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The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,
Speaker

This issue contains the latest listing of Senators,
Officers of the Senate and the Ministry.

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

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

Prayers.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-5(k), I move:

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules or previous order, for today's sitting, the duration for Senators' Statements be 60 minutes, to be used for the purpose of paying tribute to the late Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, P.C., who passed away on February 29, 2024; and

That, notwithstanding rule 5-6(2), the following inquiry be placed on the Order Paper, under the rubric Inquiries under Government Business, for later this day:

"By the Honourable Senator LaBoucane-Benson: That she will call the attention of the Senate to the life of the late Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, P.C."

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 LATE RIGHT HONOURABLE BRIAN MULRONEY,
P.C., C.C., G.O.Q.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, today I wish to pay tribute to Canada's eighteenth prime minister, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney. I wish to add my voice to those of the many Canadians saying goodbye to one of Canada's best statesmen while honouring his outstanding record of accomplishments.

The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney was a towering figure in Canadian politics. He captured the imagination of Canadians with his bold vision for the future as he assumed the leadership

of the Progressive Conservative Party in 1983. His crowning achievement came in the federal election of 1984, where he led his party to a landslide victory, securing the largest number of seats in Canadian history and winning over 50% of the popular vote.

As former Prime Minister Mulroney embarked on a transformative journey, characterized by sweeping economic reforms and visionary policies aimed at securing Canada's prosperity and global competitiveness, at the heart of his agenda was the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. At the 1985 "Shamrock Summit," Brian Mulroney joined hands with former U.S. president Ronald Reagan, declaring, "Our message is clear here and around the world — Canada is open for business again." These words reflected Mulroney's vision of a Canada that embraced innovation, entrepreneurship and global engagement — a vision that continues to shape the nation's identity and trajectory to this day.

However, the legacy of Brian Mulroney is more than just economic. He was a leader guided by principle, compassion and moral clarity. He was a tireless advocate for human rights, justice and equality. His fight against apartheid in South Africa is the best example of this.

He was a respected figure on the world stage who had direct contact and personal connections with the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, just to name two. Yet Brian was also a caring individual, someone who would call you up to see how you and your family members were doing when times were difficult. No other leader in Canada has ever worked a Rolodex like he did. And he was not only happy to mingle with presidents and kings; he was the same funny and delightful individual with any crowd. Brian Mulroney was just as at ease in a tavern in Baie-Comeau as he was in the White House.

Colleagues, as we say goodbye to a giant in Canadian politics, let's remember Brian Mulroney's incredible life and contributions to our nation. May his memory serve as a beacon of hope, inspiration and guidance for all Canadians, reminding us of the transformative power of leadership grounded in integrity, compassion and a relentless pursuit of progress.

I know those Irish eyes are smiling today.

Thank you.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I also rise today to pay tribute to Canada's eighteenth prime minister, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, who passed away on February 29.

[Translation]

Martin Brian Mulroney was born in Baie-Comeau, an anglophone welcomed by francophone Quebec as member of the family. After studying law at Université Laval, he practised successfully as a lawyer, specializing in labour law. His interest and involvement in politics started early in life, back when he

joined the Tory Club as a student at St. Francis Xavier University, in Nova Scotia. He achieved his goal of leading the party in 1983. In 1984, after one of the most resounding victories in Canadian history swept the Progressive Conservatives to power with over 50% of the popular vote, Brian Mulroney became Prime Minister.

[*English*]

Whether one agrees or disagrees with all of his policies, Brian Mulroney's negotiation of a free trade agreement with the United States and his government's introduction of a goods and services tax are seminal to his legacy. But what I'm sure we can all agree on is former Prime Minister Mulroney's refusal to go along to get along on the issue of apartheid in South Africa. Three months after the 1984 election, he hosted then-Bishop Desmond Tutu, and so began the fight against apartheid. Canada became the de facto leader in these efforts, as Brian Mulroney attempted to rally Western and Commonwealth nations in subjecting South Africa to sanctions.

In 1985, in his address to the UN General Assembly, former Prime Minister Mulroney stated unequivocally:

If there is no progress in the dismantling of apartheid, Canada's relations with South Africa may have to be severed absolutely.

While both former President Reagan and former Prime Minister Thatcher refused to impose sanctions against South Africa, former Prime Minister Mulroney would not be swayed.

