.

I look forward, honourable senators, to your support for this progressive bill. Thank you.

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

(On motion of Senator Omidvar, for Senator Duncan, debate adjourned.)

### THE SENATE

#### MOTION TO AFFECT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Saint-Germain, seconded by the Honourable Senator Oh:

That, for the remainder of the session, and notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, usual practice or previous order:

1. the Standing Committee on National Security and Defence be composed of twelve senators, other than the ex officio members;
2. the Committee of Selection; the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament; and the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration be empowered to elect up to three deputy chairs;
3. all other committees, except the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators and the joint committees, be empowered to elect up to two deputy chairs;
4. if a committee has elected more than one deputy chair:
  - (a) the reference to the deputy chair in rule 12-18(2)(b)(ii) be understood as referring to all deputy chairs of the committee acting together;
  - (b) the reference to the deputy chair in rule 12-23(6) be understood as referring to any deputy chair of the committee acting alone; and
  - (c) any reference to the deputy chair of a committee in any policy or guideline adopted by the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration be understood as referring to all deputy chairs acting together,

until the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration decides otherwise;

5. the Committee of Selection be a standing committee;
6. the Committee of Selection have power to make recommendations to the Senate on issues relating to meetings of either the Senate or committees by videoconference or teleconference, to the coordination of such meetings and to measures that would facilitate or enhance their operations;
7. if a Senate committee establishes a Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, any two members of the subcommittee be authorized to direct the clerk of the committee to convene a meeting of the committee for the purposes of considering a draft agenda by sending a signed letter to the clerk, upon receipt of which the clerk of the committee shall convene a meeting of the committee at the committee's next meeting time, during a week that the Senate sits, according to the agreed upon schedule for committee meetings that is more than 24 hours after the receipt of the letter;
8. except in the case of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators:
  - (a) except as provided in sub-paragraph (b), if a senator ceases to be a member of a particular recognized party or recognized parliamentary group for any reason, he or she simultaneously cease to be a member of any committee of which he or she is then a member, with the resulting vacancy to be filled by the leader or facilitator of the party or group to which the senator had belonged, following the processes established in rule 12-5;
  - (b) if a senator ceases to be a member of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group because that party or group ceases to exist, he or she remain a member of any committee of which he or she was a member, subject to the provisions of sub-paragraph (c), but cease to be chair or deputy chair of any committee on which he or she held such a position, and cease to be a member of any Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of which he or she was a member; and
  - (c) if a non-affiliated senator becomes a member of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, he or she thereby cease to be a member of any committee of which he or she is then a member, with the resulting vacancy to be filled either by order of the Senate or the adoption by the Senate of a report of the Committee of Selection; and
9. any changes to the membership of a committee pursuant to paragraph 8 of this order be recorded in the *Journals of the Senate*.

**Hon. Pierrette Ringuette (The Hon. the Acting Speaker):** Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**An Hon. Senator:** On division.

(Motion agreed to, on division.)

MOTION TO CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPOSE  
SANCTIONS AGAINST CHINESE OFFICIALS IN RELATION  
TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AND SYSTEMATIC  
PERSECUTION OF UIGHUR MUSLIMS IN CHINA—  
DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Leo Housakos,** pursuant to notice of September 30, 2020, moved:

That the Senate of Canada call upon the Government of Canada to impose sanctions, pursuant to the *Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law)*, against Chinese officials in relation to the human rights abuses and systematic persecution of Uighur Muslims in China.

He said: Honourable senators, I apologize, because much of what I have to say today will sound very familiar to most of you. The problem is that no matter how much I and others have been sounding the alarm over China, our government doesn't seem to be listening. So we will keep sounding the alarm, and we will continue to call for action from our government in dealing with China's increased aggression and malign actions, both domestic and internationally.

Honourable senators, I stood before you almost one year ago, along with Senator Ngo, and called upon our government to impose Magnitsky sanctions against China for their treatment of Hong Kong's pro-democracy activists and their treatment of minority Muslims in mainland China. Here we are today, and our government is no closer to imposing these sanctions than they were last year. We shouldn't even have to move these motions. The government should have already taken this action. China's behaviour screams out for Magnitsky sanctions. If there was ever a case, this is the case for it. The father of all Magnitsky laws himself, Bill Browder, has said as much. Allow me to take this opportunity to remind everyone not just what the law says, but of the man for whom this law is named and why.

The full name of the Magnitsky law in Canada is Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act. You will find similar laws in other countries, including the United States of America. These laws are named after the late Sergei Leonidovich Magnitsky, a Russian tax adviser and auditor who died in a Russian prison after being held without trial for 11 months. While in custody, Mr. Magnitsky was denied visits from his wife, mother and son. He was denied medical care after suffering serious health issues and being severely beaten, including right up to his death.

Mr. Magnitsky's supposed crime was that he had been working with Mr. Browder, the co-founder of an investment firm operating in Moscow, to expose large-scale and widespread theft, corruption and state fraud. The fraud eventually extended to

police and judges, as both Magnitsky and Browder were themselves framed for alleged theft. While Mr. Browder was expelled from Russia, Mr. Magnitsky was arbitrarily detained by corrupt prison officials. You can read the agonizing details of his detention in Mr. Browder's book, *Red Notice*.

