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The Honourable GEORGE J. FUREY,
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, October 26, 2022

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

ROHINTON P. MEDHORA

CONGRATULATIONS ON RETIREMENT

Hon. Marty Deacon: Honourable senators, it is an honour to rise today to celebrate Dr. Rohinton Medhora's incredible decade of leadership as President of the Centre for International Governance Innovation, or CIGI, in Waterloo. Dr. Medhora retired from this role on September 2, 2022.

CIGI is located in Waterloo and is a fantastic hub of innovation and global thinking.

Through Dr. Medhora's leadership, CIGI's research has evolved from its early focus on broad concepts, such as international relations and global economy, to a crosscut of topics related to big data, platform governance, digital standards, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity.

Jim Balsillie, CIGI's founder and chair of the board of directors, stated:

Rohinton has been an extraordinary leader for CIGI, who has ably guided the organization through its second decade to its current status as a go-to think tank at the intersection of technology and governance.

Personally, I have enjoyed meeting with Dr. Medhora on numerous occasions. He has helped me, and others, synthesize several global challenges, with his knack for building trust and his willingness to give his time to others in order to share his wisdom.

Under Dr. Medhora's leadership, CIGI is now ranked thirtieth worldwide among more than 8,000 think tanks. It also holds the distinction of ranking twelfth globally in the category of science and technology policy.

As a result of CIGI surging in these global rankings, our peers, internationally, are beginning to recognize that Canadian think tanks have much to offer on the international stage. The backroom work, programming and foundation building — via the work of Dr. Medhora in making this happen — cannot be overstated.

CIGI recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary, which means that Dr. Medhora has guided this institution for half its existence, and he leaves it in excellent shape to succeed in the future, as it is left in the capable hands of the new president, Paul Samson, who lives in Ottawa.

We are excited about CIGI's relevance and growth, and, despite all of his contributions, I suspect the best from Dr. Medhora is yet to come. He is far from done.

Thank you, Dr. Medhora, for your incredible leadership and contributions locally and globally. Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Louise Bernice Halfe — Sky Dancer, our ninth Parliamentary Poet Laureate. She is accompanied by family and friends, and Dr. Heather Lank, Parliamentary Librarian and former Principal Clerk of the Senate.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Ms. Carole Drolet and Mr. Claude Texier. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Dagenais.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

CAROLE DROLET AND CLAUDE TEXIER

Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais: Honourable senators, I want to take a few minutes today to tell you about the background of my two visitors, Carole Drolet and Claude Texier. They are retirees from Blainville, where I live, and they are both passionate about politics. However, they both have an unconventional background that I want to share with you.

First, let me introduce Claude Texier, who was born in France, but who, since 2008, has defined himself as a proud Quebecer and Canadian, since this is where he has chosen to spend his retirement. Before meeting Ms. Drolet, whom I will speak about in a few moments, Claude Texier, who has a background in international law, chose to work in the business world. Mr. Texier spent most of his career working for a large French company called Hutchinson Mapa, a subsidiary of the TotalEnergies group.

As an aside, Hutchinson Mapa has been in the business of manufacturing rubber products for over 150 years after acquiring patents from the Goodyear company. In the beginning, the company focused on manufacturing bicycle tires.

I would be remiss if I left out the fact that our visitor completed his French military service in the Paris fire department, where he taught mathematics to officers.

A keen traveller for both work and recreation, Mr. Texier met his partner, Carole Drolet, during his travels.

The two of them had a lot in common. Ms. Drolet has been a member of the Barreau du Québec since 1987, but interestingly she chose the industrial world for her career — although not in rubber.

Ms. Drolet was the owner of a carbonated drink business in Quebec known as Kik Cola Denis, a fierce competitor of Coke and Pepsi, at one time. My guest today was also the vice-president of the RE/MAX real estate brokerage and president of the tool rental company LOU-TEC. Before retiring in 2016, Ms. Drolet was president of operations at Loto-Québec for nine years.

We have two examples among us today of professionals who chose the industrial world to apply their skills, and they did so brilliantly.

After such a rich and productive professional life, my two guests chose to retire here in Canada, primarily in Quebec, when they had plenty of opportunities in other countries.

I am especially proud to count them among my constituents in Blainville. Today, I am pleased to give them a glimpse of the workings of Canadian politics on Parliament Hill, here in Ottawa, because there can never be too many people who are interested in what we do here.

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Ms. Djaili Amadou Amal. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Mégie.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

TRIBUTE TO ÉTIENNE GABOURY

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Renowned Franco-Manitoban architect Étienne Gaboury, who designed over 300 buildings around the world, passed away at the age of 92. Today I would like to pay tribute to this exceptional man, whose engagement serves as an example to us all.

Étienne Gaboury was a passionate, intuitive and expressive artist. Thanks to his artistry and his unwavering devotion, he made a major contribution to our architectural heritage. His works are imbued with meaning; they awaken the mind. Gaboury was a prairie boy who treasured natural light. Natural light was a

signature component of all his projects, bestowing character on spaces and dictating a building's form and, by extension, how it was built.

Étienne Gaboury's works are found around the world, in my hometown of Saint-Pierre-Jolys, Saint-Boniface and Winnipeg, Manitoba, next door in Saskatchewan and further afield in places like Mexico, the United States, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Niger, Cambodia, China, Japan, Spain and Finland, to name but a few.

This internationally renowned architect was also very community-minded. He was an architect by training, but it's important to note that he was also one of the main architects behind the Société de la francophonie manitobaine. Étienne remained engaged and involved in his community throughout his entire life. He brought his experience and knowledge to the table, while ensuring that people were always at the heart of his projects, a key part of his architectural practice and all community development plans.

It will come as no surprise that Étienne Gaboury received many honours across the globe and numerous awards during his career. He was also awarded the Order of Canada in 2010 and the Order of Manitoba in 2012. He received honorary doctorates from the Université de Saint-Boniface and the University of Manitoba. The Université de Saint-Boniface student centre, which he designed himself, now bears his name, in honour of his life and work.

