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Wednesday, June 9, 2021

The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

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

Prayers.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-5(j), I move:

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, previous order or usual practice, for today's sitting:

1. the duration for Senators' Statements be 45 minutes, to be used for the purpose of paying tribute to our colleague the Honourable Senator Jim Munson, who will retire from the Senate on July 14, 2021;
2. the vote on the amendment to Bill S-209, deferred to 3:30 p.m. today, be further deferred to after Question Period, with the bells to ring for five minutes once Question Period ends; and
3. the sitting continue beyond 4 p.m., if necessary, until the deferred vote has concluded.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

TRIBUTES

THE HONOURABLE JIM MUNSON

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, from the Great Wall of China, to the first Gulf War, to North Korea, to Tiananmen Square, to Prime Minister Chrétien's office, to the Senate of Canada, with a great deal in between, it has been quite a ride, Jim Munson. Your hard work and your passion for everything you undertake, and your ability to work hard while having fun, have made it a privilege to know you and to be your colleague. The Progressive Senate Group will miss you, but you won't be too far away.

For the past few weeks, I have been jotting down notes, funny anecdotes and stories of what you have accomplished. But, Jim, that all stopped when I got a call last week from Ginette, your biggest supporter and someone we all love. Ginette asked if I would be willing to make an announcement as part of my tribute to you, to which I readily agreed.

But first I spoke to Margaret Whelan. To those of you who don't know Margaret, she is a lifelong advocate and leader in the field of autism. She served as an executive director of the Geneva Centre for Autism, and she was a board member of the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance. She has worked with Jim and Ginette for over 14 years, pushing for autistic Canadians to enjoy a more inclusive Canada.

Today in the Senate of Canada, I am delighted to announce a special recognition of Jim's work and that of his wife, Ginette. As we all know, Jim has dedicated himself to advocacy on behalf of autistic Canadians, their families and the communities in which they live and are loved. In 2007, Jim challenged autism communities to seize the opportunity presented in the Senate report *Pay now or pay later: autism families in crisis*. In response, those communities banded together to form the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance, or CASDA.

Throughout the intervening years, Jim has been an unwavering supporter of and mentor to CASDA, providing sage advice and reassurance, pressing his colleagues to listen to and understand the importance of the issues facing autistic Canadians. And, yes, Jim has persistently — and I use that term in the most positive way — worked the corridors of power here in Ottawa to advance the call for a national autism strategy. With sheer tenacity, Jim was able to get the World Autism Awareness Act passed in 2012.

He has led autism awareness events on Parliament Hill for many years, and he has brought a wide variety of autism advocates, families and individuals with autism to celebrate and to hold government accountable.

In 2019, the National Autism Strategy finally became a reality. That could not have happened without Jim's dedication and determination.

In recognition of this unflagging support and perseverance, CASDA is pleased to be creating the "Jim and Ginette Munson Autism Leadership Award." That award will be presented annually to a Canadian who demonstrates the leadership, determination and values that reflect Jim and Ginette's commitment to creating a better Canada for autistic Canadians. The recipients of this reward will be recognized at the Canadian Autism Leadership Summit held in October each year.

Jim, on behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, congratulations to you and to Ginette. This award is a fitting tribute to your work.

Throughout your Senate career, you have demonstrated a commitment to hard work and advocacy, and it has been a privilege to be your colleague. You will forever be our “kindness senator.” Our love and best wishes always.

And, Jim, I do hope you are wearing your dad’s shoes today. Rest assured, you have more than filled them. He would be very proud.

Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to our friend and colleague Senator Jim Munson.

There are colleagues in this place who have known Jim far longer than I have. In fact, there are those who have known him since his former life. I understand, Jim, that your former life included very long lunches at the National Press Club of Canada. I am told you have stories from those good old early days that, should they be made public, could cause even international incidents. I’m sure they’re just rumours, although we have travelled together with your lovely wife, Ginette, so I guess we will see.

As we all know, Jim is passionate about that which matters to him, and he can eloquently and convincingly guide us to those places he describes and the emotions that he experienced. The most recent was his annual commemoration of those massacred in Tiananmen Square. We all remember the event taking place. We can all recall the iconic photograph — a lone young man, immovable in front of the tank barrelling down on him. But Jim was there. He witnessed the moments following the snapping of that photograph. Through his words and his vivid recollections of those events, year after year, we also experienced what he felt. Every year, we are riveted and we are moved, Jim, by your description of the students and the price that they paid for their persistence in following their dreams.

• (1410)

As Senator Cordy has already mentioned, and as we all know, one of Jim’s long-standing passions is his unending fight for those suffering with autism. He has never let up. He has given voice to the families and to the children, and through sheer resolve and after five attempts he had the World Autism Awareness Day Act passed into law in 2012. Today, the government is continuing Jim’s fight and working on a national autism strategy to provide support for these children and their families. Jim, your work has shone a spotlight on this issue, and as a result, Canadian society has come to understand and accept the need for autism support.

Honourable senators, it is impossible to encapsulate a 17-year career in the Senate in a few short minutes, but the recent passage of Bill S-223, An Act respecting Kindness Week, is perhaps the best way to pay tribute to our friend and colleague. During these turbulent times, and especially after this past exceptionally difficult year, expressing kindness and caring for all of those around us pretty much sums up what Jim Munson’s presence means to us in this chamber. He is always kind, ever cooperative

and unfailingly collegial. He truly understands the value of quiet diplomacy, and has never needed to carry a big stick, although I hear he is pretty ferocious on the hockey rink, so I’m not sure which way it goes.

Let me close by quoting the man himself from the third reading speech of Bill S-223: “What a way to start summer, with kindness in our hearts.”

You have made your mark here, Jim, and in Canada. You should be very proud of your legacy. We are going to miss you. Travel safe.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I also rise today to pay tribute to Senator Munson’s retirement. Today we celebrate his time in the Senate of Canada that he has used to make meaningful contributions to our country.

Senator Munson, throughout your life, you have been a proponent of democracy, both globally and nationally. Your experiences, accumulated as a journalist, have consistently gifted the Senate of Canada with anecdotes from your time as a foreign correspondent. I have been especially touched by the way you annually share your time reporting on the Tiananmen Square Massacre on its anniversary. Thank you, Jim, for choosing each year to use your experiences to remind us of the importance of democratic rights.

I’m also repeating what has already been said, but I deeply admire how you have used your position in the Senate to advocate for individuals with autism spectrum disorder. Indeed, it was your passion and dedication that led Parliament to pass the World Autism Awareness Day Act in 2012. The 2007 Senate report *Pay Now or Pay Later: Autism Families in Crisis*, that you contributed to, highlighted the gaps in support that autism families faced. You have steadfastly voiced the concerns of individuals and families impacted by autism spectrum disorder in the Red Chamber. This has continually reminded us of the collaboration needed throughout Canada to foster a society that celebrates neurodiversity. We senators will not forget your efforts in this incredibly important cause.

Of course, I will not forget how you and I were poster boys for Kindness Week, as we both acted as sponsors or critics. But truly, it must be a joy for you to see that Kindness Week received Royal Assent just before your retirement. I applaud all of your work on this file, fellow poster boy.

I am also sure that you played a great game of hockey and we would have played a great together. You and I are about the same size, so I have no doubt that in hockey we played a similar game — sticks and elbows high.

From spending time in journalism for nearly 30 years, to your lengthy 18 years in the Senate, you, my friend, are well deserving of retirement. Senator Munson, I wish you all the best in your future endeavours. May you thoroughly enjoy your retirement, and may you rest in the fact that your career has had a lasting impact on all of your spheres of influence.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Ratna Omidvar: Honourable senators, I rise on behalf of the ISG to pay tribute to our colleague, Senator Jim Munson. We all have a great deal of respect, affection and admiration for him, especially as he was always friendly and welcoming to us newcomers. All of us have stories and perspectives we would like to share.

Let me try to give voice to these by starting with a question: How do we truly take the full measure of a man like Senator Munson? Is it through the successes of his professional life? We have already heard of these and there were many, first as a journalist, and then when he brought his formidable communication skills to the government of former prime minister Jean Chrétien. Or do you add up his many, many contributions in his time as a senator? Again, there is a formidable list of these, ranging from his leadership role on the Human Rights Committee, his championing of the seminal study on prisons, and to his latest and most welcome success, the passage of the Kindness Week bill.

I believe that these, significant as they are, miss the true mark of the man we know as Jimmy Munson. That can only be measured by his relationships with people. Not just his peers, but with those who may have no power.

We all know that Senator Munson is a champion for autism. What we may not know is that his initial interest was sparked many years ago from the many sustained conversations that he had with a lone demonstrator on the Hill who stood every day to talk about his son with special needs. I can almost hear this conversation — with Senator Munson asking probing questions and listening with empathy. It was then that Senator Munson decided to make this a front page issue.

For Senator Munson, it is these personal relationships that matter. We have seen in the chamber how he extends his warmth to all of us. More significantly, he pays attention to others who may not have our voice. It is not a surprise for me then that last month we all received an email from Senator Munson to mark the passing of Ismail Ocal, who worked in the Senate on maintenance and cleaning for many years. Senator Munson credited Ismail for teaching him a life lesson that we should all learn: We need to take the time to talk and listen to each other.

I have my own particular bond with Senator Munson, based not just on the fact that we are both vertically challenged, but also on our common engagement with human rights and sponsored refugees. His voice has resonated in this chamber when he talks about introducing the refugee kids and this family to the glories of Canadian winter, ice skating and, of course, hockey.

So how do we take the full measure of a man? Plato must have been thinking of Senator Munson when he wrote that the only way to take this measure is to reflect on how he uses power. If that is our measurement, then tiny, wonderful Senator Munson will go down in history as a giant.