Mr. Magnitsky kept a heartbreaking diary during his time in prison, during which he detailed attempts of his tormentors to persuade him to change his story and turn on his friend Bill Browder. But Magnitsky refused. He held steadfast in his belief that he must stand for truth and do the right thing, all the while knowing that it would be so easy to just do as they wanted and all of his suffering would be over and he could be with his family again. But he chose principle. Each time he refused, his suffering grew worse until, eventually, while his spirit remained determined, his body could take no more.

Mr. Magnitsky's death was not an easy one, it was long, slow and deliberate. He was found to have suffered a closed cranial injury, numerous bruises and wounds were found all over his body, as well as abrasions and various degrees of soft-tissue damage. This man suffered greatly for doing the right thing: for being principled. His friend Bill Browder made it his life's mission to make sure his death was not in vain. He has spent the last few years since fighting for legislation named in Sergei's honour to make sure that there are consequences for foreign officials who commit human rights abuses and violate principles of fundamental justice and rule of law.

That's what Mr. Magnitsky's law stands for. Our former colleague the Honourable Raynell Andreychuk made it her personal priority to see it passed here in Canada. She fought hard for a long time in this chamber. I saw first-hand how important it was for her to see it through. But, colleagues, she certainly didn't take that on only to see it used to play politics, to whip it out when it's politically expedient to do so and to set it on a shelf collecting dust when it's not so politically expedient.

• (1600)

Interestingly, at the passing of this legislation, three years ago this month, Russian President Vladimir Putin accused Canada of playing political games and calling it a "blatantly unfriendly step." But that didn't deter us, and we haven't been deterred from applying this law on a few occasions since passing it. In addition to imposing it against several Russian officials, Canada has imposed Magnitsky against officials from Venezuela, South Sudan, Myanmar and Saudi Arabia, and rightfully so on each and every occasion.

Why won't we use this legislation to hold to account Chinese officials who have shown such disregard for human rights in their persecution of religious minorities, including the Uighur Muslims, as well as their increasingly aggressive measures being used against Hong Kong pro-democracy activists? Yes, there are considerations like the continued illegal detention of our two Michaels, commercial trade interests and the safety of 300,000 Canadians living in Hong Kong.

However, colleagues, if we've learned anything from the story of the man from whom this law takes its name, it's that doing the right thing isn't always easy. We won't do it because it's easy; we do it because it's right. That has always been the Canadian way.

Never in our history as a nation have we backed down in the face of tyranny, and we certainly haven't played the part of appeaser, which appears to be exactly the role we're playing now, where the communist regime of China is concerned. I spoke about it yesterday, and when I was speaking to my other motion regarding Canada's response to the conflict in Artsakh and regarding the impending genocide of the Armenian people. And, colleagues, that story is going to turn out very ugly as well, because I have a lot of information from independent media over the last 24 hours of what's happening there. Again, if the West doesn't move quickly, we are going to have another ethnic genocide on our hands in just a few days.

As I had said last year and again yesterday, Canada's actions on the global stage must be guided by our strong adherence to our values and principles, not by double standards, playing expediency or corporate pressure. We cannot allow economic interests and influence of foreign powers to dictate how we react to issues of such grave danger. The interests of the few should not overwhelm the fundamental values that this country has been built on.

Canada's actions and words must reflect our long-standing reputation as peacekeepers and peacemakers, as defenders of human rights and the rule of law. The first step in doing that must be our ability to distinguish between aggressors and innocent, peaceful victims.

And it is crystal clear who the aggressor is where China is concerned. They are becoming increasingly emboldened and increasingly aggressive, whether in Hong Kong, mainland China, the South China Sea, Taiwan, the border of India and even right here in Canada. There needs to be a reckoning now, before it's too late, and both of my motions I'm speaking to today — this one and the additional one asking for Magnitsky sanctions — are just the start.

As I stated last year, Canada and the Chinese Communist Party have a very serious clash of values. The communist regime of China is a dictatorship possessing a complete disregard for fundamental freedom, democracy, rule of law and human rights. They are, without a doubt, one the greatest threats facing Canada, the Western democratic world and our way of life.

For many years, our successive governments, Liberal and Conservative alike, have attempted to engage in a responsible partnership with the Chinese Communist Party, pursuing an economic relationship that was supposed to be mutually beneficial. But this has come at a great cost to us, and the true extent is only now beginning to crystallize. We not only turned a blind eye to the malign actions of the CCP, but we are also now in a position where we must weigh turning our backs on our own values because of how heavily reliant we are on the relationship with China. We allow our values to take a back seat to our zealous pursuit of cheap goods and foreign markets for our goods.

Quite bluntly, we've allowed ourselves to be put in a compromising position, and now the time has come to decide who we want to be as a country and what we want to stand up for. Are we a country that stands for human rights, freedom, law of law and democracy, or are we a country that can be bought at any price?