Behind all these architectural jewels is Étienne Gaboury, the family man, husband of Claire, father of Lise, Pierre, Jacques and François, and grandfather of 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Rest in peace, my friend Étienne, and thank you for shining your light on all of us.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

• (1410)

[English]

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Alanis Obomsawin. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Francis.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

ALANIS OBOMSAWIN, C.C., G.O.Q.

Hon. Brian Francis: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to Alanis Obomsawin. As a member of the Abenaki Nation, Ms. Obomsawin is one of the most renowned Indigenous filmmakers in Canada. Her body of work highlights the beauty, strength and resistance of Indigenous people in the face of

injustices and inequities inflicted by the state and others. It has also empowered Indigenous people — who have been silenced or ignored for too long — to share stories in their own voices.

As a result, Ms. Obomsawin has helped me, and many others, learn about our distinct but shared perspectives and experiences, as well as inspired us to connect, heal and hope. She has informed the broader public of our past and current treatment, and she has appealed for tangible action at all levels.

Over the last 60 years, Ms. Obomsawin has created more than 50 films with the National Film Board of Canada. Among the films are *Incident at Restigouche* in 1984; *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance* in 1993; *Is the Crown at War with Us?* in 2002; and *Trick or Treaty?* in 2014, which chronicled various First Nations' struggle to assert their rights and title to land and resources, and to secure their well-being, dignity and survival.

Other films like *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice* in 2016 and *Jordan River Anderson, the Messenger* in 2019 focus on the plight of First Nations children and, in particular, the lack of access to health care, education and other basic services.

Given that many of these issues remain unresolved today, Ms. Obomsawin's landmark documentaries continue to be relevant. Due to her commitment to her craft and all her relations, Ms. Obomsawin has won many awards, including the Companion of the Order of Canada in 2019. At the age of 90, she continues to be a force to be reckoned with and shows no signs of stopping.

Tonight, she is premiering one of her newest documentaries called *Wabano the Light of Day*, which highlights the story of the pandemic through the eyes of Indigenous people in Ottawa and the staff at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal health. I hope you have an opportunity to watch this documentary and others.

Colleagues, please join me in celebrating the remarkable life and legacy of Ms. Obomsawin. I have no doubt that she will continue to hold Canada accountable for how it treats Indigenous people, as well as profile how my brothers and sisters are working to reclaim and recover our ways of life.

Wela'lin. Thank you.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

FEDERAL LAW—CIVIL LAW HARMONIZATION BILL, NO. 4

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate) introduced Bill S-11, A fourth Act to harmonize federal law with the civil law of Quebec and to amend certain Acts in order to ensure that each language version takes into account the common law and the civil law.

[Senator Francis]

(Bill read first time.)

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

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

L'ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,
COMMUNICATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, THE YOUNG
PARLIAMENTARIANS NETWORK AND THE NETWORK OF WOMEN
PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE
DE LA FRANCOPHONIE, APRIL 19-22, 2022—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Meetings of the Committee on Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs, the Young Parliamentarians Network and the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, held in Papeete, French Polynesia, from April 19 to 22, 2022.

MEETINGS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON REFORMING THE
ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE
CONSTITUTION AND OF THE ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA
FRANCOPHONIE POLITICAL COMMITTEE, MAY 12-15, 2022—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Meetings of the Working Group on Reforming the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) Constitution and of the APF Political Committee, held in Quebec City, Quebec, from May 12 to 15, 2022.

FRANCOPHONE YOUTH PARLIAMENT, JULY 25-31, 2022—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Francophone Youth Parliament, held in Tiranë, Albania, from July 25 to 31, 2022.

SESSION OF THE AMERICA REGION OF THE ASSEMBLÉE
PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE AND CONFERENCE OF
BRANCH CHAIRS, JULY 18-22, 2022—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Thirty-seventh Session of the America Region of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie and Conference of Branch Chairs, held in Edmonton, Alberta, from July 18 to 22, 2022.

BUREAU MEETING AND ANNUAL SESSION, JULY 5-9, 2022—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Bureau Meeting and Forty-seventh Annual Session, held in Kigali, Rwanda, from July 5 to 9, 2022.

SYMPOSIUM ON CONTESTED DEMOCRACIES,
SEPTEMBER 15-16, 2022—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Symposium of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie on Contested Democracies, held in Luxembourg City, Luxembourg, from September 15 to 16, 2022.

[English]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Charlene Liske and Kyla LeSage from the Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Anderson.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

[English]

• (1420)

BANKING, COMMERCE AND THE ECONOMY

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

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

That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Commerce and the Economy be authorized to meet on Tuesday, November 1, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., to hear from the Governor of the Bank of Canada, even though the Senate may then be sitting and that rule 12-18(1) be suspended in relation thereto.

QUESTION PERIOD

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COST OF DELEGATION TO THE FUNERAL OF HER MAJESTY
QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Senator Gold, I want to follow up on my questions from yesterday on the extravagant \$400,000 invoice that Canadian taxpayers are having to pay for hotel rooms in London for Canada's delegation to Her late Majesty the Queen's funeral.

Senator Gold, yesterday you defended the cost of a \$6,000-per-night hotel room in London — I think you said hotel rooms in London are expensive — while also claiming you didn't have enough information about the number of people and the length of their stay.

Senator Gold, Brian Lilley had an article in the *Toronto Sun* a few days ago. I'm surprised you had not been informed of this, as you represent the government in this chamber.

Global Affairs indicated through an access to information request that the Canadian delegation stayed at one of the top luxury hotels in Central London. Canadians are on the hook for rooms as of September 11, with the bulk of the delegation arriving on September 16 and staying until September 19 or 20.

Canada's official delegation was led by the Governor General and her husband; Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his wife; and it included diplomats, top bureaucrats, former prime ministers and governors general and celebrities.

Senator Gold, will you continue to defend this undefendable invoice not only to this chamber but to Canadian taxpayers?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. As I said yesterday, I think it was totally appropriate for the Governor General and her husband to lead a diverse and proper delegation to pay tribute to Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I have every confidence that the measures taken to take care of that delegation were appropriate under the circumstances.