From all of us in the ISG, we wish you all the best and may you continue to spread your glow of kindness wherever you go. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Larry W. Campbell: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to Senator Jim Munson. As our former Senator Baker from Newfoundland said, I will be brief. I first met Senator Munson 16 years ago when I was appointed to the Senate. I remember looking around that chamber, and the first person I saw was Jim. I recognized him from all of the groundbreaking news coverage from all over the world that I had watched night after night. From the Tiananmen Square protests to the Iran-Iraq War to the Gulf War, Jim was there, easily recognizable to the majority of Canadians.

• (1420)

Since that time, Jim and I have become friends who, on occasion, express different views. Jim Munson is a giant of a man. His interests and passions are seen in all manner of bills, from the Special Olympics to Kindness Week, his tireless work for those suffering from autism and his understanding of how to help those in need of every walk of life. Jim sees injustice and he does something about it. I think his understanding of the world and life in general comes from his vast experiences reporting around the world and working closely with Prime Minister Chrétien but, most importantly, from listening to the counsel of his wife, Ginette.

As I said, Jim is a giant of a man. Nothing demonstrates this more than his love of playing hockey. If you've been around enough, you've seen the occasional limp, bruised eye, and other artifacts of the game. I got used to being regaled on a daily basis with stories of his scoring prowess, his ability to go into the corner with his elbows up and using his massive size to screen the goalie. These are characteristics that not only work in hockey but, on occasion, in life.

Height does not determine or define courage, tenacity or the ability to care for others. Jim exemplifies this. It has been an honour for me to know Jim. The ability to work with him and learn from his example has been a bonus. I know that Jim and Ginette will soon be sitting on the deck at their home on Galiano Island, having a smart one and watching the sun set.

All the best to you my friend on what is not a retirement, but simply a career change. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, I rise to pay tribute to my dear friend Senator Jim Munson on his impending retirement. Jim and I were both appointed in late 2003 but were sworn into the Senate together on February 2, 2004. We were, in fact, seatmates until he was elevated to the position of whip in the leadership of another caucus we belonged to way back when.

There have been some ups and downs, but throughout it all, Jim was a constant guide and a trusted friend. I will miss him here in this place.

Born in New Brunswick, he started his career in radio at CJLS in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. Jim tells the story that one day the station manager gave him a list of small businesses in downtown Yarmouth and told him he had to go collect payments for advertising that they had on the radio. Once he collected the money, the boss said, "Okay, that's your pay." It is only a story that could happen in small-town Eastern Canada.

We all know that he went on to bigger things, as the ever-intrepid national and international journalist and then as Prime Minister Chrétien's director of communications. However, what I will most remember is his love of children. Senator Munson has been a champion for many issues affecting children, like his dedicated work on autism in Canada and around the world.

We were asked by former senator Landon Pearson to take over National Child Day, which we did for many years. This event saw hundreds of school children attend the Senate of Canada every year. They were entertained by singers, dancers and spoken-word artists. Most of you will not know this, but at one event, we had the group Barenaked Ladies play on the Senate floor. We had the band set up in front of the Speaker's chair. National Child Day was one of Jim's favourite days of the year.

Thank you, Senator Jim Munson, for your dedication to Canadians and your friendship to all.

That dedication will continue, because it was recently announced that Jim will be executive-in-residence at the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business at the University of Victoria and special adviser for the Victoria Forum. Congratulations on that, Jim.

To his partner Ginette and his sons, Claude and James, I hope you can keep Jim busy in his spare time by playing hockey — he always gave a detailed report of his actions on the ice — being the shortest guy on the basketball team, skating on the canal or cycling.

We all hope you get to enjoy some time in your native province of New Brunswick. As you say, Jim: There's no shore like the north shore, that's for sure.

Congratulations, Jim.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to a dear friend and beloved colleague The Honourable Jim Munson as he prepares to take his official retirement from the Senate of Canada on July 14, 2021.

Although we have always sat opposite one another, more often than not, we've been on the same page on many issues and initiatives, be it in our shared hope in advocating for human rights in North Korea, co-hosting a National Child Day on the hill as the three musketeers — Munson, Mercer and Martin — or working collaboratively on bills as sponsor and critic or vice versa.

After all, Jim is a caring and loveable person with the biggest smile and an even bigger heart. Anyone who knows him can attest to how much he truly cares for others. I knew from the moment he regaled me with his experiences as a journalist whose assignments took him right into North Korea with a twinkle and clear sincerity in his eyes, I knew we would be friends.

Before beginning his life in the Senate Chamber, Jim was a well-known Canadian journalist and communications adviser. He reported on current affairs for more than 30 years, most notably as a bureau chief and foreign correspondent for CTV News. His reporting touched upon events around the globe — from Belfast to Beijing to Pyongyang — including the Gulf War, the assassination of Indira Gandhi and the Tiananmen Square Massacre. At home, he covered the FLQ October Crisis in Quebec and, in Ottawa, every federal election from 1974 onwards. His work ethic, leadership and dedication earned him two nominations for a Gemini Award for excellence in journalism.

On December 10, 2003, the next chapter of his life began when he was appointed to the Senate of Canada to represent the province of Ontario. As a senator, he has served diligently as Whip of the Senate Liberal Caucus from 2008-16, as a member of the Progressive Senate Group and on most of the committees over the last 18 years. Jim has been a champion for many communities over the years, speaking passionately, in this very chamber, about the issues and the communities and issues that he holds dear to his heart.

During this Forty-third Parliament and especially this current and final sitting for our retiring colleague, it was a privilege for me to support my friend as a friendly critic of Bill S-223, An Act respecting Kindness Week. Kindness Week, along with the many causes that Jim has championed, will remain a part of his legacy in this chamber and in the annals of Canadian history.

Honourable senators, please join me in recognizing Senator Jim Munson for his many accomplishments and wishing him all the best as he begins yet another chapter in his life story, and in thanking his wife Ginette and his family for graciously sharing him with Canada and with us.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to Senator Munson with some sadness to see him leave this chamber to which he has devoted himself for over 17 years. Many of you will recall, over those years, how many times Senator Munson joked in this chamber about his height. Well, Senator Munson, from my perspective, you are living proof of the French saying *dans les petits pots, les meilleurs onguents*.

Senator Munson, the proof is clear and, shall I say, defies gravity. Yes, time and again, Senator Munson, you have proven through your actions how tall you are in responding with more than words to the call of compassion on a multitude of issues that we know of, and probably on many more that you have kept to your humble self.

• (1430)

You, Senator Munson, the Baptist son who defied religious belief and married this wonderful French, Acadian, Catholic girl, Ginette.

You, Senator Munson, the journalist who witnessed and recounted the Tiananmen Square massacre with passion, calling on all of us to never forget. You, Senator Munson, the devoted father who worked tirelessly for governments to establish programs for autistic children. You, Senator Munson, the engaged volunteer, are the senator who persuaded this institution, with the inclusive program called Friends of the Senate, to bring citizens with disabilities into our workplace. You, Senator Munson, the small but mighty athlete, still playing hockey and either skating or biking — like you did again yesterday — to work, depending on the season.

You, Senator Munson, an unassuming voice seeking kindness, wanting Canada and its citizens to reflect and be kind. You have managed to have all parliamentarians agree and approve a bill for a national Kindness Week. Yes, you, Senator Munson, may joke about your height, but in my book you are a giant in human compassion and stand tall among us.

May you and your beloved Ginette enjoy the next many seasons of your life in good health, moving to new adventures and travels as you create and spread kindness paths along the way. The “Republique” will always welcome you, so I hope this is just an “au revoir.”

[*Translation*]

Safe journey, my friend.

[*English*]

Safe journey, my friend. We — and I — will miss you. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Dennis Dawson: I met Jim in 1977, when I was first elected to the other place. By then he had already been covering the Hill for several years. I can confirm for our friend, Senator Gold, that, yes, the National Press Club was one of his favourite places on the Hill. Also, I want to confirm that —

[*English*]

— at that time, Jim was a much-feared journalist on the Hill. Since then, and for all those reasons, he has maintained a fierce reputation. I will make my statement brief, since there are many of you who wish to speak. Instead, in this virtual world, I opted for a virtual tribute. You will find in your email inboxes a few links to some great Munson moments, as they are often called. One is a much-publicized confrontation with Trudeau, the father. Trust me, it was not a moment of great kindness from either one, but I’ll let you judge that when you see it. Another covers his arrival to the dark side of partisan politics when he joined the staff of Mr. Chrétien. I tried to find a video of him when we were both thrown out, with 30 other senators, from the Liberal Caucus, but I decided to pass on that subject.

[Senator Ringuette]

[*Translation*]

As I was saying, I met Jim in 1977, and what followed were 44 years of friendship, no matter which hat he was wearing. I will miss Jim’s presence in the Senate, but I don’t doubt for a second that we’ll see him again around here. After all, he’s been a part of Parliament Hill for almost 50 years.

Ginette and Jim, when you’re in the “Republic,” drop by to see me in Quebec. I’ll be happy to do with Jim what I did at the National Press Club almost 45 years ago.

See you soon, Jim and Ginette. Happy retirement.

[*English*]

Additionally, there is a link on the Progressive Senate Group website for those people listening who may want to access those Munson moments.

Hon. Thanh Hai Ngo: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to a valued colleague and a voice for human rights, Senator Jim Munson. A seasoned journalist, Senator Munson reported on some of the most defining events of our age as bureau chief and foreign correspondent for CTV News. A well-respected and trusted reporter, he provided Canadian audiences with coverage of current affairs around the globe. This includes the first Gulf War, the assassination of Indira Gandhi and the Tiananmen Square massacre. On two occasions, Senator Munson’s outstanding work garnered him the nomination of the Gemini Award in recognition of his excellence in journalism.