Colleagues, it seems to me that it's time to rethink and recalibrate our relationship with the communist regime of China. That starts by imposing Magnitsky sanctions for these egregious behaviours, starting with the persecution of religious minorities, like the Uighur Muslims.

Colleagues, anywhere between 1 to 3 million Uighurs who identified as Muslims have been snatched off the streets or from their homes by communist authorities in China and placed in internment camps. That is the bottom line.

In what the Chinese government calls "training centres" that offer up improved job skills, these prisoners are subjected to psychological indoctrination; physical torture, including waterboarding; sexual abuse; and then there is the mass forced sterilization of women, something that in and of itself is the definition of genocide, colleagues. There are believed to be as many as 350 of these internment camps, with many of them showing signs in satellite imaging of having been expanded in size over the past year.

And for those Uighur Muslims on the outside, they are also subjected to oppression and forced labour.

This is happening in full view of the world. These people are suffering and are facing genocide right before our eyes. It's not enough for our government to say it's disappointing. The communist regime in China is committing these atrocities with impunity. They are arrogant and indignant in their blatant disregard for human life and human rights.

After the Holocaust, the Western world vowed we would never again stand by and allow such actions. Then we had Rwanda. Again, we vowed that we would "never again" stand for that. Then we had the Yazidis. Then here at home, we're quick to denounce Islamophobia, though. We're quick to denounce anti-Muslim rhetoric, and rightfully so. It's abhorrent and unacceptable.

So where is the outrage over what's happening to these Muslim people in China?

Colleagues, the least we should be doing as a nation in light of what's happening to the Uighur Muslims at the hands of the CCP is imposing sanctions, but at least it would be a start. We have the tools available to us, and we must start using them. We must back up rhetoric with action. We can't say we are a nation that defends human rights and religious freedoms and then stay silent on something like this. We can't say we stand up for Muslims in this country, but we don't stand up for them and speak out against genocide and atrocities that are taking place against Muslims in China. It makes no sense, colleagues.

That's why I hope you will support this motion. I hope the Canadian government finds it in their heart and mind to understand that it's not enough just to express disappointment and terms of rhetoric; we need to provide action. We have the tools, and the Magnitsky act is the ideal tool to start with.

(On motion of Senator Omidvar, debate adjourned.)

MOTION TO CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPOSE  
SANCTIONS AGAINST CHINESE AND HONG KONG OFFICIALS FOR  
THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Leo Housakos**, pursuant to notice of September 30, 2020, moved:

That the Senate of Canada call upon the Government of Canada to impose sanctions, pursuant to the *Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law)*, against Chinese and Hong Kong officials for the violation of human rights, civil liberties and the principles of fundamental justice and rule of law in relation to the ongoing pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong.

He said: Honourable senators, obviously I won't repeat everything I said in my previous speech. My overall point is that it is time for Canada to start standing up to the communist regime in China. We can no longer allow them to push us around and hold us hostage because we have become so heavily reliant on them for trade and cheap goods.

They behave like a loan shark or like someone blackmailing you. At some point, you have to make the decision that you're going to take what you have coming, no matter how much it hurts. That's what Canada has to do. We have to start defending not only our own interests but also the interests of others. That's who we are as a nation. Like Sergei Magnitsky, we stand up for what's right and not what's easy.

What's right is for us to stand up for the people of Hong Kong. The communist regime in China is breaching an international treaty with respect to Hong Kong. It is clear the CCP is intent on pushing through its One China policy. It started last year with the proposed extradition policy that first prompted the pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong that has turned into a full-blown and ongoing dismantling of civil liberties in Hong Kong. This is being done through the new national security law that was brought in on June 30 of this year, one hour before the twenty-third anniversary of the turnover of Hong Kong to China following British rule.

• (1610)

The national security law criminalizes any act of secession; subversion — undermining the power of authority of the central government; terrorism — using violence or intimidation against people; and collusion with foreign or external forces.

Those broad powers are being abused by the Chinese communist regime to crack down on dissent. Make no mistake; this is a draconian law with far-reaching powers and implications that completely undermine the principles of freedom and the rule of law. It strips citizens of the most fundamental rights, including the right to protest and the right to a fair trial.

If you think that is something that's just happening over there, think again. This law actually applies to non-permanent residents, including people from outside Hong Kong. And the CCP is using it not only to chill dissent in Hong Kong itself but also right here in Canada.

Just a few weeks ago, I was privileged to take part in a Zoom meeting with a few different organizations operating in Canada that are trying to draw attention to the plight of Hong Kongers, and it hasn't been easy. With COVID and all the other challenges we face, unfortunately people are not as preoccupied with democracy; they're not preoccupied with basic human principles anymore. There was one participant who wouldn't even show his face or use his name. Why? Because he is a student in Canada, and if he ever wants to go back to Hong Kong, he doesn't want to get arrested. Imagine. That's just one example.

Proxies operating on the CCP's behalf are employing intimidation measures here in Canada. Even China's own ambassador to Canada recently threatened the 300,000 Canadians living in Hong Kong should Canada step out of line, and all our government had to say is that it's inappropriate. It's not his first threat since being named ambassador to Canada. Last year, he threatened the Senate of Canada if we dared pass a motion similar to this one.