Senator Plett: Of course, nobody is questioning that a delegation attend. We're questioning the expenses, Senator Gold. Again, you're refusing to even touch on the question.

Senator Gold, in contrast to what our Canadian delegation did, U.S. President Joe Biden and his entourage incurred zero dollars for their costs there — zero dollars for taxpayers.

Senator Gold, the Prime Minister's ultimate lack of respect for our public funds and his tradition of contempt for accountability are truly beneath the conduct of a prime minister.

The aggravation continues, as Prime Minister Trudeau also managed to keep up with another one of his traditions on this trip, which is to embarrass Canada during international visits. I'm

sure nobody needs to be reminded of the unfortunate video of the Prime Minister singing the night away just days before the Queen's funeral.

I know that this Prime Minister aspires to be a superstar, but was there no one there to remind him that such expenses would be infuriating for Canadian taxpayers?

Senator Gold, how can your government justify \$6,000 per night on a hotel room when the Prime Minister himself was critical of a former Conservative minister for invoicing a \$16 glass of orange juice? Is your government subject to the same standards as others?

Senator Gold: The appropriateness of expenditures varies with the context and circumstances. I repeat that I think it was appropriate for the Canadian delegation to be in London and to be accommodated in the appropriate circumstances.

Senator Plett: I heard "appropriate to spend \$6,000 a night." That's what I heard.

PUBLIC SAFETY

EMERGENCIES ACT

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): My question again is for the government leader. I want to expand on a question that Senator Martin posed last week.

The Emergencies Act inquiry has been providing Canadians more information about what was going on behind the scenes in the decision-making process at the government level. Amongst other issues, we have learned that CSIS informed senior government officials that no evidence was found in terms of foreign actors or states financing the convoy protest in the week prior to the Emergencies Act being invoked.

The director of CSIS said, "There is not a lot of energy and support from the USA to Canada," adding that, "CSIS has also not seen any foreign money coming from other states to support this."

Yet, leader, on February 11, when Prime Minister Trudeau was asked by Marieke Walsh for more details on the percentage of financing coming from the U.S., he said:

Those aren't details that I have right in front of me. I have heard that, on certain platforms, the number of U.S. donations are approaching 50%.

Senator Gold, such a contradiction between the Prime Minister and CSIS will have serious consequences for the confidence of Canadians.

Leader, I know your government tries to say Canadians should have confidence in the process under way with the Emergencies Act inquiry. But we have a serious issue here: Who should Canadians believe — CSIS or the Prime Minister?

[Senator Plett]

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. Canadians should have confidence in the processes that the Emergencies Act has put into place. The situation, as we all experienced it here, was fluid. Information was being processed in real time and answers were given in good faith throughout the process. I'm confident that will be the conclusion that will be reached as well by the commission.

Senator Plett: Well, I wish we could all be as confident. Surely, Senator Gold, you must agree that the information divulged by CSIS and the Prime Minister's public comments are serious contradictions and they are on a collision course.

Senator Gold, two of the most powerful offices are saying two different things. They cannot both be right. Keeping Canadians' trust in their institutions cannot be taken for granted, Senator Gold. Such paradoxical versions of the truth will have a devastating effect on the already eroded confidence of the citizens of our country.

Senator Gold, does your government not understand the serious impediment of diminishing public confidence on issues of national security and the use of the Emergencies Act? Where did the 50% number of foreign funds advanced by the Prime Minister come from?

An Hon. Senator: The CBC.

Senator Gold: The denigration of our national institutions is indeed a serious matter. I would ask that all members of this chamber, including members of the opposition, pay careful attention to their rhetoric when they seek to denigrate institutions, including the Office of the Prime Minister.

Once again, the inquiry is hearing from a variety of sources and witnesses, including the Prime Minister, who will be appearing. I have every confidence that Justice Rouleau will come to his conclusions based upon all the evidence, looked at properly in context.

[Translation]

HEALTH

CANADIAN THALIDOMIDE SURVIVORS SUPPORT PROGRAM

Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate and it has to do with the management of the Canadian Thalidomide Survivors Support Program. I am asking my question with the permission of Yves Bourque and on his behalf. He is a Paralympic athlete and a victim of thalidomide, and his story is similar to the one we read yesterday and today in *Le Journal de Montréal*.

For the past 18 months, since February 2021, my office has been helping Mr. Bourque navigate the Canadian Thalidomide Survivors Support Program and deal with EPIQ, the firm to which the government delegated the management of this program. This firm has asked him over and over again for evidence from medical specialists and for X-rays. The doctor

who treated his mother at the time passed away and another doctor took over. To put it clearly and concisely, the way he is being treated is inhumane.

• (1430)

It was only a few months ago, following a call from a senator's office, that we were able to get the contact information for an agent from that firm, who was at least able to answer a few questions.

Here is my concern. Does the government plan to do something to ensure that the citizens who contact the delegated managers of this program are treated humanely and efficiently?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for highlighting a part of our history that unfortunately is not that well known. The effects of this problem are still felt today.

The government is committed to supporting the Canadian survivors of thalidomide to help them live out their days in dignity. The Canadian Thalidomide Survivors Support Program, or CTSSP, uses a three-step medical assessment process based on probability and international best practices.

People who consider themselves to be survivors of thalidomide are encouraged to submit an application to the CTSSP before the deadline on June 3, 2024. Applicants who are missing information or whose application has been denied at one of the three steps of the assessment process can submit additional information to the program administrator in support of their application. Pursuant to a Federal Court decision in August 2022, all applicants whose application was previously denied can now seek reconsideration.

I also want to point out that in 2017, the government changed the program to make it more flexible and to make it easier to demonstrate proof. Before 2017, claimants had to demonstrate beyond a reasonable doubt that their disability had been caused by their mother's use of thalidomide. Today, thanks to the government, claimants must submit concrete evidence to demonstrate that their disability was likely caused by thalidomide.