Since being called to the Senate on December 10, 2003, Senator Munson has been a tireless advocate for individuals with autism spectrum disorder. He has also continued to be an outspoken critic of violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms at home and around the world.

Before becoming his colleague in the Senate, I had heard of him. Known to be a straight shooter, his stellar reputation as a journalist preceded him. I was therefore looking forward to working with this illustrious journalist who courageously covered the horror of Tiananmen Square. Upon meeting Senator Munson, I immediately knew he would be a sympathizer to the plight of the downtrodden and the oppressed. I had the privilege of getting to know the true Jim better back in 2016 when we travelled to Toronto and Montreal to investigate the challenges of Syrian refugees during their resettlement in Canada.

At that time, he was Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights. It was during this trip that I discovered that he was indeed a deeply compassionate man. I knew I had met a fellow supporter, and I was right.

He has been a courageous critic against authoritarianism and a relentless defender of fundamental freedoms, human rights, democracy and the rule of law — causes such as the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong, the meaningful participation of Taiwan in international fora and the Uighur genocide.

Thank you for your support and dedicated service to Canadians, my friend. Your principled voice will truly be missed. Please accept my sincere congratulations and best wishes on a well-deserved retirement. Thank you.

Hon. Brent Cotter: Honourable senators, other than by reputation, I have only known Senator Munson since early 2020 when I joined the Senate. During that time, I have learned and greatly appreciated his contributions in this chamber and the ways in which he advances issues and concerns in a constructive, considerate, heartfelt and, if I may say so, kind way — a model for us all. I particularly admire his relentless, generous, unselfish efforts on behalf of those who are the most vulnerable in our society, particularly those with intellectual disabilities.

This is an issue that touches many of us in this chamber personally, as it does literally millions of Canadians. I have shared Jim's commitment with my daughter Kelly, who is herself intellectually disabled. She lives in a wonderful assisted-living community on Vancouver Island — in fact, not far from where Senator Campbell lives.

At their community, Kelly and others weave and put together decorative pillows. Last summer, I had the idea that I might buy one and that she and I might give it to Senator Munson in person on the occasion of his retirement as a small thank you. My daughter, however, thinks big. She said, "How about, so that all the senators will remember him, we make 100 pillows, you buy them and we give one to each senator in Mr. Munson's honour?" So that is what we did. I ordered them, and over the winter, Kelly and her colleagues made 100 decorative pillows, one for Jim and one for each of us.

• (1440)

This afternoon, and blessed by the Senate Ethics Officer, a decorative pillow made by Kelly and her colleagues — I owe a bit of deference to Senator Seidman here, to be careful, the chair of the Ethics Committee, as we know. A decorative pillow made by Kelly and her colleagues will appear in each of your offices, to honour Senator Munson, but also in the hope that when you set eyes upon it in the months or years to come, you might remember Jim's work in this chamber and elsewhere and, perhaps in a small way, dedicate yourself to be part of the great commitment to social justice that he has championed and inspired.

Thank you, Senator Munson. When I look at my pillow, I will be reminded of you and will try to do my part.

Hon. Wanda Elaine Thomas Bernard: Honourable senators, Senator Cotter is a hard act to follow, but my tribute is also personal.

I'm pleased to rise today to pay tribute to our honourable colleague, Senator Jim Munson. As many have already said today, Senator Munson is a tireless advocate for persons with disabilities, particularly children with disabilities and those on the autism spectrum.

In December 2016, shortly after I arrived in the Senate, he gave a statement for International Day of Persons with Disabilities. In that statement, he said:

I believe each of us has a role in creating an accessible future for everyone. Whether as policy-makers, community leaders, advocates or neighbours, there is a part for all of us to play.

At the end of that sitting, I immediately went over to thank Senator Munson for his statement and to ask what part I could play in getting a national autism strategy in Canada. That was the beginning of our work together on the autism file and many other issues of advocacy, human rights, and of course, all injected with humour.

Senator Munson became my go-to person for advice, support, wise counsel and a laugh when I needed it. I will always be grateful for the fun-filled guided tour of the tunnels in Centre Block that he organized for my family when they visited Ottawa, and I will never forget the hilarious race between Senator Munson and my two young grandsons, Damon and Gavin. I will leave it to you to guess who won that race.

Senator Munson, the legacy you leave behind is one of inclusion and kindness. I am especially grateful for all of your advocacy on autism initiatives and the priorities outlined in the *Pay Now or Pay Later* report. Here's Gavin, who has autism, joining me today.

Thank you, Senator Munson, for elevating the voices of persons with disabilities and for the passion that you poured into every issue you fought for. I wish you well in your retirement, and I look forward to seeing all the amazing things you will do in your next chapter. We will miss you. *Asante*. Thank you.

Hon. Mary Coyle: Honourable senators, today we sing the praises of our dear friend and esteemed colleague, the Honourable Jim Munson. Captivating maritime storyteller, accomplished journalist, elated Habs fan, hockey player and canal skater extraordinaire, high-level PMO communications guru, dedicated parliamentarian and all-round decent human being — Jim has been such a gift to this chamber and to Canada.

When former prime minister Jean Chrétien tapped Jim Munson to join the Senate of Canada in 2003, he knew Jim's political savvy would serve him well, as would his experience as a senior CTV correspondent who had reported on so many historical moments, from the FLQ crisis to the Tiananmen Square Massacre, from the assassination of Indira Gandhi to the Iran-Iraq and Gulf Wars. Jim credits his father, a United Church minister, for teaching him the value of service for the greater good, and Timmy, his son with Down's syndrome who, sadly, died young, with inspiring him to break down barriers for others.

In Jim Munson's first speech in this chamber, he said:

I consider government to be an agent of good. . . . I plan to work toward building bridges of opportunity for others, particularly children. . . . and the less fortunate.

And work hard he has. We all know Jim for his tenacious and effective work on autism, for championing the Special Olympics, for sponsoring the Accessible Canada Act, and for recently bringing Kindness Week legislation across the finish line. Jim's desire with the establishment of Kindness Week was, quite simply, to build a culture of kindness in Canada; a culture where we are friendly, generous and considerate towards each other. Senator Munson has an enormous heart — a heart of gold — which we all know he wears in full view right here on his sleeve.

Jim, we wish you a long and healthy retirement, enjoying family and friends, and deep satisfaction in your new role with the Victoria Forum. Jim, I am so happy your beloved staff member Michael Trinque is joining our team. Given he has dubbed you "Boss Dad" and me "Boss Mom," I just know you won't ever be too far away.

Senator Jim Munson, for all the relationships you have forged and fostered, for your many Senate accomplishments, for being a model of parliamentary civility and for just being the wonderful scamp, as your mom used to call you, we say to you, thank you so much, kind sir. You are living proof that government can, in fact, be an agent for good. Thank you. *Wela'liiq.*

Hon. Patricia Bovey: Honourable colleagues, Senator Munson — our conscience of kindness, our senator who skates or cycles to the chamber, a senator whose passion, concern for all Canadians, whose humanity, sense of humour, honesty and justice are the epitome of dedication, service and fun. Senator, you inspire us daily and, for me, have defined a goal to which we all should aspire.

Saying farewell to you from this august chamber is not easy, so I'll just say thank you. Thank you for your kindness bill. Thank you for all your work and insights on Bill C-81 and the way you have stood up for people with disabilities. Thank you for your determination that you have brought to the chamber's committees and to the parliamentary associations on whose executives you have served. Your vision and the way in which you have connected so many societal dots have made your years in this chamber admirable.

But now I want to be personal. I so appreciated the warmth with which you welcomed me when I was appointed to the Senate, and particularly when I joined the PSG. I have learned a great deal from you and by watching you work your magic.

Jim, your professional life prior to your time in the Senate was also truly significant. Before we actually met, I have to say you were in our living room almost daily for years, bringing us insights, facts and perspectives from various parts of the world, at home and abroad.

Your annual reminder in this chamber of the horrors and truths of the Tiananmen Square Massacre will be remembered. I can't imagine being there that day. I do know artists who were there, by those who were mowed down by the tanks. Some fled to Canada. One in particular, who early on came to our house in Victoria, has since become a major Canadian artist. Your tales remind me of one of the hardest walks, or perhaps I should say runs, I have ever done, crossing that square over the new pavers covering the place of the massacre. I wanted to go around it, but the Chinese police wouldn't hear of it. Feeling sick, I ran across

the square with your news stories in my head and those of the artists I came to know, coupled with my visceral, visual memories of the images, sounds, stories and human lives of that day.

Jim, I do thank you for all you gave me and my clan before we met, and the guidance you have given in the years we have worked together. I congratulate you on your many accomplishments and wish you a truly wonderful, rewarding retirement and many years of good health.

• (1450)

I also congratulate you on your appointment to the University of Victoria. You will find it a warm and welcoming community, and I will see you there among friends I know we have in common. You must come for dinner.

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, I also rise to recognize a remarkable man, Senator Jim Munson.

Jim, I have a formal statement that I was going to give, but I will send you that statement because I cannot get through it.

For those who don't know, 18 years ago, when Jim came to the Senate, it was a very different place and it was very difficult for me to fit in. Senator Munson and Senator Mercer were there for me. Senator Munson would always look out for me. He would always tell me what I should be doing, how I should be heard. The issues we discuss so freely today were not so much addressed when I first came to the Senate.