He should have been warned then. He should have been shown the door then. The Canadian government should have shown strength and firmness, and there certainly should be an apology forthcoming for his latest threat. If not, he should have been shown the door the second time, after making the same threat. These are the kinds of actions our government should be taking each and every day we deal with this malign regime.

The threats are real, colleagues. Activists have been disappearing from the streets of Hong Kong, some while on their way to the U.S. Consulate to claim asylum. And there are many right here in Canada, like the student I described earlier, who had a very real fear of being literally kidnapped off his own streets here in this country.

Earlier this week, self-exiled Hong Kong activist Nathan Law appeared at the House of Commons Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, during which he referred to the national security law as a weapon designed by Beijing to intimidate pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong.

Colleagues, yes, there is much at stake in standing up to the Chinese Communist Party. But it is the right thing to do, and we should do it with courage.

As I previously stated, the CCP is one of, if not the greatest threat facing our country today. It was done by design. However, we must not continue down this path of appeasement. It serves only to further embolden them.

Not only do we need to stand up to China with our tone, we need to do so with our actions. That starts by imposing Magnitsky sanctions for the total disregard for democracy, freedom and the rule of law — the most fundamental of rights for the people of Hong Kong.

We see a lot of media coverage here in Canada about what's happening in the U.S. Yes, it's important, because they are the world's largest superpower and our greatest ally and trading partner. People have the right to protest. People have the right to fight for the principles they believe in. It's fundamental to our democracy. This is true here in Canada and all over the world where we believe in the principle of democracy.

Colleagues, what is going on in Hong Kong needs to be called out and action has to be taken. Every day I get the emails — and I know you do too — emails from individuals and groups right here in Canada and around the world. I've met with several of them, including Hong Kong Watch but also smaller groups like Canada-Hong Kong Link and others based in Saskatchewan. Across Canada, these people are begging to be heard. They're begging to be saved from tyranny. They are afraid, truly afraid. Talk to them. Pick up the phone when they email you and you'll realize there are real people at the other end of the line with families that are being abused, tortured and imprisoned back home in Hong Kong by this Chinese regime. There are actual human beings behind this issue.

I have signed every joint letter that comes across my desk. I signed another one yesterday as a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China. I will keep signing on to these initiatives and keep raising my voice about this until our government takes things seriously where China is concerned. China needs to understand that if they want to continue to do business with Canada, it has to be under our terms.

Colleagues, I hope you will support this call to action to apply this very apt law. We've done it before. There is no good reason why it shouldn't apply here. There just has to be the will on the part of the government, colleagues. The government has to put some teeth behind our messaging to China.

I want to finish by saying this: Canada is a country that was built on the foundation of sacrifice, fighting back tyranny. Each and every one of us who came to this country — either through immigration or born to parents of immigrants, and all of us came through that route — came because of our freedom, our democracy and the opportunity it provides us. That's what Canada is all about. If we are going to sacrifice those principles because there are some consultants in law firms and some former bureaucrats who are living off retainers from China, and if we sacrifice everything this country has been built upon, then shame on us. We have an opportunity to send the message that we're not going to be sold for just a few thousand dollars of retainers for a few opportunists. Thank you very much.

(On motion of Senator Cormier, for Senator McPhedran, debate adjourned.)

[ Senator Housakos ]

MOTION TO FILL THE POSITION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE BY MEANS OF A SECRET BALLOT FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SESSION—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond**, pursuant to notice of September 30, 2020, moved:

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules or usual practice:

1. for the remainder of the session, the position of Speaker pro tempore be filled by means of a secret ballot by all senators to be held before the end of this year, using a process to be established by the Speaker after consulting with the Leader of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of any other recognized party or recognized parliamentary group; and
2. in the period preceding the secret ballot decision provided for under the first paragraph, any vacancy in the office of Speaker pro tempore be filled on an interim basis in accordance with the Rules.

He said: Honourable senators, today I am inviting you to support a significant change to our practices by adopting a motion to elect our Speaker pro tempore or, if you prefer, our Deputy Speaker.

Specifically, this motion would authorize the Speaker to design and carry out a process for the election of the Deputy Speaker by secret ballot of all senators before the end of this year. The process is to be designed by the Speaker following consultation with the leadership of all groups. Finally, until we make a decision by secret ballot before the end of the year, a senator chosen in accordance with the current Rules may fill the office of Speaker pro tempore on an interim basis.

[*Translation*]

As you may recall, on June 18, 2020, I moved a similar motion without setting a date for the first election of the individual to serve as Deputy Speaker, and also without providing for the appointment of a senator to serve as Acting Speaker pro tempore. The abrupt ending of the previous session means that we now have to revisit this motion.

It wasn't my idea to elect a deputy speaker through a secret ballot of all senators. I am simply repeating previous proposals from 2016, including one brought forward by the Special Committee on Senate Modernization, which was chaired at the time by Senator Greene, and one brought forward in 2014 by Senator Ringuette. The idea gained momentum after that, and, in June 2020, many of you spoke in support of the proposal, including Senator Saint-Germain and Senator Omidvar.