Once again, as a result of an August 2022 Federal Court decision, all previously denied applicants may now apply for reconsideration.

Senator Saint-Germain: Thank you for this response. In addition, I would like to know if applications for reconsideration are being processed more efficiently and if the medical committee that ultimately reviews these applications is willing to meet with victims.

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. I do not have the answer, but I will ask the government and try to get an answer as soon as possible.

FINANCE

BANK OF CANADA'S MANDATE

Hon. Clément Gignac: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Gold, as you know, today the Bank of Canada raised its key interest rate for the sixth time to 3.75% in the hope of taming persistent inflationary pressures. At a press conference earlier today, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, Tiff Macklem, said we should expect further interest rate hikes over the coming year to bring the annual inflation rate down to the 2% target.

More and more economists and experts, including former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney, are telling the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Commerce and the Economy that Canada is heading straight for a recession in 2023. Some parliamentarians and political party leaders believe that the Bank of Canada is making a mistake with its current policy and that, at the very least, its mandate should be revised to bring it into line with that of the U.S. Federal Reserve.

Senator Gold, does your government still have full confidence in the current Governor of the Bank of Canada, or does it intend to revise the Bank of Canada's mandate sometime soon?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. The Bank of Canada has an independent monetary policy that best suits the country's economic situation. The bank's mandate is to monitor and ensure the stability of the rate of inflation in the interest of all Canadians.

The bank has started to bring the inflation rate back within the target range and has the necessary tools and expertise to prevent inflation from becoming entrenched. The government believes that a sound monetary policy framework is the best weapon in its arsenal to protect Canadians against inflation.

Honourable senator, Canada has the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, and the government has a plan to make life more affordable by providing direct support to the Canadians who are the most vulnerable to inflation and who need it most. As the Minister of Finance recently stated, and I quote, "Canada is a country of peace, order and good government."

This institutional stability includes the independence of the Bank of Canada, which the government remains firmly committed to supporting. The independence of the Bank of Canada is essential, and we can have confidence in Governor Macklem's leadership.

Senator Gignac: Thank you, Senator Gold. Your answer is reassuring, and I agree with you on the independence of the Bank of Canada with respect to political pressure. That said, we find ourselves in the context of a minority government that has the support of the New Democratic Party. Can you assure us that the Bank of Canada will continue to be independent over the next two years and that it will not be subject to constraints related to the context of this coalition?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. One of my former professors of constitutional law, Laurence Tribe, often said that if you live with a crystal ball, you must be prepared to eat glass once in a while. Personally, I do not have a strong enough stomach for that. I have no idea what will happen over the next two years, but I do know that the confidence and supply agreement contains a very specific list of the terms and conditions for maintaining the coalition, and I don't think that this issue is on the list.

[English]

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

BUSINESS OF THE COMMITTEE

Hon. Pamela Wallin: My question is for the Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications.

In your speech yesterday, Senator Housakos, you raised many of the concerns that witnesses have been outlining throughout our hearings. The testimony of the current Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, or CRTC, chair in which he explained his stated view that he will force streaming services to alter their algorithms to promote or censor user-generated content has been key to this debate. Have you, or you along with the steering committee, considered the importance of having the new chair testify to clarify his or her views before we complete our study or vote, as this person will be key in implementing and interpreting Bill C-11?

Hon. Leo Housakos (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Thank you for the question, Senator Wallin. You are absolutely right; it is very concerning. As you — an active member of the committee — and all of us on the committee have seen, the outgoing chair of the CRTC came before the committee.

Actually, his testimony created a storm and raised a lot more questions than he actually answered. If anything, he confirmed that what the government has been saying is the opposite of how he reads the legislation in terms of acknowledging that he will have the authority, under this bill, to force platforms to manipulate algorithms. This is, of course, of great concern to independent content providers and should be of concern to all of us.

We have taken steps to bring the CRTC chair back to the committee — at his request but as well at the request of our steering committee.

You are absolutely right. It has become evidently clear that his mandate is ending in the next little while, and the government is in search of a new CRTC chair. If one is to be logical about this, the most important part of this bill is the regulatory aspect of it, which is squarely on the shoulders of the incoming chair of the CRTC and the board.

• (1440)

I agree it would be irresponsible on the part of Parliament to pass this bill without getting all of our Ts crossed and Is dotted, and hearing from someone associated with the most important part of this legislation.

I know there are members of steering who wanted to pass this bill last week. We continue our discussions in terms of trying to maintain our course of having a robust, wide-ranging study. I hope that steering will agree to do that.

I will personally take to steering that we consider having the incoming CRTC chair testify, along with the minister, before we return here for final approval.

Senator Wallin: I have a supplementary question.

Senator Housakos, you mentioned yesterday that you believe that more Indigenous voices should be heard during our committee hearings. I know we heard from APTN, but have you been able to extend any invitations, and, if so, to whom?

Senator Housakos: Thank you for that question as well, senator. We have. It was brought to the attention of the steering committee by Senator Klyne that we had not done enough due diligence in terms of reaching out to Indigenous voices on this bill.

There are a number of potential witnesses that steering has instructed the clerk to reach out to and bring before our committee. I don't have the list before me, but I can assure you that we will not move forward until Indigenous voices are consulted in a robust manner.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

SUPPORT FOR THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Justin Trudeau's government has been rethinking its national defence priorities. The government has earmarked \$8 billion in the current budget for modernizing the military. Despite that, we will not reach the 2% that our NATO partners are demanding. According to several experts, this delay is very worrisome in terms of modernizing our military equipment, especially for our navy and air force.

Why has the Trudeau government waited for a military conflict to break out in Europe in order to finally take care of the Canadian Armed Forces?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. As I've said a number of times in response to similar questions, the Government of Canada has made and continues to make considerable historic

investments in our Armed Forces. Canada may not have reached the 2% you mentioned, but it's important to emphasize certain facts. Since coming to power, this government has made additional investments totalling \$34 billion in 2015 and \$33.67 billion in 2021.