Jim, you introduced the kindness bill. I'm not surprised by that. You are "Mr. Kindness." You showed me so much kindness throughout my years, and you were our whip. My staff warned me, "Please don't talk about that in your statement." I knew that sometimes you had to give me some very tough messages, but I think you hurt more than I because you were a real friend.

Jim, you taught me the ropes but, most importantly, you taught me how to survive in the Senate. I could say a lot more about your kindness, but I will not be able to get through it. Jim, I will really miss you.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the time for senators' tributes has expired. I will now call upon Senator Munson.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

Hon. Jim Munson: Your Honour, I know we're not allowed to use props in the Senate, but I'm going to sleep well tonight. Senator Cotter and everybody, this is the pillow that Senator Cotter mentioned earlier. What a touching statement you made on behalf of your daughter. We'll all sleep well tonight with these pillows.

It's also wonderful, by the way, to receive tributes when you're alive. Just to hear them is amazing. I'm deeply touched. I am always fond of the saying, "Seek the wisdom of the ages, but look at the world through the eyes of a child."

On February 2, 2004, Senator Landon Pearson, as tradition dictates — and you know what this is like — tugged my arm, pulled me into the Senate chamber and introduced me as the "newbie" senator. From that moment, Landon was my guiding light, placing the rights of the child as a thread that would tie together my work here. I will come back to Senator Pearson a little later.

Today, I speak to you as the child who grew up to be a senator. I hope to tell a story that reflects my own journey — the people who helped me along the way and the influence they had on me.

Senators, you are an important part of this story, because it is here in the Senate of Canada where I discovered inspired thinkers and leaders, made new friendships, found mentors and a passion for helping others. It's here in the Senate where I have found the real meaning of public service, an institution where every one of you has brought your experience of life to help build a better Canada. I mean that deeply and sincerely.

Honourable senators, what we do here matters. It matters because we use our time to improve legislation. It matters because we can use our time in committees to focus on the critical issues of the day: study them and analyze them with a collective lens of expert advice and experience. It matters because we work in collaboration. It matters because we have the time to do it.

I've always been a man in a hurry. What I've discovered in this chamber is that here you can actually slow down, really learn how to listen to others, seize the essence of an issue and then run with it.

But, like all of you, I had a life before the Senate. I came to the Senate with previous life experience and what it taught me. As a foreign correspondent for CTV National News network, I witnessed the worst of humanity and the best of humanity. I saw love and I saw hate. It is the best of humanity that inspires me, and sometimes the worst of humanity that has moved me to action.

As a child growing up in northern New Brunswick in the 1950s, I fed my imagination and curiosity. I wondered: What was the world like beyond the borders of my hometown of Campbellton? I was adventurous and mischievous. I loved hockey and I was a proud rink rat. Listening to the radio and reading newspapers were my own sources of knowledge and dreams. We did not have a television set. In fact, there were very few television sets in my town. But we had teachers who brought to life the world outside my small town and satisfied a young child's curiosity about Canada and the world beyond.

A Grade 7 supply teacher spent the entire year telling us about China. She had lived there for a year. Little did I know that 30 years later I would be living in Beijing, discovering every corner of a country that had captured my imagination as a 12-year-old.

My other discovery of the world stood at my doorstep on the platform of the Campbellton train station when the afternoon train would pull in. I really feel I'm going to be 75 now. As I peered through the mist from the steam engine, there would be the bundle of newspapers — my bundle. Before delivering them on my paper route, I devoured every word of the *Saint John Telegraph*. My customers might sometimes have been annoyed with the late delivery, but my curiosity of the great big world was satisfied for that day.

A train station in those days was the entry and departure point to the world. It brought awareness. This one time, it was about politics. Imagine being a 12-year-old boy with your dad in 1958 — an election year — bundled up in winter clothing and waiting for the campaign trains to arrive. Imagine the scene: the steam engine, the political bunting of party colours draped over the last car. And who would emerge, but John Diefenbaker. I tried to shake his hand. I really tried to shake his hand after his speech. Perhaps because of what has been said of my stature, he didn't notice me and he didn't shake my hand. My father tried to console me. But a few days later — and I hate to say this, Senator Plett — there was a similar scenario with Lester Pearson. After his stump speech, I stuck out my hand. This time, the politician shook it. I have been told I've been a Liberal ever since.

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh!

Senator Munson: Politics crept into my life and captured, again, my curiosity and imagination. Here I was now 19 years of age and, as has been said, a radio announcer in the classic 250-watt radio station in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. Once again, John Diefenbaker played a role in my dream of one day — maybe one day — working on Parliament Hill as one of those national reporters. This was a by-election. The year was 1965, and Diefenbaker was in town to help the local candidate — I never forgot his name — John O. Bower. He won. There, outside the radio station, were the scribes wearing their turned-up trench coats, smoking their cigarettes and waiting for the chief to arrive. I wondered, "Maybe if I did a good interview, somebody would notice and I would punch my ticket to Parliament Hill."

• (1500)

That wasn't going to happen — at least not that day or not right away.

I began my interview by welcoming Mr. Diefenbaker to Yarmouth. I ended the interview by thanking him. In the course of 30 minutes, I hadn't asked one question. Call it what you want — stage fright — but it was the best interview I ever did. My listeners had a giggle, and I learned about humility.

By the way, my vocabulary and understanding of politics and the economy were limited in those days. My interest was more focused on having enough money from my weekly paycheque of \$36 to buy a few beers on a Friday night.

One day, when reading the noon-hour newscast, I stumbled upon a word I had never seen before. Remember, this was 1965. I said, “Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson stated today that Canadians might have to tighten their belts as we could all be suffering from serious in-fa-la-tion.” Not “inflation,” but “in-fa-la-tion.” I thought it was a stomach disorder. I didn’t have a clue what I was saying — and that would sometimes happen later on in life. This time, the listeners had a good laugh, and I learned about humility one more time.

Along this radio road, I found wonderful friends and mentors. I found welcoming communities. I found acts of kindness. Along this road, there were expressions of love. Along this road, I met the love of my life, Ginette.

Along this road, there was the loss of a child and the birth of two more sons. Life seemed cruel in the 1960s when we lost Timothy James Alexander Munson at the age of nine months. As has been said, he was a Down syndrome baby who struggled with pneumonia. His short life became my inspiration and the expression of everything I’ve done for the rights of the child, of children with disabilities, of those who live in the special and unique world of autism and, of course, those who thrive in the organization that has been the centrepiece of my Senate life, Special Olympics.

For 17 years, I have often shared the road with Special Olympics athletes. It didn’t matter whether it was nearby Navan, Ontario, or Nagano, Japan. Every time I was hugged by an athlete was an embrace of love, living the moment and living with the motto of Special Olympics: “Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave at the attempt.”

In the inclusive world of Special Olympics, this is what is called winning at life.

Honourable senators, I know every one of you has a story to share. Your life experiences continue to guide me as I share my personal story and the autism story. You, Senator Wanda Bernard, and your grandson; you, Senator Peter Boehm, and your son; you, Senator Cotter, and your daughter; and you, Senator Leo Housakos, and your work with Giant Steps in Montreal — you are my guides. And I am thinking of all of you who have a relative or a neighbour down the street with autism. I am thinking of the kind acts that happen every day in the autism community.

This journey has connected me with you and practically every autism organization in the country, particularly CASDA, the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance, and QuickStart Autism here in Ottawa. Thank you. Every year, we took the Hill by storm, and we brought our message to the Hill. I think politicians finally listened.

Because of our collective will, we are on the verge of implementing this national autism strategy. It is in the hands of government now. And the report that has been talked about, which I am proud of and in which I am proud to have played a

role — *Pay now or pay later: autism families in crisis* — has served as a template for the autism community. We have a foundation to build upon.

Human rights and inclusion in our society are powerful ideas that drive change, transformation and action. That’s why I am proud of my private member’s bill that became law a number of years ago. Recognizing World Autism Awareness Day on April 2 has not only given a profile to the autism community; I believe it has helped create an inclusive place for those who have autism.

To you, the friends in the CASDA community; the other autism organizations, autism and family advocates; you have been the driving force bringing vision, knowledge, expertise and wisdom to realize the achievements we have reached together. I thank you humbly.

Inclusion leads to productive lives for all Canadians. We can never forget that 6.2 million Canadians have one or more disabilities. That is 22% of our population; one in five Canadians lives with a disability.

I think one of my proudest moments in the Senate of Canada was to help shepherd the Accessible Canada Act through the Senate and into law. Remember, senators, we made amendments. We made a good bill a better law.

Of course, there is more work to be done. But as I said at the beginning of my speech, you have the knowledge, the wisdom, the experience and the time to make this a more inclusive country, a country where people who live with differences can participate fully as members of our society.

In my life as a reporter, I have witnessed and reported on the good, the bad and the ugly. Through most of it, it filled me with energy. Sometimes, I was afraid. Most of the time, I was aware of history being made. What astounded me was the survival and the strength of the human spirit, whether it was in Belfast, Beirut or Beijing; whether it was the killing of Quebec cabinet minister Pierre Laporte during the FLQ crisis; whether it was the assassination of Indira Gandhi; whether it was the first Gulf War or the Iran-Iraq War; whether it was covering the numerous bruising election campaigns; it was a privileged window on the world for me.

The questions that always surfaced for me were about the people: How are these events affecting the lives of ordinary people? I would ask myself that every day as I prepared a news story. During those 35 years, working with true professionals in radio and at CTV, I learned how to work hard and I learned the true skills of being a reporter.

I want to acknowledge an old friend, Sidney Margles from Montreal. Early on in radio in Montreal, he and I worked together at Standard Broadcast News here in Ottawa. He showed me the first steps — getting a little tougher, getting a little edgier and making a deadline. You can’t miss a deadline. The news doesn’t come on at 11:05; it comes on at 11.