[*English*]

We also know that Senator Mercer is a strong advocate for the election of not only the Deputy Speaker but also of the Speaker.



Establishing a process for the election of the Speaker pro tempore by secret ballot will afford all senators the fair and equal opportunity to be considered for the role and for all of us to choose among those willing to serve as Deputy Speaker of the Senate. This position of trust and institutional confidence would no longer be left to discrete negotiation or to the internal selection mechanisms of a group. All senators will have a voice in the selection of this important position.

• (1620)

In 2016, the Senate Modernization Committee, then chaired by Senator Greene, recommended in its sixth report:

That the Senate direct the Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament to recommend changes to the *Rules of the Senate* to permit the Speaker *pro tempore* to be elected by senators by secret ballot.

On November 2, 2016, Senator Tannas moved that report for adoption. Senator Tannas then said:

These more democratic approaches to the selection of the Speaker and the Speaker *pro tempore* make this an important set of recommendations. . . .

I think it would be better if it was transparent and clear and all those who wanted the job and were capable of the job stepped forward and were elected by senators.

Like many of you, I share these comments of all the senators who were on the Modernization Committee.

The motion before us today gives us the opportunity, right now, to act upon the 2016 recommendations. The adoption of this motion, like the motion on the new audit and oversight committee, will represent another improvement in how we run our business. In addition, it will further the principle of equality between senators.

Once a process for the selection of the Speaker pro tempore has been established and tried, we could look at formalizing this change in the *Rules of the Senate*. But for now, considering that this session may be short, let us trust the Speaker to develop a fair process as he has done for the hybrid sessions of this chamber, all the while in collaboration with the leadership of all the groups in the Senate.

Since hybrid sessions will most likely last until the end of December, considering the current circumstances related to COVID-19, the conducting of a secret ballot may raise some challenges. But, as with the hybrid sitting motion, we should trust the Speaker to consult with the leadership and the administration in designing innovative solutions befitting our unique and temporary situation.

Perhaps we can look at a virtual voting system involving members of our administration sworn to secrecy, or a mail-in ballot option, like the one available in the House of Lords for the election of the Lord Speaker.

[*Translation*]

In conclusion, honourable senators, I believe we now have an opportunity to take concrete action on years of discussions and suggestions all aimed at recognizing that it is time we implemented a process that will enable us to elect a Deputy Speaker of the Senate who has the confidence of the majority in this chamber.

I therefore invite you to support this motion as we prepare to convene the Selection Committee to produce reports on the Speaker pro tempore and committee membership.

Thank you. *Meegwetch*.

(On motion of Senator Dagenais, debate adjourned.)

MOTION TO CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO INTRODUCE  
LEGISLATION TO FREEZE THE SESSIONAL ALLOWANCES  
OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN LIGHT OF THE ECONOMIC  
SITUATION AND THE ONGOING PANDEMIC—  
DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Lucie Moncion**, pursuant to notice of October 27, 2020, moved:

That the Senate of Canada call upon the Government of Canada to introduce legislation that would freeze the sessional allowances of parliamentarians for a period that the government considers appropriate in light of the economic situation and the ongoing pandemic or for a maximum period of three years.

She said: Honourable senators, two days ago, I tabled a notice of motion that reads as follows:

That the Senate of Canada call upon the Government of Canada to introduce legislation that would freeze the sessional allowances of parliamentarians for a period that the government considers appropriate in light of the economic situation and the ongoing pandemic or for a maximum period of three years.

By supporting this motion, this is the message we are sending to the government: Senators do not want their privileged position to be devoid of sensitivity and consideration for the harsh economic reality many Canadians are experiencing.

Given the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the finances of individuals and the state, the government should take steps to ensure that parliamentarians do not get a pay raise.

[*English*]

I rise today to share with you the main reasons that led me to move this motion in the Upper House. As a member of the Internal Economy Committee and, more specifically, as chair of the Subcommittee on Estimates, I have seen first-hand how senators' allowances are set and how amounts are allocated among the various Senate departments.

Our salary increase is set by law. Year in and year out, it is included in the Senate budget and the calculation is built in automatically. If we do not want to receive this allowance, the legislation must be amended.

The purpose of my motion is, therefore, to urge the government to amend the act so as to freeze the salary of parliamentarians for the fiscal year 2021-22 and, if deemed appropriate, to extend this freeze for an additional period of up to two years. Giving up the increase in our sessional allowances is a simple act, and, I will say, not a very costly one for each and every one of us. It's a little bit over \$3,000 a year.

[*Translation*]

In 2010, parliamentarians waived the increase to their sessional allowance for three consecutive fiscal periods because of the economic crisis at the time. The current economic situation is similar to that one. The Senate should communicate clearly to the government that the current economic crisis calls for the implementation of this measure once again.

The Senate, the chamber of sober second thought, can lead by example. As senators, we can be proactive about the study of the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic by being mindful of the impact of our sessional allowance on the state of the nation's finances. The financial impact will not be significant, but the gesture may well be.