To put all that in context, for those who may not remember exactly, the amounts invested by the Harper government in previous years were 0.99% of the budget in 2013 and 1.01% in 2014. The Government of Canada continued to invest as it was able to spend more, and the percentage is a greater proportion of our GDP when the GDP goes up. This government will continue to invest in our Armed Forces in a manner consistent with Canadians' interests.

Senator Boisvenu: I would remind you that, in terms of our NATO contribution, which represents a strategic budget relative to the conflict in Europe, Canada spends just over 1%, although the target is 2%.

When General Eyre appeared before a House of Commons committee a few days ago, he had this to say about protecting the Arctic:

If the day arrives when Canadian sovereignty is threatened, Canada's presence there is limited. . . . Consequently, Canada needs a "sustained and visible . . . presence there."

He was referring to a military presence. Can you provide this chamber with a copy of the Arctic defence policy that the government plans to put in place? Does the government plan to address the concerns raised by General Eyre, who believes that our Armed Forces should have a greater presence in the Arctic?

Senator Gold: I believe I have answered that question, but I will repeat the key points for the benefit of all senators here. The government is making impressive investments in defence and our sovereignty in the Arctic. The government has announced a plan that includes \$38.6 billion to modernize our continental defence capabilities. This is the most significant upgrade to our NORAD capabilities in nearly four decades. The government has awarded major contracts to ensure that our northern warning systems are improved, including a \$122-million contract to support CFS Alert.

We are conducting exercises in the Arctic, we have procured patrol ships and we have also invested in our intelligence and monitoring capabilities in the Arctic by purchasing 88 aircraft. There is a plan, and that plan is integrated into programs for communities that are also located in the North, with the Rangers and the other communities we rely on to defend our sovereignty.

TREASURY BOARD SECRETARIAT

PUBLIC SERVANTS DISCLOSURE PROTECTION

Hon. Claude Carignan: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Yesterday, I asked you a question about the outrageous witch hunt the federal government is waging against public servants to find out who

dared to speak out against its decision to appoint a unilingual anglophone American as the Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Museum of History.

The government searched public servants' emails and telephone records. No stone was left unturned. That is unacceptable in a democratic, law-based society like Canada. In 2017, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates tabled a report entitled *Strengthening the Protection of the Public Interest within the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*. The committee made 35 recommendations to protect public servants who disclose wrongdoing. Essentially, these recommendations sought to strengthen public servants' ability to speak out against the misuse of public funds or public assets and questionable practices. In light of the federal government's witch hunt against its public servants, I would like to know what your government has done to follow up on the 2017 report on whistle-blowers.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): The report and recommendations are very important. I don't have a specific answer as to what follow-up has been done, but I will try to find out.

Senator Carignan: One of the recommendations was that the Government of Canada amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act to explicitly mandate managers and supervisors in federal departments and agencies with a duty to protect and support employees who made a disclosure, any person that helped the employees, as well as witnesses and people mistaken for whistle-blowers. Has this been done, to your knowledge?

Senator Gold: I will add that to my list of questions.

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS

Hon. Leo Housakos (Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

While your government was voting against the motion in the House of Commons yesterday to recognize the Uighur genocide and to extend emergency refugee measures to the Uighur people fleeing persecution, it seems that one of the Trudeau government's members of Parliament appeared to have done the right thing and voted in favour of the motion — Mary Ng. As it turns out, she quickly apologized and said it was a mistake. She even went to the extent, Senator Gold, of rising in the House of Commons on a point of order, asking for the record to be corrected. So the Trudeau government unanimously voted for the motion recognizing the Uighur genocide and giving these people some hope and emergency refugee measures.

• (1450)

I'm really perplexed as to why your government has such a difficult time doing what's right when it comes to these basic human rights and standing up for this community. Is it because

the Trudeau government is afraid of Beijing, or is it an unfortunate simple case that the Uighur people are just too small a voting bloc in Canada for our government to stand up for them?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): It is neither one nor the other, frankly, senator. I suppose in my role as the Government Representative in the Senate, I'm fair game for questions about anything that happens, and I accept that. But if and when the issue arises here, we as senators will have our opportunity to pronounce, and we should do so in the spirit of independence that we have from the other place.

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROHIBITING CLUSTER MUNITIONS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Ataullahjan, seconded by the Honourable Senator Plett, for the second reading of Bill S-225, An Act to amend the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act (investments).

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Honourable senators, I am pleased to speak to Bill S-225, which is sponsored by Senator Ataullahjan. This bill amends a piece of legislation passed by Parliament in November 2014, the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act, which implements the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This convention was adopted on May 30, 2008, and entered into force on August 1, 2010. To date, 32 other countries have passed legislation to bring the convention into force and another 20 are working on it, while 83 others consider their legal framework to be sufficient.

As the name suggests, the convention covers cluster munitions, which are weapons designed to disperse or release explosive submunitions. If these submunitions end up unexploded on the ground, they can then kill or injure people in the same way as anti-personnel mines.

The convention has several objectives, including a ban on the production of cluster munitions unless they are equipped with self-destruction and self-deactivation mechanisms, the destruction of existing stockpiles, a ban on the export and import of such weapons, the clearance of contaminated sites, risk reduction education and victim assistance.

In her speech on April 7, Senator Ataullahjan appropriately reminded us of the devastating impact that cluster munitions have on innocent civilians who may come into contact with unexploded or deactivated submunitions. These victims are often children.

[Senator Housakos]

Last August, while the Senate was on summer break, the *Cluster Munition Monitor* released a report. I have it in my hands. It is published occasionally, with the previous edition dating back to 2018.

In this very recent report, which was published last summer, we read that since the advent of cluster munitions, 23,000 people have been killed or injured by these weapons. However, in reality, this number is much higher because not all cases are reported. According to the *Cluster Munition Monitor*, there could be between 56,500 and 86,500 victims who have been injured or killed.

In the summer of 2021, the *Cluster Munition Monitor* reported 59 people killed and 90 injured. All these people were victims of cluster munition remnants scattered in the ground. That is especially the case in Syria and in some other countries where these munitions have been used. Children accounted for 66% of these casualties.