Among the news professionals who deeply influenced me, I want to recognize Tim Kotcheff, Lloyd Robertson, Craig Oliver and so many others. And you, Pamela, as well as Senator Duffy. It is so important to recognize others. Thank you for the work you have done in the journalism world.

You know who you are. I can't name everybody. I want to thank the hardworking producers and crews in the bureaus and main newsrooms in Toronto. I particularly want to thank John König, François Bisson and Mike Nolan, the producer/cameramen who were my eyes on the road. You helped me write the stories and show them. You have shaped me.

There is a special person in my life, Roger Smith, my old CTV colleague. Thank you, Roger, for always being in my corner in life and on the hockey rink.

During my five years living and reporting in China, our family could not have survived without the guidance and support of our interpreter there, Zhao Feng Yu, now Frank Zhao, who is now a Canadian and doing quite well. I really appreciate Mr. Zhao. As he said to me when I got to China — because he had other reporters who showed up: Dennis Mcintosh, Tom Clark, Roger and others were there. When I showed up at the airport with Ginette, he looked at me and I looked at him. He said: “Finally, a reporter I can talk to, vis-à-vis.” He meant we were the same height. He was so happy to meet me.

• (1510)

Speaking of Canadians and wonderful people with whom I have shared the deepest lifelong friendships, I want to acknowledge Don Connolly, Kevin Ryan, Ron MacIsaac, Steven Boyd and the forever-missed Robert McKelvie; friends from Nova Scotia and the Maritimes, and lifelong friends who supported me and lived with me on so many life adventures.

In the 1970s, the early 1980s and later in the late 1990s, along with my colleagues in the national press gallery on Parliament Hill — there were not long Friday lunches, by the way, but there were long Friday evenings — away from the press club, I practised being a corridor commando, chasing and cornering politicians into giving an insightful quote and clip. I learned history on the run, to borrow the title of a National Film Board documentary by Peter Raymont on the election of 1979, and on the dynamic among four reporters, including yours truly, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau and Joe Clark. That is known as learning on the job. Many colourful stories were created there. Maybe one day they will be in a book.

Later, as a foreign correspondent, deadlines and dealing with death were tough enough, but the question always remained: What happens the next day for those who are not in the headlines? This is but one story that had more meaning for me than all the others.

Let me take you to Phnom Penh in Cambodia in the early 1990s, into the back alleys of this tortured city, to see the faces of humanity and their will to survive. Orphaned babies, many with recognizable disabilities, had been thrown into trash cans. A Canadian woman by the name of Naomi Bronstein, from Montreal, was operating a home for orphans in the heart of that beleaguered city. She was saving lives. I told her story on TV

and the story of the babies. Who would adopt them? Would they live long enough to be adopted? Does anybody care? It is the one story that has affected and influenced me forever. My thought was that if I were ever, later in life, to be in the position of doing more than just telling a story, then for the love of a child, I would do something.

After eight years abroad, my CTV road had taken a new turn, back in Canada. First in Halifax working with my team, Gord Danielson and Charlie MacDonald, and then back to Ottawa. I was still grinding away at the next story on Parliament Hill. Little did I know that I would find myself facing the prospect of a new life beyond reporting. The news business, being what it is, can be cruel sometimes. In 2001, I was out of a job. At 55, what could possibly be next?

I will never forget the call from the prime minister who changed my life. Early on, as I mentioned, there was John Diefenbaker and Lester Pearson. And before going overseas, there was Pierre Trudeau, Joe Clark and Brian Mulroney, whose election campaigns and governments I covered as a newsperson. I loved politics — not that I wanted to be one of them, but I was always fascinated by the role politicians and political parties play in our lives. I loved the stories, and I loved telling them in my journalism.

On a particular morning, the call came from the Prime Minister's Office. I will never forget his voice — “Jimmy!” Sometimes, he said to me, you were a so-and-so, and sometimes you were a good guy, but I like you. Would you come and work for me? I hesitated. I was out of work at 55. Why would I go to work, as we call it in journalistic circles, “working on the dark side.” If it had not been for the wisdom of my wife, I may have been unemployed for a long time.

Now came the enlightenment. Working for then-prime minister Jean Chrétien has been the greatest privilege of my life. He gave me back a life that I thought I had lost. He gave me purpose, and for almost two years, I walked into a world where decisions were being made that mattered to all Canadians and many other people in other countries. I was in the room when the decision was made not to go to war in Iraq. Jean Chrétien was a man of decision; humble, highly intelligent, proud and fierce. He is one of the great prime ministers this country has had. Mr. Chrétien has served his country well, and I was honoured to be in his service along with the incredible team of people who ran the Prime Minister's Office. Most have remained close friends since. You know who you are, and I thank you for your friendship. Specifically, I want to acknowledge my three amigos, Bruce Hartley, Stephen Hogue, and Paul Genest.

Back to the Senate. You never know in life where the road will take you next. Being appointed to the Senate has given me a public voice I never thought I would ever have. Honourable senators, do you remember the day you walked into the Senate? A sense of excitement, expectation and, yes, trepidation? You are surrounded by your kind and loving family. Recognizing tradition, you are escorted into the Senate by a veteran senator, one that you have respected or seen over the years. Looking around you, you wonder — and I still wonder — how did I get here? As I told you earlier, former senator Landon Pearson was the one who clutched my arm as I walked into the Senate. Simply put, she was my hero, a fighter for children's rights. She was

smart, she was warm, she was kind, and she symbolized to me what a person could do in this place. As an advocate for the rights of the child well before coming to the Senate, she didn't waste any time here in promoting the rights of the child under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. I thought again of children I grew up with, those who lived in poverty. I thought of the orphaned babies in Cambodia. I thought of a baby son who died so long ago. And I thought, what could I do to try to make a little difference in the lives of children?

We carried on, as has been said, with Landon's celebration of children each year with National Child Day. Imagine the old Senate chamber; we would pack the place with the voices of children on November 20 every year. It was their voices, their advocacy and their opportunity to show us the way. The way Landon put it, every child is a new chance for the whole human race. My hope today, as I leave, is that one of you — or one of you from each group or caucus — gets together and revives that celebration and the recognition of the child. But there is still unfinished business here.

First, working with the incomparable former senator Raynell Andreychuk, the report *Children: The Silenced Citizens* and the call for a national children's commissioner. Today, with the work of Senator Rosemary Moodie, I hope, senators, that the call will be answered. I hope that the government will really listen. We've been saying it over and over again: This country needs a national children's commissioner.

I will continue to look at the world through the eyes of a child. If Landon Pearson, through her Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights at Carleton University, can continue to do so at the age of 90, why shouldn't I? All it takes is a little time.

It reminds me of a story being with Mr. Chrétien back in northern New Brunswick after an event in Bathurst, New Brunswick. We were on a country road heading to the airport. He said to stop the car; he wanted to see the people who were standing by a fence. It was a fiercely cold northern New Brunswick day, and he was insistent on getting out. I was cold, I wanted to stay in the car, but he was with them for about 25 minutes. There were no cameras. I said to him, Mr. Chrétien, that was a nice thing that you just did. It was a kind thing that you did. And he looked at me and he said, what did it take, Jimmy? He said: "It took time." I kept that in my heart. All it takes is a little time, to stop, listen and to pay attention to others. It is advice that I have embraced.

I learned so much in the Senate, but now I need to be blunt. Despite all my advantages to learn about the world and my country, despite all the opportunity to show more curiosity and interest in our First Nations and their communities, I have never paid enough attention. Imagine being a reporter full of curiosity and questions, and I never paid enough attention.

I covered a major news story in the mid 1990s in Davis Inlet in Labrador. Innu children had become addicted to sniffing gas in Davis Inlet. I was full of empathy. I wrote a number of news stories, but I never really understood the story behind the story — the story of systemic racism and a system that stole the lives of families, communities and Indigenous children. I did not know my history.

• (1520)

It wasn't until 2004, when I first entered the Senate, that I began to truly listen. I met former senators Charlie Watt and Willie Adams, and Senator Lovelace Nicholas. I became a member of the Aboriginal Committee. Lillian Dyck — my goodness, I miss her — sat here as a mentor and an adviser. I gained a better understanding of Indigenous issues.

Knowledge is the key to understanding. With the help of Lillian and other Indigenous senators, I have come to understand the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples and the real history of this country. I hope the Indigenous senators in this room can forgive me for not knowing better at an earlier age.

But you are never too old to learn, are you? I am grateful that my teachers have been other senators, and now we are all in a state of shock — I'm going to have a hard time getting through this. I thought I would get through this easily but it is difficult. It is so difficult — we are shocked at the discovery of the graves of the 215 children of the Kamloops residential school.

The Indigenous children of Kamloops are revealing the truth. Their spirits are alive, though, and they are talking to us. Canada is in shock. People's awareness of the unfair treatment of First Nations is finally reaching every corner of this country. Everybody is talking of our history with sorrow and anger.

I believe reconciliation is the responsibility of each and every Canadian, each and every one of us. We need to relearn our history. We need to learn that history.

One of the important and eminent teachers we've had here in the Senate was former senator Murray Sinclair, the chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission contain an invitation to all of us to act. In presenting the findings of the commission, Senator Sinclair's words were:

... we have described for you a mountain. We have shown you a path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing.

Honourable senators, how can there be reconciliation when so many of us still know so little about First Nations history?