Allow me, esteemed colleagues, to elaborate on the primary reason I am moving this motion. It has to do with the advantages we have as Canadian senators.

It is undeniable that our status as senators comes with many benefits, including that related to our sessional allowance and the annual increase of that allowance. However, these financial benefits make no sense when they are juxtaposed with the harsh reality of many Canadians today. Many of them have lost their jobs and some industries are struggling to survive this second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[*English*]

The current crisis, more than ever, appeals to our solidarity with and sensitivity to the socio-economic reality of Canadians. The pandemic has deepened inequalities and shed light on many of the social issues that underlie the increasing gap between rich and poor. I am thinking of systemic racism in particular. Black people are at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 and suffering the financial consequences of the pandemic than other Canadians, according to a survey conducted by Innovative Research Group Inc. in partnership with the African Canadian Civic Engagement Council.

The pandemic has also affected women more than men in the workforce. For example, according to the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the pandemic has led to the lowest rate of women's participation in the province's economy in 30 years. Seniors, children and migrant workers are also among vulnerable groups that are feeling more of the negative impact of the pandemic. While it is true that this motion will not result in substantial savings, it does, however, demonstrate our solidarity with Canadians. By supporting this motion, we recognize the

advantageous position we occupy in Canadian society and the fact that it is strengthened by the economic situation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

In addition, I want to share with you the pertinence of presenting and supporting this motion right now. To that end, I must briefly speak of the freezing of the sessional allowance, which was adopted by Parliament in 2010, in response to the 2008-10 financial crisis. In 2010, the government of the day had introduced Bill C-9, the Jobs and Economic Growth Act. This omnibus bill included clause 1649, which replaced section 55 of the Expenditure Restraint Act. Effective July 12, 2010, section 55 provided that senators' and members' allowances and salaries would not be increased in the 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13 fiscal years.

In response to the 2008-10 financial crisis, parliamentarians decided that the best thing to do was not to accept a salary increase for three years. Recently, certain members in the other place have publicly spoken about the fact that they would like the current government to propose a similar measure.

[*English*]

The current economic situation is similar to what was seen back then — some may say it's even worse — and should therefore, at the very least, prompt an equivalent response from parliamentarians. Senators are among the main stakeholders in this debate and should express themselves transparently by taking a position on this motion.

Mindful of how the government is spending in the pandemic, the Senate must lead by example by asking the federal government to introduce legislation that would freeze the sessional allowances of parliamentarians for an appropriate period of time. The Senate has mandated the Senate Standing Committee on National Finance and the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology to study the federal government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Senate has also created or will be creating a new Senate committee on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and future preparedness.

[*Translation*]

In this chamber, we often express our concerns about how much the government is spending to manage this crisis. If we support a measure to freeze our parliamentary allowances, it would show that we are concerned about our country's finances.

Logically, the Senate must support measures that ensure responsible management of government finances. It goes without saying that the motion I have moved will do just that.

The motion I've proposed today calls on the government to introduce legislation that would freeze the salaries of senators and members of Parliament for a maximum of three years, or for a period that the government considers appropriate, in light of the economic situation and the ongoing pandemic.

Some may see this as a superficial or even symbolic gesture, since freezing parliamentarians' salaries will not save a substantial amount of money. I did a quick calculation, and if you combine the amounts for the Senate and the House of Commons, we're talking about \$1.7 million a year.

[English]

However, I do believe that supporting this motion is an expression of our solidarity with Canadians during these difficult times and a demonstration that, in our work as parliamentarians, we are concerned about our status and the wealth gap that is unfortunately growing in our Canadian society.

Honourable senators, let's stand together in supporting this motion in order to send a clear and certain signal to the government. I thank you for your attention.

[Translation]

**Hon. Claude Carignan:** Thank you, senator.

Have you estimated the cost of your motion per senator over a period of 10 years?

**Senator Moncion:** I calculated for a one-year period, not 10 years. Over a period of 10 years, we'd have to do some exponential calculations, so I calculated the amount over the period of one year.

**Senator Carignan:** If we did an exponential calculation and calculated for three years? You mentioned \$3,000, so for the third year, we're talking about \$9,000. If you take \$9,000 recurring over 10 years, you're talking about asking senators to give up \$100,000 over a period of 10 years.

**Senator Moncion:** I'm not sure I understand your calculations.

When we look at the amount of money we receive, if we add in our marginal tax rate, that amount comes to roughly \$3,300, but once we subtract the taxes, the amount decreases over a 10-year period.

**Senator Carignan:** Let me clarify my question.

If you give up \$3,000 once, the second year you give up \$6,000, and the third year, \$9,000. If you do this for 10 years, then you've given up \$100,000, because it must be indexed.

I just want to make sure you understand how much it will cost, over 10 years, to give up three years of indexing.

**Senator Moncion:** I understand your calculations, and I could give you more significant figures. It's an accurate calculation, very accurate, except that, since we are senators, I'm not sure it is a calculation that can be easily justified to Canadian taxpayers. Therefore, I think this calculation needs to be weighed, if I can put it that way.