In 2022, the situation has worsened. As of June 30, 2022, the *Monitor* reports that there were at least 689 casualties of cluster munitions, mostly in Ukraine.

[English]

To this day, 110 countries are party to the convention, including Canada. Unfortunately, however, 74 countries have not yet ratified the convention, including China, Russia and the United States — three members of the United Nations Security Council. However, among the states not party to the convention, Greece, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Turkey, Israel and the U.S. have said that there is no longer any production of cluster munitions in their respective territories. In addition, in April 2022 — a few months ago — EXPAL USA was awarded a contract by the U.S. government for the demilitarization and disposal of the stock of cluster munitions in the U.S.

But there are still countries that tolerate the production of such arms in their territories and their export. They need to be denounced and put on a shame list, particularly those producing the cluster munitions reported to have been used recently in Syria, Nagorno-Karabakh and Ukraine.

Among the countries still producing cluster munitions, some are welcoming foreign investments, such as South Korea, Brazil and India. The public denunciation of these countries must extend to Canadians or Canadian institutions, if any, that still invest in companies producing cluster munitions.

Speaking of South Korea, the president of which was here not long ago, the shareholders of Hanwha Corporation, one of the South Korean conglomerates, voted in September 2020 to end the company's production of cluster munitions by shifting this activity to the Korea Defense Industry Corporation, a new, separate company that, unfortunately, seems to remain affiliated with Hanwha. This was described as an attempt by Hanwha to get rid of an unethical arms business. They still produce other types of arms but not those that are covered by the convention.

It is also interesting to note that the government pension funds in Australia, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden have decided by themselves to withdraw

their investments — fully or partially — in companies or groups that are related to cluster munition production. Furthermore, many private financial institutions have acted to stop investment in cluster munition producers and to promote socially responsible investment in states parties to the convention such as Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.K. Clearly, there is social responsibility being assumed by private financial institutions, and that's good.

• (1500)

That explains why several private companies based in non-signatory states have ceased production of cluster munitions. These companies include Elbit Systems Ltd. of Israel, Singapore Technologies Engineering, and U.S. companies Lockheed Martin, Orbital ATK and Textron Systems. So even if the U.S. is not a signatory to the conventions, U.S. companies are disengaging.

In terms of adoption of national laws to prevent such types of investments, it is fair to say that there is a controversy about the intent of the convention regarding investments. At least 38 countries, parties or signatories to the convention have stated that they regard investments in cluster munition production as a form of assistance prohibited by the convention. But some other countries who are party to the convention have expressed the contrary view, including Germany, Japan and Sweden.

The current Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act, adopted by our Parliament in 2014, does not contain any provision relating to investment. Such is also the case for the Model Law Convention on Cluster Munitions, which was legislation for common law states proposed in 2008 by the International Committee of the Red Cross. However, the Lausanne Action Plan, adopted by states parties at the convention's second review conference in September of last year, encourages the adoption of national legislation prohibiting investment in producers of cluster munitions.

Senator Ataullahjan's legislation thus comes as a response to this action plan, and it is welcome. Bill S-225 proposes that Parliament make it an offence to acquire or have, directly or indirectly, any pecuniary interest in a person, knowing that such person is involved in the use, production, possession, development, transportation, importation or exportation of cluster munitions or to attempt to commit such an act. This prohibition would cover loaning funds or guaranteeing a loan of funds. Though we have no current data on the extent of Canadian investments in cluster munitions-related businesses, if any, I nevertheless see merit in Bill S-225. I think that it would send a strong message to Canadian investors and maybe also to other investors in foreign countries.

The bill proposes to use the criminal law power of the Canadian Parliament to enact a new offence that could lead to a conviction further to an indictment or a summary proceeding. But

it is worth mentioning that in both cases, the proceedings could only be commenced with the consent in writing of the Attorney General of Canada. It is also notable that in both cases the federal prosecutor would have to prove beyond any reasonable doubt that the investor was aware that the investment was made in an entity involved in one or more of the activities targeted by the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act. It appears to me that a conviction under such a regime may be rare, but I leave it to the committee process to assess the proposed regime.

Incidentally, by adopting a statutory ban against such investments, Canada would become the twelfth country since 2007 to enact legislation designed to prohibit investments related to cluster munitions. The last country to do so was Italy in December 2021. The Italian law is titled Measures to ban the funding of manufacturers of anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and submunitions. That law prohibits the financing of businesses engaged in the manufacture, production, development, exporting, stockpiling, et cetera, of cluster munitions and submunitions, as well as anti-personnel mines — a category of arms not included in the proposed bill before us. Perhaps this is another issue that the committee could look at.

Furthermore, the Italian Parliament has opted for a regulatory scheme under the authority of the Bank of Italy and some other regulatory agencies instead of creating a new crime. The Italian law empowers regulatory agencies to instruct registered Italian financial intermediaries to ensure compliance. Failure to comply exposes these intermediaries to a substantial administrative fine ranging between €150,000 to €1,500,000.

The committee called to review Bill S-225 could also consider the model law developed by the Cluster Munition Coalition in conjunction with Human Rights Watch and Harvard Law School's International Human Rights Clinic. It draws heavily on their report *Staying Strong: Key Components and Positive Precedent for Convention on Cluster Munitions Legislation*. This model law, for example, adopts a slightly different definition of what is prohibited, which we could find useful for comparison and possible amendment of the bill.

[Translation]

In closing, as Senator Coyle did recently, I invite you to complete second reading of this bill and send it to committee for study and report.

Thank you. *Tshinashkumitin*.

[English]

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak in support of Bill S-225, and I thank Senator Ataullahjan for this important bill that comes at a particularly crucial time with international discord keeping cluster munitions near the top of the active weapons list.

Canada has a proud history of facilitating international efforts to ban cluster munitions. Many here today may recall that Canada stepped up when the international community faltered and failed to pass an all-out landmines ban. Canada refused to accept that indecision and became a leader in pushing for a treaty that confirmed what has long been known to be true: cluster munitions are a humanitarian disaster.