Recently, Quebec First Nations in Canada lost a wise sage and formidable communicator, Serge Bouchard, an anthropologist and writer. This wouldn't be well-known to English-speaking Canada, but if you want to see the translations and watch the documentaries, search the name Serge Bouchard and listen to his words. For 30 years, he broadcast his knowledge of the North, of First Nations and of life in general on Sunday evenings on Radio-Canada. He was a great friend of Indigenous people and had a huge following. His lesson for us was to be curious, to listen, and to treat each person like the unique individual he or she truly is — to be kind and respectful. He was a transmitter of history and memory. His published work is a good place to start relearning our history.

I asked the question: How can there be reconciliation when we know practically nothing about First Nations history? Is it too much to ask ourselves individually and as a nation to answer the Call to Action 62, and change the way we understand our relationship with First Nations?

To the Muslim community of Canada regarding the unspeakable tragedy in London, Ontario — I hurt with you. We in the Senate hurt with you.

I want to say this personally to my dear colleague Senator Salma Ataullahjan. Salma, you have been such a dear friend. Remember this one thing: You will never walk alone in our grief. We will lift you up to walk again. Love always has the upper hand over hate.

There are so many people to thank. In my office alone over the last 17 and a half years, I've had a number of trusting and loving advisers. For example, Alex Asselin, Amélie Crosson, Andrée Chenard, Marie Russell, Elizabeth Laforest and Christian Dicks, who showed such commitment. Still with me are the two angels — one who is sitting here — who guide me, watch over me and keep me calm — if that's possible — and organized: Lisa Thibedeau and Lillian Kruszely.

My dear Lisa, who will soon have a baby, has been with me most of my time in the Senate. Imagine a new little person on the planet. I repeat what former senator Landon Pearson said: Every child is a new chance for the whole human race. Lisa, I wish you and Chris the greatest happiness. There is nothing more in the world than the love of a child.

Lillian, you are the most talented person, ready the role of sending me out into the world again after wrapping everything up in the office. We have two months, but we might need an extension.

Thank you to Lisa and Lillian for having accompanied me through these very demanding and busy times remotely. I don't know how I will function without you.

I can't forget all those interns who spent summers with us. To all those interns, now well on their way to new careers, I hope that your stay with us added a little value to your life. I know that your assignment with us gave you a taste of the political landscape and a special dimension on what it means to be a Canadian citizen.

Then there's Michael Trinque. You have all met Michael somewhere in the corridors of the Senate. As you know, Michael has Down's syndrome. He has been working as part of our office team for 12 years. Michael has brought to the office the face of affection, dedication and the understanding that we are, as the saying goes, all in this together. Together means inclusion. As Senator Cordy has said, Michael won't be out of work. He will join Senator Coyle's team.

Senator Coyle, I hope that by your example, more senators will create a space for those who have the ability — not the disability but the ability — to bring added value to everything that we do.

Speaking of value, senators, there has been nothing greater than the new friendships I have made in the Senate. I'm particularly grateful for the circles of friendships: the committee friendships, the caucus friendships and simply friendships. I look at Senator Martin's face, and all I see is a friend. You have all enriched my life. You have made it fun.

Thank you Terry Mercer for being you. We arrived in the Senate on the same day. I guess you can call us Senate seatmates for life. Of course, in our feisty little group led by Jane Cordy, it has been an interesting experience. We will see where new experiences take senators in the future.

I owe so much gratitude to the people in the Senate Administration. You have been faithful, dedicated public servants, committed to making the Senate function well. I have been witness to your professionalism and dedication. From a friendly good morning to an informal conversation to expert advice, you've shown me the greatest support. You showed by example, each and every day, the true meaning of public service.

Speaker Furey, you are a gentle, considerate speaker and a wise leader. You are the face of the modern Senate, guiding this institution through its evolution. I value our friendship. You have guided us all with respect, grace and dignity.

I want the pages to know that I have loved hearing your stories, your dreams and your aspirations. Thank you for your assistance. Always be curious about what's down the road.

Stop for the security outside and the drivers of the small buses — we see them every day, and I know you do from time to time — and listen to their stories. It is important. They have done a tremendous job in protecting us and keeping us on the move.

• (1530)

Speaking of what's next down the road, I'm pleased to tell you there is a future after 75. On July 15, the day after my mandatory retirement date, I'm taking up a position as Executive-in-Residence at the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business at the University of Victoria. I asked them if they could change "executive" to "sage," but they wouldn't do that. I'll also be a special adviser to the Victoria Forum. It's a part-time gig, as they say.

I know you're aware of the Victoria Forum because many senators have been involved in it, in the past plenaries and webinars. The next forum is April 20 to 22 of next year. The theme, Turf, Truth and Trust, brings together policy-makers, business leaders, academics, youth and leaders of civil society. We'll discuss all kinds of gaps and divisions in our society, from identity to territory, religion, race, economic status, culture and politics, culminating in policy recommendations for political leaders.

I'm very grateful. I know that his dad has passed away and he can't be here today, but Senator Peter Boehm will be acting as a liaison between the forum and the Senate. So I'm not totally gone, Your Honour, because I'll be working with you and with Peter, and continuing this partnership with the Victoria Forum.

Honourable senators, people say to me, "You've lived so many adventures and met so many important people in your life, people like Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama, but it seems people who are closest to you, your family, your community, your workplace, that's the real difference in life." It is within your family that you begin to reflect the values that will carry you throughout your life.

My father Eddie, or Ed or J.E., the United Church minister, was the spiritual leader in the congregations he served. He accompanied the members of his congregations through the cycle of their life, from baptizing babies to marrying young couples to comforting those who were ill in hospital, and finally to offer comfort to families at funerals. He was a deeply empathetic man, shaped by the severe hardships of his youth growing up in the small village of Alma, New Brunswick. You learn those values.

Before I talk about my mother, I have a little secret I have to get out of the way before I end. In my father's congregation, because I was quite rebellious and questioned and challenged a lot, I remember a member of my father's congregation saying, "You'll never fill your father's shoes." Well, senators, it was said a moment ago I may never have filled my father's shoes, but today I am wearing my father's shoes and they seem to fit. They have anchored me.

My mother Dora, well, she was tiny — no surprise. She was determined, she was tough in a gentle way and she was feisty. She loved people and connected to everyone, and everyone loved her.

My brother David, my sister Mary and I were like the proverbial preacher's kids and had to develop a deep resilience to always living in a glass bowl. Together the three of us carry on the values of love and family bonds. We are a close family. To put it simply, we love each other. Both our parents would be proud of the four grandchildren and the two great-grandchildren, so far.

My family includes Ginette's sisters, Françoise and Denise, and my brother-in-law, André, of the large Aubut clan; talking about the Republic of Madawaska — they say "république" — that's in New Brunswick, it's still part of Canada, but they're from there and they've been an important part of my life.

I don't know what to say because I may not be able to finish the last four pages. I'm almost done. But Ginette, of course, has been the love of my life, along with the two boys here. He's known as James but we know him as Jamie, and Claude Mathieu, known as Claude. We're so fortunate to receive the gifts of a child, two children, later on in life after losing Timmy. To you, Ginette and to the boys, I can't say anything more than I love you so much. You have kept me together. You've understood my weird sense of humour. But if there's anything that is caring

about life, it's about family. I'd like to tell all the senators that each and every day when you go home, hug your children; and a big loving hug to you, Ginette.

I feel enormous gratitude for the platform the Senate has given me to help build awareness of what makes a difference in the lives of people, awareness around intellectual disabilities, the power of Special Olympics, around families who live with autism, awareness of the power of advocacy; it goes on and on.

One of the last great privileges I've had in the Senate is to have sponsored the Kindness Week bill last month, inspired and moved to action by Rabbi Reuven Bulka, one of Ottawa's spiritual leaders and the co-founder of The Kindness Project, and with the unanimous support of the House of Commons and, of course, here in the Senate, it was just a given; it was done. A bill to create Kindness Week in Canada passed in Parliament with the help of Michael Barrett of the Conservative Party and Liberal MP Emmanuella Lambropoulos.

Why a Kindness Week? Why is kindness so central to our well-being as individuals and as a society? To paraphrase Dr. Brian Goldman — yes, the doctor from CBC's radio program, "White Coat, Black Art" — kindness and empathy are essential in everyday life. Dr. Goldman, the journalist, published his book on kindness and empathy in 2017. All the evidence you need to understand why kindness is essential for us as individuals in a society is in this book.

As for the bill, I was merely the messenger, but it was Rabbi Bulka who brought his vision to a national level, a dedicated week to spread the knowledge of kindness and how it changes everyday lives. We did it, Rabbi, we did it — a kindness law in this country, which I hope acts as a beacon to other countries. Canada, a place where acts of kindness simply build more acts of kindness.

Recently here in the Senate, we lost an employee. His name was Ismaël Ocal. He was a cleaner. He had a son with autism. He had a smile. He was here long before I arrived. We would have conversations, many conversations. They were the conversations which mattered to me. They brought meaning. They brought humanity. Ismaël, he was one of us.

Thank you for your patience, but I really did need this time because I just had to talk to you to tell you what it has been like for 17 and a half years.

In closing, over the years I've been rereading letters from my father's brother, Uncle Lloyd Munson, who was killed during the Second World War. He was in the Royal Canadian Air Force and a crew member on a Lancaster bomber. I was born in 1946. We never met, but I have met his spirit. Every year I attend ceremonies at the National War Memorial to honour him and five other uncles who came home. I am named after Uncle Lloyd. My full name is James Lloyd Munson.

Every letter to my dad during the Second World War, whether it was from Scotland, Egypt or what was then known as Ceylon, Uncle Lloyd would sign the letters with the words, "So long for now, Lloyd."

As I move into the next stage of life, I hope to be guided by the words of Marcel Proust, who said, “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new sights but in looking with new eyes.”