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Thank you for this motion, Senator Moncion. I find it very interesting. I fully agree that the pandemic has had a catastrophic impact on the economic health

and mental health of Canadians. We have never seen so much worry and anxiety in Canadian society as we have now as a result of the pandemic.

I find your motion far more symbolic than anything else, because in reality, the impact of COVID-19 on the economy amounts to hundreds of billions of dollars, not just a few million.

[English]

Here is what I was wondering: Did you consider, when moving a motion like this forward, broadening it a little bit more? The reality is that those of us working in the public service as parliamentarians, but also civil servants across the country, provincially and federally — for now we're talking about the federal scope — are all working remotely.

The reality is all of us have had a reduced workload because of the situation of the pandemic, but none of us has participated in the sacrifices that many Canadians have.

If you look at the impact on Canadians in the private sector, it has been anywhere from 30% to 40%. It's significant. Some it has been so impactful that they have lost their work.

Did you ever consider putting this motion across the board but rolling it back for a short period of time during the pandemic so people in the public sector — not just parliamentarians — would share in the sacrifice, and all of us in the public sector would share in the pain that Canadians are going through?

**Senator Moncion:** Thank you for the question, senator. No, I did not go that far. I find it difficult to go as far as that.

[Translation]

Employees have collective agreements and, as employers, we must respect them. There are many rules in place. As you mentioned, and as I stated in my speech, this is much more symbolic than significant financially, but I believe that this motion sends a message. It sends a message to several groups and individuals who are relatively well-paid, fortunate and who are not affected in the same way by the pandemic. It is truly a symbolic message and what I am asking of the government is that it at least study this.

The other element that I would like to mention and did not discuss in my speech is that when we received a pay increase this year, at the start of the pandemic, we were asked to donate it. I thought that was a good suggestion. Since the beginning of the year, I have donated a similar amount every month but to different charities. This means that I donate this money, even though it is part of my salary and I pay income tax on it, by giving an equivalent amount. I have donated to the food bank, a local health organization and several interest groups. However, there are other ways to provide money to organizations and other groups.

**Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais:** Honourable senators, I did not want to participate in the debate, but I find myself forced to do so. It is very commendable that the senator has been donating her salary increase to food banks, since this is obviously a personal gesture.

• (1640)

I have negotiated several collective agreements, and let me tell you, in the 1980s, the Quebec government found itself in a very precarious financial situation. It therefore introduced special legislation to freeze all salaries.

To pick up on what Senator Housakos was saying, if we're going to take such a drastic measure, it should apply not only to parliamentarians, but also to the entire public service. The government will not hesitate to pass special legislation, and it would be entirely within its rights to do so. That's the point I wanted to make.

**Senator Housakos:** Senator Dagenais, I heard Senator Moncion's arguments, and I also heard your perspective. I have some concerns, not only as a senator, but also as a Canadian.

There are in fact two classes of citizens in Canada: One class is privileged, made up of people who work for the federal government or a provincial government, who are public servants with collective agreements; the other class is made up of private sector employees who don't have collective agreements to rely on for protection in times of crisis.

Senator Dagenais, as members of the upper chamber, we have an obligation to protect and stand in solidarity with Canadians in a crisis, period. Don't you think it's unfair and just plain wrong to have two classes of citizens, one that is quite protected and the other without adequate protection?

**Senator Dagenais:** Thank you, Senator Housakos. I have to agree with what you are saying. However, this is simply a symbolic gesture that will have no impact on the government's spending.

What is disappointing is to see a Prime Minister acting like a teenager with his father's credit card on a Saturday night. I can tell you that, according to current estimates, Canada could face a deficit of \$450 billion. Symbolic gestures are very nice, but we need to be more concerned about the government's reckless spending.

You have to be careful when you say that there are two classes of citizens. I was a police officer, I was unionized and I had privileges, but it should be said that people have these privileges because of their role. I can tell you that when I was a police officer, we had salary freezes at the time and I did not agree with that. We have to be careful when we talk about privileged and non-privileged classes. That is the way society works, and we can't beat ourselves up over every raise we get. I don't expect you to agree with me, but that is how I see it.

We have to do what is in Canadians' best interest, and that is what we have done quite recently. We supported bills like Bill C-2. I'm still annoyed at myself for giving Bill C-4 the go-ahead in just a day and a half though. The Senate was there to help Canadians. It did its job. I think our job is to approve bills, to fine-tune them and to take the time to study bills in order to help Canadians, rather than just do something symbolic. That kind of thing can impress people, but it does not help the country's finances.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

[English]

## ARCTIC

MOTION TO PLACE FOURTH REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE  
TABLED DURING THE FIRST SESSION OF FORTY-SECOND  
PARLIAMENT ON ORDERS OF THE DAY ADOPTED

**Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson,** pursuant to notice of October 27, 2020, moved:

That the fourth report of the Special Committee on the Arctic entitled *Northern Lights: A Wake-Up Call for the Future of Canada*, tabled in the Senate on June 11, 2019, during the First session of the Forty-second Parliament, be placed on the Orders of the Day under Other Business, Reports of Committees – Other, for consideration two days hence.