Distinguished Manitoban, the Honourable Dr. Lloyd Axworthy — then Canada's foreign minister — initiated a Canadian convention of 50 countries in 1996, which led to the framework for what would become known as the Ottawa Treaty, the first international ban on the use, stockpiling and production of anti-personnel landmines. It opened for signatures in 1997 and came into force in 1999, more quickly than most such treaties do. It is inspiring to review the record of that time, to see the shift that Minister Axworthy's speech made to increase the number of countries that declared support for the ban and to read accounts of his bold and tenacious diplomacy that enabled this treaty.

The Ottawa Treaty created a stigma against cluster munitions, and their use went down, albeit slowly, from 1999 until now. The downward trend has reversed, and it must be asked: Which side is Canada on? As other senators have pointed out, Canadian companies have invested hundreds of billions of dollars into cluster munitions. Where once a humanitarian leader, Canada now seems to be supporting some merchants of death.

This issue is especially important because of its disproportionate impact on civilians and youth. As we all know, landmines and cluster munitions are extraordinarily difficult to remove, and often stay around well past the end of a conflict once placed. This is due in large part to the nature of the weapon and to the difficulty of removing them. It must be done by hand, and requires a lot of risk to those who take on the task. In places like Egypt, for example, the job is made even more difficult because the loose sand means that munitions often shift very far from their original positions, making them harder to identify.

As local populations repatriate, the impact of these landmines can be devastating. This is especially true for children. Children have always been susceptible to unremoved cluster munitions and landmines, and they make up a disproportionately high percentage of deaths.

• (1510)

In Afghanistan in 2014, children made up 45% of civilian casualties where the age was known. In 2018 and 2019, children accounted for 54% of all civilian landmine deaths. Internationally, where the age was known, this is a 12% increase over previous years.

[Senator McPhedran]

Many countries have instituted educational programs to try to help children avoid landmines and cluster-type munitions by educating them on their dangers. However, these weapons are often appealing to children because of their shape and colour.

Usually left unremoved in areas off regular paths and streets, these weapons are where children are more likely to venture to play. Although landmines are made to maim adults, the smaller size of children leaves them more likely to suffer fatal injuries. In Yemen, landmines have been the biggest killer of children since a truce was called in April of this year. Moreover, just above 75% of all war-related casualties among children in Yemen are landmine related. Landmine education campaigns have put out comic books and booklets and instituted institutional programs in schools in an effort to reduce these deaths. This, clearly, is no match for the existence of these weapons.

These statistics may not even give a full or accurate view of the devastating impact of landmines and cluster munitions. In some cases, landmines, when not fatal, may create lifelong physical disabilities. In many affected countries, disability is still seen as a stigma, especially in girls, leading to an under-reporting of landmine injuries. It is speculated that female youth casualties may be among the most under-reported groups for this reason. For many disabled children, they may be regarded as a burden or, because of neglect or a lack of resources, will not get access to proper care or support that they need to thrive.

Honourable senators, how can we, as Canadians, allow our companies to invest in corporations that, to put it bluntly, indiscriminately kill children, women and civilians? It goes directly against our Canadian values to protect human rights and to protect civilians and children. It also goes against our strong history as leaders in standing against landmines and cluster munitions for their disproportionate and indiscriminate harm. If enough countries refuse to invest in landmine-producing corporations, it may eventually make the production of these weapons untenable financially. This would help force even those countries who refuse to sign into the landmine treaty to give up their use.

Canadians want ethical investment. Canadians care about humanitarian protections and human rights. We should bring our policies into line with our Canadian values. Bill S-225 aims to do just that. It is not enough to passively discourage these investments. We should ban them outright. Canada must once again become a leader. These efforts may help reverse the recent rise in landmine use and kickstart further international action against how landmines and cluster-type munitions amplify and perpetuate the absolute horrors of violent armed conflict.

Honourable senators, I thank Senator Dalphond for his speech today and join senators who have encouraged with cogent evidence that it is time — through this bill — we take a clear, principled stand against corporate investment in cluster munitions and stand for human rights, especially children's rights to live their best possible lives. Thank you. *Meegwetch*.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Is it your pleasure, [English] honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time.)

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

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

(On motion of Senator Housakos, for Senator Ataullahjan, bill referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.)

INCREASING THE IDENTIFICATION OF CRIMINALS THROUGH THE USE OF DNA BILL

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Carignan, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Wells, for the second reading of Bill S-231, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Criminal Records Act, the National Defence Act and the DNA Identification Act.

(On motion of Senator Cotter, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

HEALTH-CENTRED APPROACH TO SUBSTANCE USE BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Boniface, seconded by the Honourable Senator Hartling, for the second reading of Bill S-232, An Act respecting the development of a national strategy for the decriminalization of illegal substances, to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

(On motion of Senator Pate, debate adjourned.)

ENACTING CLIMATE COMMITMENTS BILL

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Galvez, seconded by the Honourable Senator Gignac, for the second reading of Bill S-243, An Act to enact the Climate-Aligned Finance Act and to make related amendments to other Acts.

(On motion of Senator Housakos, debate adjourned.)

• (1520)

[Translation]

THE SENATE

MOTION TO STRIKE A SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN CAPITAL AND THE LABOUR MARKET—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Diane Bellemare, pursuant to notice of October 4, 2022, moved:

That a Special Senate Committee on Human Capital and the Labour Market be appointed until the end of the current session, to which may be referred matters relating to human capital, labour markets, and employment generally;

That the committee be composed of nine members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, and that four members constitute a quorum; and

That the committee be empowered to inquire into and report on such matters as may be referred to it by the Senate; to send for persons, papers and records; to hear witnesses and to publish such papers and evidence from day to day as may be ordered by the committee.

She said: Honourable senators, on behalf of the Standing Senate Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament, I have the honour to move a motion to create a Special Senate Committee on Human Capital and the Labour Market.