Honourable senators, so long for now. Be kind and cultivate your sense of fun. Thank you.

• (1540)

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INCOME TAX ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIFTH REPORT OF NATIONAL FINANCE
COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Percy Mockler, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, presented the following report:

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

The Standing Senate Committee on National Finance has the honour to present its

FIFTH REPORT

Your committee, to which was referred Bill S-222, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (use of resources), has, in obedience to the order of reference of May 25, 2021, examined the said bill and now reports the same without amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

PERCY MOCKLER
Chair

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

(On motion of Senator Omidvar, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading at the next sitting of the Senate.)

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, June 15, 2021, at 2 p.m.

CANADIAN VICTIMS BILL OF RIGHTS

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu introduced Bill S-235, An Act to amend the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights (posting of information about the victim).

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

[*English*]

THE HONOURABLE JIM MUNSON

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the career of the Honourable Senator Jim Munson.

QUESTION PERIOD

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before calling Question Period, there were a couple of points I would like to make. I've made these points before, but I wish to make them again. Many senators have taken to making very lengthy

preambles to their questions, things that often amount to, in my opinion, statements or inquiries. They also have, in some cases, taken to asking two, three and sometimes four questions in the same question. What that does, honourable senators, is it interrupts the queue for senators who are in line to ask questions and we don't get a chance to give senators who are supposed to ask on a particular day the opportunity to ask questions that they have prepared.

Lastly, when you are asked about a supplementary, honourable senators, it's not an opportunity to ask a separate, different question. You have to go back into the queue to do that. A supplementary should have some nexus to your original question. I give a lot of leeway there, but there should be some nexus.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Your Honour, we will certainly try to adhere to that admonition and we hope our answers will be equally concise and direct and not setting the government agenda.

My question, government leader, concerns the ongoing detainment in Chinese jails of Canadian citizens Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. The two Michaels and their families continue to be in the thoughts of Canadians over 900 days after they were illegally jailed. In March, these Canadians were subjected to so-called trials that were nothing but a sham. Our ambassador to China, Dominic Barton, was absent while their trials were taking place. This week, we learned from Minister Garneau that Ambassador Barton is in regular contact, leader, with Chinese tech company Huawei to find a way to free the two Michaels.

Leader, why is Ambassador Barton negotiating with Huawei on freeing the two Michaels when they were unlawfully jailed by the Chinese communist regime? Is this approach the reason it's going to take quite a long time to release them, as the Prime Minister told Ryerson University last week?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. The short answer is — and I'll try to be brief — Canada is working and using multiple approaches and multiple pathways to secure the release of the two Michaels who have been detained, as you put it, unreasonably, arbitrarily and illegally. This includes using diplomatic efforts with our allies, notably the President of the United States Joe Biden, and exploring all ways in which — while remaining true to the long-term interests of Canada and indeed all those who would otherwise be victimized and subject to the arbitrary coercive actions of regimes like China — to secure the release of our two Michaels. It is a fact that, to date, China has been intransigent. That does not mean, however, that Canada is letting up one wit in terms of its efforts to release them.

Senator Plett: The short answer to me sounded like it was yes.

Leader, is it usual practice for Canadian governmental officials, including ambassadors or high commissioners, to negotiate with private companies on the well-being of Canadian citizens abroad, especially those illegally jailed? As far as you know, has this ever happened before?

Leader, could you tell us if Ambassador Barton negotiated allowing Ms. Meng Wanzhou's family to join her in Vancouver for Christmas while the two Michaels sat in jail? How can the Trudeau government possibly think that fiasco is fair?

Senator Gold: Senator, thank you for your question. Canada is working hard to secure the two Michaels and using all appropriate measures to do so. I have no information about the matters that you raised. The important thing, and all Canadians would agree, is that we use all methods possible to secure their release.

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY

NATIONAL MICROBIOLOGY LABORATORY

Hon. Thanh Hai Ngo: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. As you may be aware, there's a growing concern that the COVID-19 outbreak may be the result — I said "may be" — of an accidental escape of a substance from the Chinese virology lab. Last week in the committee, I asked the Minister of International Development whether she supports an independent investigation, and she said that she did. I give the minister credit, because that is a much better response than the one that came from the Prime Minister when he responded to a legitimate question by accusing people of racism.

• (1550)

Senator Gold, your government is refusing to comply with the House of Commons order to produce a document on the firing of the two scientists from the National Microbiology Laboratory. As the government is hiding this document, why should we have confidence you will support an investigation into the origin of COVID, and can you provide to the Senate the specific steps that you will take to support an investigation?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): I'm pleased to answer your questions. You raise important issues. The government is not hiding documents, and I will refrain from pointing out the excessive demands that are being made in the other place for the production of documents. Simply put, Canada supports a transparent and open inquiry into the source of the COVID-19 virus and an independent analysis and evaluation of the origins of the pandemic and is working with like-minded countries to that end.

With regard to the issue of the two researchers, my understanding is that these individuals — as you would know — are no longer with the Public Health Agency of Canada. However, the government is not in a position to release or disclose any further information about their termination due to legal privacy considerations.

Senator Ngo: Thank you. You didn't answer my question about what kind of steps you will take for the investigation.

Anyway, in March, President Biden asked his National Security Advisor for a report from the U.S. intelligence community on the most up-to-date analysis of the origin of COVID-19, including whether it emerged from human contact with an infected animal or from a laboratory accident. After receiving that report, President Biden ordered a follow-up intelligence review, including specific questions for China, and to report back to him in 90 days.

Senator Gold, as part of your report to the Senate on what Canada is doing to investigate this matter, can you also outline the specific steps being taken by the Government of Canada to engage with the United States and other allies on this matter?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. The Government of Canada is engaged with the United States and others to pursue this analysis. It is a challenging one, given the facts on the ground. The government is committed to working with its allies to find out the origins of this virus.

[*Translation*]

FINANCE

MONETARY POLICY FRAMEWORK RENEWAL

Hon. Diane Bellemare: I hope I'll have time to ask my question even though I shortened it. It's for Senator Gold.

The five-year monetary policy agreement between the government and the Bank of Canada ends on December 31. Usually that agreement is renewed in October for another five years. In the 30 years that this agreement has been in place, its parameters haven't changed.

That isn't the case elsewhere. New Zealand, which pioneered this approach, changed the terms of its agreement three years ago. That country now has a dual mandate, as do the United States and Australia, both of which are confederations.

My question is for you and the Minister of Finance. After the work that the Bank of Canada did internally to inform Canadians, what studies did the Department of Finance undertake to inform the government so that it could ensure that the agreement benefits all Canadians? What work has the department done? When does the government, and more specifically the Minister of Finance, intend to renew the agreement with the Bank of Canada? Does the minister intend to keep Parliament informed?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you, senator, for asking that question. The current monetary policy framework will expire on December 31, 2021. Thanks to the notice you gave me, I made inquiries with the government. I don't yet have the details you asked for, but

I'm told that the process of renewing the monetary policy framework is always done through extensive consultations with various stakeholders. The Department of Finance is in regular contact with the Bank of Canada throughout this renewal process.

Senator Bellemare: A Bank of Canada study published in August 2020 reveals that Canada's central bank is more independent with respect to the assessment of and the choices it can make regarding the monetary policy framework compared to New Zealand, the United States and England. Still, monetary policy has a major impact on our economy.

Senator Gold, can you please ask the Minister of Finance whether she thinks there's a democratic deficit in Canada in terms of how monetary policy decisions are made?

Senator Gold: I'll be happy to ask the minister the question and get back to you with a response.

HEALTH

COVID-19 PANDEMIC—HEALTH MEASURES IMPOSED ON OLYMPIC ATHLETES

Hon. Chantal Petitclerc: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Gold, as Montrealers, we both celebrated the outstanding victory of the Montreal Canadiens earlier this week. What great news. There's more good news. On Sunday, the federal government announced a quarantine exemption for the finalists in the NHL playoffs. Hockey players will be able to cross the border and avoid the 14-day quarantines which, understandably, have a considerable impact on the preparation and performance of athletes.

The bad news is that, 44 days from the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, our amateur athletes aren't receiving the same treatment. They must still quarantine for 14 days. Many organizations, athletes and journalists are being very vocal about their frustration and anger, which I share wholeheartedly.

Our athletes have been vaccinated. They are tested regularly. They have been living in bubbles for more than a year. They are our best ambassadors and we must support them. They're being told that Canada is a country where health measures for high-performance athletes vary depending on whether or not they can afford a private plane. Senator Gold, how does the government plan to address this situation?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question, senator. I'll inquire with the government and get back to you with an answer soon.

Senator Petitclerc: Senator Gold, I really want to insist on this, because we can't wait weeks for an answer. I read an article yesterday that quoted Mikael Kingsbury, a 28-year-old skier, who said the following:

. . . it's really not cool for the Government of Canada to do that to athletes. It's just sad when you see what other countries are doing.

That's true.

I completely agree with Dominick Gauthier, an Olympian and coach, who said:

No matter what the government ends up doing, it will have sent a clear message that our Olympians are second-class athletes compared to professional hockey players.

Senator Gold, can you please ask Minister Guilbeault and Minister Mendicino to find a solution to this problem as soon as possible in the coming days? The Olympic Games are starting in 44 days.

Senator Gold: Thank you, dear colleague. I'll ask the question and follow up on this matter with the ministers you mentioned.

[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, I have received a letter from a group of high school students at the Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, asking me to sign a letter to Parliament urging the government to take action against what many are calling a genocide by the Chinese government toward its minority Uighur population.

They write:

If we sacrifice our morals on the altar of convenience, we will lose the very thing that makes us so proud to be Canadian. If we allow this inhumanity to be overlooked, all future apologies will be futile.