He said: Honourable senators, I move adoption of the motion.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to advise you that, after the required consultations, hybrid sittings of the Senate will begin on Tuesday, November 3, 2020, using Zoom with multi-factor authentication. As of that time, the terms of the order of Tuesday, October 27, 2020, concerning hybrid sittings, will govern proceedings.

(At 4:46 p.m., the Senate was continued until Tuesday, November 3, 2020, at 2 p.m.)

## CONTENTS

Thursday, October 29, 2020

	PAGE		PAGE
<b>The Senate</b>		<b>Finance</b>	
Catherine Piccinin—Tribute on Departure . . . . .	196	Economic and Fiscal Snapshot 2020	
		Hon. Tony Loffreda . . . . .	202
<b>Business of the Senate</b> . . . . .	196	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	203
<hr/>			
<b>SENATORS' STATEMENTS</b>		<b>Justice</b>	
<b>Tributes</b>		Mandatory Minimum Penalties	
The Late Honourable David Osborn Braley, O.C.		Hon. Kim Pate . . . . .	203
Hon. Donald Neil Plett . . . . .	196	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	203
Hon. Yuen Pau Woo . . . . .	197		
Hon. Yonah Martin . . . . .	197	<b>Public Safety</b>	
Hon. Jim Munson . . . . .	197	Border Security During the COVID-19 Pandemic	
Hon. Larry W. Smith . . . . .	198	Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais . . . . .	204
Hon. Salma Ataullahjan. . . . .	198	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	204
<b>Show Your 4-H Colours Day</b>		<b>Health</b>	
Hon. Robert Black. . . . .	199	COVID-19 Pandemic Response Plan	
		Hon. Patricia Bovey . . . . .	204
<b>The Late Aline Chrétien</b> . . . . .	199	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	204
<b>Teachers</b>		<b>Foreign Affairs and International Trade</b>	
Importance of their Work During the COVID-19 Pandemic		Canada-U.S. Trade	
Hon. Chantal Petitclerc . . . . .	200	Hon. Yonah Martin . . . . .	205
		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	205
<b>The Senate</b>		Export of Defence Technology to Turkey	
Catherine Piccinin—Tribute on Departure		Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . .	205
Hon. Raymonde Gagné . . . . .	200	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	205
		Yemen—Humanitarian Aid	
<b>The Late Right Honourable Donald Mazankowski, P.C.,</b>		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	206
<b>C.C.</b>			
Hon. Pamela Wallin. . . . .	201	<hr/>	
		<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
<hr/>			
<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>		<b>Question of Privilege</b>	
<b>Modern Slavery Bill (Bill S-216)</b>		Speaker's Ruling. . . . .	206
Bill to Amend—First Reading . . . . .	201		
		<b>Adjournment</b>	
<b>Girl Guides of Canada Bill (Bill S-1001)</b>		Motion Adopted	
Private Bill—First Reading. . . . .	201	Hon. Raymonde Gagné . . . . .	207
<hr/>			
<b>QUESTION PERIOD</b>		<b>Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada Bill</b>	
<b>Finance</b>		<b>(Bill S-210)</b>	
Fiscal Update		Second Reading—Debate Continued	
Hon. Elizabeth Marshall . . . . .	201	Hon. Salma Ataullahjan. . . . .	207
Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	201		
		<b>Criminal Code (Bill S-212)</b>	
<b>Health</b>		Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Adjourned	
Testing for COVID-19		Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu . . . . .	209
Hon. Judith G. Seidman. . . . .	202		
Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	202	<b>Constitution Act, 1867 (Bill S-214)</b>	
		Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Adjourned	
		Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson . . . . .	210
		<b>The Senate</b>	
		Motion to Affect Committee Membership Adopted	
		Hon. Pierrette Ringuette . . . . .	213

## CONTENTS

Thursday, October 29, 2020

	PAGE		PAGE
Motion to Call Upon the Government to Impose Sanctions Against Chinese Officials in Relation to the Human Rights Abuses and Systematic Persecution of Uighur Muslims in China—Debate Adjourned		Hon. Lucie Moncion . . . . .	217
Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . .	213	Hon. Claude Carignan . . . . .	219
Motion to Call Upon the Government to Impose Sanctions against Chinese and Hong Kong Officials for the Violation of Human Rights—Debate Adjourned		Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . .	219
Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . .	215	Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais . . . . .	219
Motion to Fill the Position of Speaker Pro Tempore by Means of a Secret Ballot for the Remainder of the Session— Debate Adjourned		<b>Arctic</b>	
Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond . . . . .	216	Motion to Place Fourth Report of Special Committee Tabled during the First Session of Forty-second Parliament on Orders of the Day Adopted	
Motion to Call Upon the Government to Introduce Legislation to Freeze the Sessional Allowances of Parliamentarians in Light of the Economic Situation and the Ongoing Pandemic—Debate Adjourned		Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson . . . . .	220
		<b>Speaker's Statement . . . . .</b>	<b>220</b>