This motion reflects a fairly broad but not unanimous consensus on the part of committee members resulting from discussions held by the committee in February 2022, and which are currently ongoing, about the structure and mandates of committees.

We divided this review into two steps. As you know, the first step consisted of a stylistic review of the committee mandates. This step ended with the adoption by the Senate of our third report, which led to amendments to the *Rules of the Senate* in July 2022.

The second step of our review, which is currently under way, consists of a more in-depth study of the structure and the mandate of Senate committees. During our prior discussion in February, May and June, we noted serious problems with our committee structure. It was clear that there was an urgent need to debate issues related to employment and human capital.

Many senators on the committee expressed their concerns about the fact that important and timely issues related to the labour force, the labour market, immigration and employment are not being given proper consideration by the Senate.

As you know, honourable colleagues, labour market and human capital issues are fundamental components of creating and sharing prosperity in Canada. They're also central to the policy choices and strategies needed to ensure continued prosperity, promote equity and combat inequality and poverty. They're also at the root of regional concerns and solutions to encourage all groups to integrate into Canadian society.

Labour issues obviously intersect with federal and provincial jurisdictions. However, the federal government has played a unique role since it gained constitutional jurisdiction over unemployment insurance in 1940, as has the Bank of Canada, which independently monitors the country's employment level.

The complexity of the labour market requires a nation-wide discussion between the federal and provincial levels. The Senate is well positioned to play an important role in addressing human capital and labour market issues. We have representation from all regions of Canada, we have senators with experience relevant to their region and we have the political remove to study these issues with some degree of neutrality.

Canada is facing major challenges associated with the inevitable aging of the population, which is part of the reason for the labour shortages. In addition, Indigenous peoples are experiencing high unemployment rates and would like to participate in sustainable wealth creation. We have to look at how our federal immigration, employment and workforce development strategies can help us address these issues. In addition, our Employment Insurance system, an economic stabilization force with which there were serious problems during the pandemic, still hasn't been reformed since these events.

Currently, no committee is really working on these problems, not for lack of will or interest, but for lack of time and resources.

The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology would be the appropriate committee to study several human capital and labour market issues. However, it is the third-busiest committee after the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance and the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, meeting an average of 55 hours per fiscal year.

We invited the Chair of the Social Affairs Committee, Senator Ratna Omidvar, as well as the former chair, Senator Chantal Petitclerc, to share their thoughts regarding the committee's workload. The conclusion was unanimous. Human capital, the labour market and employment are all important issues that need to be examined, but the committee does not have the time to deal with them. The idea of creating a special committee on human capital and the labour market was welcomed by Senator Omidvar and Senator Petitclerc, as well as by the majority of senators from various parties and groups who sit on the Senate Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament.

Now let's look at the specifics of the motion.

This motion proposes to create a special, not standing, Senate committee on human capital and the labour market. The proposed mandate for this committee mirrors the language we used for the stylistic review of rule 12-7. The special committee would be appointed until the end of the current session. It would therefore be temporary. It would be composed of nine members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection. It could deal with any matters relating to human capital, labour markets and employment generally. As with most standing committees, the Senate would have to authorize it to consider any particular matter by adopting an order of reference.

Many people were concerned about this special committee's mandate. Let me reiterate that we gave it a general mandate, as is done for all committees, because any decisions regarding the subjects to be studied, once the committee is formed, would be made by the Senate through an order of reference.

I want to be clear that an order of reference must be adopted for a committee to study any matter. The committee's mandate in the motion remains general, yet specific enough to cover the relevant subjects.

Some senators, as well as leaders and liaisons, have raised questions about whether we have the financial and administrative capacity to create this special committee. We are short on financial resources and human resources, especially clerks, technicians and translators. We spoke with Shaila Anwar, the principal clerk for Senate committees, about the issue of human resources in a public meeting.

There is also the potential extra workload for senators that comes out of creating a committee. In that context, we even talked about reducing the number of senators per committee for the rest of the parliamentary session. Our discussions made us appreciate the need for a more thorough review of the structure and mandate of the committees, and that is what we will undertake as soon as the current study is over.

As you know, the number of committees has increased over time. A review of the structure of the committees is necessary. If we cannot increase the number of committees in the long term, perhaps we should merge committees or do things differently to ensure that committees can carry out their mandates effectively. Our future work on these issues will lead to solutions, for which I hope there will be a consensus in this place.

We asked the leaders and liaisons of each group for their opinions of our work plan for the committees file. As I stated earlier, they were not in unanimous agreement, but most were in favour of creating a special committee on human capital and the labour market. However, everyone recognized that there are constraints that must be considered.

As a democratic parliamentary institution, we must have the administrative and financial capacity to carry out our work. Reality sometimes requires us to make difficult choices about how our administrative and financial resources are allocated in order to prioritize certain studies over others.

I am moving this motion, not in my name, but in the name of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament, in the knowledge that we will not be able to make a decision immediately about the creation of this special committee. However, we can have a debate about whether it is necessary to create a special committee on human capital and the labour market. We are sure to find solutions for bringing this project to fruition, if that is the will of the Senate.

Thank you for listening. *Meegwetch.*

(On motion of Senator Patterson, debate adjourned.)

• (1530)

[*English*]

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

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

On Motion No. 83 by the Honourable Robert Black:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry be authorized to meet on Tuesday, October 25, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., even though the Senate may then be sitting and that rule 12-18(1) be suspended in relation thereto.

Hon. Robert Black: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 5-10(2), I ask that Notice of Motion No. 83 be withdrawn.

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

Hon Senators: Agreed.

(Notice of motion withdrawn.)

(*At 3:31 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 2 p.m.*)

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Increasing the Identification of Criminals Through the		Hon. Diane Bellemare.	2255
Use of DNA Bill (Bill S-231)			
Bill to Amend—Second Reading—Debate Continued.	2255	Agriculture and Forestry	
Health-Centred Approach to Substance Use Bill		Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Meet During	
(Bill S-232)		Sitting of the Senate Withdrawn	
Second Reading—Debate Continued	2255	Hon. Robert Black.	2257