• (1600)

The eloquence of these students is powerful.

So through me, from them, this is my question: Is the Canadian government ready to declare the actions of the Chinese government a genocide?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, and thank you for being the conduit for the important and powerful voices of students of that school, with which I am familiar.

The Government of Canada takes allegations of genocide very, very seriously. The government has repeatedly said that the international community has to work together in order to investigate the egregious human rights abuses taking place, and that's why it has repeatedly called for an international investigation in response to the allegations of genocide. The government believes that this investigation must be conducted by an international and independent body so that impartial experts can observe and report on the situation first-hand.

[Senator Petitcherc]

The government is seized with the issue. The allegations are deplorable, but, as the government has explained on many occasions, it is not yet ready, absent this investigation, to declare it such.

Senator Wallin: I would like to follow up on questions asked by others here today about the most recent contact with the two Michaels who have been held hostage now for over 900 days. What was the last contact? What is your knowledge of their health and safety?

Senator Gold: Thank you, senator. I don't have the precise answers to your question. I will have to inquire and get back to the chamber.

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

INDEPENDENT ADVISORY BOARD FOR SENATE APPOINTMENTS

Hon. Denise Batters: Senator Gold, the Trudeau government used to assure us that the Senate appointment system was very independent and non-partisan. They would say that Prime Minister Trudeau doesn't appoint all the panellists because each province picks its own two panellists to sit on each regional Senate appointment panel.

Well, the Trudeau government no longer trumpets this. Many of the provinces have declined to participate in this smokescreen appointment process. In those cases, that means Prime Minister Trudeau appoints all their Senate appointment panellists, who then give him secret, non-binding lists so that the Prime Minister picks all the senators. Independent and non-partisan indeed.

We know the Saskatchewan government doesn't pick their panellists. It's the same with the previous Manitoba and B.C. governments.

With a big batch of senators soon to be named, it is important that the Canadian public be able to evaluate how independent and non-partisan the Trudeau Senate appointment process really is.

My question is this, Senator Gold: For which provinces has the Prime Minister's Office, or PMO, appointed all of the Senate appointment panellists?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I don't know that there is an answer to the question, because there is so much embedded in your question that it is disturbing, frankly.

The process of appointing senators, which was put into place by this government, has produced an impressive group of senators in the Senate of Canada. I am sure that your question did not imply otherwise.

Provinces have the responsibility and the privilege of naming the members of those panels. Some have lagged behind for reasons I do not know. This has slowed down the process of appointments, to the regret of the government.

I have no information whatsoever, senator, to the effect that the Prime Minister or the PMO has engaged in an inappropriate way in the selection of the panels. Any suggestion otherwise is something that I simply cannot respond to further.

Senator Batters: My first question was about “which provinces.” Perhaps you could inquire about that, Senator Gold.

The Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments is supposed to file a report within three months after an appointment cycle. They have not filed a report for two and a half years. Since then 12 senators have been appointed, and a big new bunch is apparently coming soon, yet the Canadian public has no transparency on this so-called independent, non-partisan process.

One thing we do know is that this bit of smoke and mirrors is very expensive. The reports indicate about \$500,000 every appointment cycle. Former Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation mentor, now Chair of the Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments, Huguette Labelle, is paid up to a \$650 per diem for this position.

Senator Gold, given this hefty government stipend, why isn't the chair producing reports to provide taxpayers with this accountability more frequently than once every two and a half years?

Senator Gold: With the admonitions of our esteemed Senator Munson in mind, I will simply respond as follows: I will make inquiries as to the delay in the filing of the reports. The government has every confidence in the officials, including Madam Labelle, who are doing work on behalf of Canadians and on behalf of a more independent, less partisan and more diverse Senate.

PUBLIC SAFETY

HUAWEI—5G TECHNOLOGY

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is also for the government leader in the Senate.

According to public statements made by former minister Ralph Goodale, the Trudeau government has been conducting a 5G network security review since at least September 2018. In May 2019, just over two years ago, the Trudeau government promised that it would make a decision on Huawei's role in the building of 5G infrastructure in Canada before the 2019 federal election. Just a few months later in July 2019, the government reversed course and said the decision would be made after the 2019 election.

We are now in June 2021. Leader, Canada remains the only Five Eyes partner not to ban or restrict Huawei. Does your government commit to making a decision on Huawei's participation in our 5G network before the next federal election?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. I am not in a position to answer, but I will make inquiries and report back.

Senator Martin: Leader, could you tell us whether the Trudeau government is considering advising Canadian universities against entering into partnerships with Huawei? Also, would you inquire and tell us if your government is considering issuing a specific directive to the various federal granting councils to ban research partnerships with Huawei?

Senator Gold: I will certainly make those inquiries. Thank you.

Senator Martin: Thank you.

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY

NATIONAL MICROBIOLOGY LABORATORY

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my next question for the government leader concerns the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg.

Senator Ngo stated earlier that the Trudeau government is refusing to comply with an order from the other place to produce uncensored documents on the firing of two scientists from the Winnipeg lab. This government is so desperate to hide what it knows about collaboration between Canadian federal researchers and Chinese military scientists that it is willing to defy the House of Commons and be found in contempt. This is yet another example of the mockery that the Trudeau government has made of its so-called commitment to openness and transparency. It's a total sham.

Will your government reverse course and publicly release the full, unredacted documents, or will the Trudeau government continue to hide what it knows from Canadians?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the honourable senator for the question.

I think the government's position has been stated clearly in the other place. I will certainly inquire as to whether they are considering changing positions, and I would be happy to report back.

Senator Plett: Leader, in a September 2018 email, the former head of the microbiology lab, Dr. Matthew Gilmour, wrote his colleagues about concerns about viruses being exported to China and the lab's cooperation with Chinese military scientists. Dr. Gilmour questioned the nature of the work, why certifications were not provided, why the lab materials were required and how such a group of researchers came to be connected with the microbiology lab. Those are all good questions, and it is surprising that the former Scientific Director General of the laboratory had to ask them.

Leader, two scientists were escorted out of the lab and later fired. Why? They have since apparently disappeared. Where are they? The Chinese military scientists received high-level clearance to work at the lab. How did that happen?

• (1610)

Why is the Trudeau government afraid to answer basic questions about the security breach at our most important lab?

Senator Gold: Again, senator, I do not accept the last assertion of your question. It was quite clear, and I am not prepared to comment further on behalf of the government due to privacy obligations with regard to this matter.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the Senate has come to the end of Question Period, and pursuant to a previous order, the bells will ring for five minutes to call in senators for the taking of the deferred vote on the recent amendment to Bill S-209. The vote will take place at 4:15.

Call in the senators.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BILL TO AMEND THE CANADA ELECTIONS ACT AND THE REGULATION ADAPTING THE CANADA ELECTIONS ACT FOR THE PURPOSES OF A REFERENDUM (VOTING AGE)

SECOND READING—MOTION IN AMENDMENT NEGATIVED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator McPhedran, seconded by the Honourable Senator Loffreda, for the second reading of Bill S-209, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Regulation Adapting the Canada Elections Act for the Purposes of a Referendum (voting age).

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Wells, seconded by the Honourable Senator Plett:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word “That” and substituting the following therefor:

“Bill S-209, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Regulation Adapting the Canada Elections Act for the Purposes of a Referendum (voting age), be not now read a second time because a proposal which so fundamentally impacts the conduct of elections in this country, specifically the qualifications of electors, should more properly be introduced first in the elected chamber, namely the House of Commons.”

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the question is as follows: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Wells, seconded by the Honourable Senator Plett:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word “That” —

Shall I dispense, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Wells negatived on the following division:

YEAS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Batters	Oh
Boisvenu	Patterson
Carignan	Plett
Dagenais	Seidman
Griffin	Smith
MacDonald	Stewart Olsen
Marshall	Verner
Martin	Wallin
Mockler	Wells—19
Ngo	

NAYS

THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Bellemare	Harder
Bernard	Hartling
Black (<i>Alberta</i>)	Jaffer
Black (<i>Ontario</i>)	Klyne
Boniface	Kutcher
Bovey	LaBoucane-Benson
Boyer	Loffreda
Brazeau	Marwah
Busson	Massicotte
Cordy	McCallum
Cormier	McPhedran
Cotter	Mégie
Coyle	Mercer
Dalphond	Miville-Dechéne
Dasko	Moncion
Dawson	Moodie
Deacon (<i>Nova Scotia</i>)	Munson
Deacon (<i>Ontario</i>)	Omidvar
Dean	Pate
Downe	Petitclerc
Duncan	Ravalia
Dupuis	Ringuette

Forest
Forest-Niesing
Francis
Gagné
Galvez
Gold

Saint-Germain
Simons
Tannas
Wetston
Woo—55

people who attend by Zoom are required to be in a secure location, which means either their residence or an office. During the vote, I saw what appeared to be a senator outside, possibly in a park. I would not consider that a secure location.

I am raising that as a point of order, Your Honour. You may want to look into it and remind senators that they need to be in an office or in their home.

ABSTENTION
THE HONOURABLE SENATOR

SPEAKER'S RULING RESERVED

Anderson—1

• (1620)

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Your Honour, we have a rule that when we are either in a Senate meeting or in the Senate chamber during a virtual meeting that

The Hon. the Speaker: Thank you, Senator Plett. I will have the table look into the matter and will report back.

(At 4:30 p.m., pursuant to the orders adopted by the Senate on October 27, 2020 and December 17, 2020, the Senate adjourned until 2 p.m., tomorrow.)

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Hon. Donald Neil Plett	1757	
Speaker's Ruling Reserved	1757	