Less than 24 hours after his release in 1990, Nelson Mandela called former Prime Minister Mulroney to thank him for his support. Four months later, Nelson Mandela addressed a joint session of the House of Commons and Senate, where he stated:

I would like to take this opportunity to salute the great Canadian people . . . They have proved themselves not only to be steadfast friends of our struggling people but great defenders of human rights and the idea of democracy itself.

As we all know, Brian Mulroney could tell a good story and enjoyed making people laugh, often at his own expense. Speaking at a fundraiser for a children's centre 20 years after his departure from Ottawa, he ended by explaining why, in 1993, he decided to step down:

I decided it was time to go when I realized that more people believed that Elvis was alive than approved of me.

Colleagues, the magnitude and legacy of the work of leaders can only be evaluated when looking back. In one of his final speeches, former Prime Minister Mulroney said:

I have learned over the years that history is unconcerned with the trivia and the trash of rumours and gossip floating around Parliament Hill. . . . History is only concerned with the big-ticket items that have shaped the future of Canada.

• (1410)

During his tenure, Brian Mulroney did indeed shape our future.

[Senator Gold]

[*Translation*]

On behalf of the Senate of Canada, I extend my sincere condolences to Prime Minister Mulroney's wife, Mila, and to his children, Ben, Caroline, Mark and Nicolas.

[*English*]

May his memory be a blessing.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain: Honourable senators, on behalf of all members of the Independent Senators Group, I offer our sincere condolences to the family of the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney.

As Canada's eighteenth prime minister, he left a significant legacy, both domestically and internationally. Among other things, he oversaw the post-recession revival of the Canadian economy and the negotiations that led to the ratification of the first Canada-U.S. free trade agreement, followed by the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA. Historians will give him his rightful place not only in the history of our country, but also in world history.

As prime minister, Brian Mulroney lived up to his constituents' expectations, expectations that related to the good economic and social governance of the country, the strengthening of federal-provincial relations and even the advancement of world peace.

In that regard, he earned the support of Canadians across the country and he made them feel proud. Canadians were honoured when, in 1985, he stood before a packed audience at the United Nations and courageously rose above the ideological divisions between the East and West blocs to strongly and skilfully condemn the apartheid regime and boldly plead for human rights and dignity to prevail. His actions marked a turning point in the fight against apartheid.

In the end, Mandela, Tutu and Boesak were right, and history has already placed Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, by their side.

[*English*]

He also devoted all his energy to building stronger and more amicable federal-provincial relationships and invested a lot of his time in the negotiation of constitutional arrangements. Even though these negotiations did not necessarily yield the desired outcomes, he succeeded in ensuring a more equitable sharing of powers, the respect of jurisdictions and the specific recognition of Quebec in the confederated nation — a nation he would continue to serve even after leaving political life and to the limit of his capacity.

Indeed, the mandates he was given were numerous and varied, from acting as a mediator to being an adviser to his successors as well as to other personalities and thought leaders, both at home and internationally. Today, we pay tribute to this eminent statesman who demonstrated such an exceptional sense of duty to his country — a politician and parliamentarian who, despite this

sad era of cynicism toward the men and women who devote themselves to the public sphere, continues to inspire recognition, gratitude and respect.

It is also the man who distinguished himself through his humility, charisma, kindness and sense of family whom we grieve today, from coast to coast. “The boy from Baie-Comeau,” the great Quebecer, the proud Canadian — it’s to this man we express our gratitude for his service to our country and his contribution to democracy, both within and outside our borders. Above all, we express to him our most profound admiration for having never forgotten his roots and remaining, at any time and in any place, a man of the people.

May he rest in peace.

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, I grew up in a Canada that had every advantage in the world, but we had an inferiority complex. We resented our more confident neighbours and denied our own potential.

There were battles over who owned Western oil, and Quebec separatists were angry. By 1984, “. . . time for a change” was to risk understatement. It was the largest win in history for “the boy from Baie-Comeau.”

The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney became a leader of great consequence, a modern-day founding father of a new Canada.

With his powerful will, discipline and amazing people skills, he did transform our nation.

He understood that relationships were key. He forged the Acid Rain Treaty before the environment was cool and convinced Reagan and Thatcher to dismantle apartheid; Nelson Mandela called him a hero.

As Mandela said, “There is no passion to be found playing small. . . .” Brian Mulroney never played small. He practised what his friend Wayne Gretzky preached: You’ve got to “. . . skate to where the puck is going to be”

So he risked it all on the free trade agreement. It would define us and finally put us in the economic game.

The goods and services tax, or GST, which no leader today would ever forfeit, was all part of standing us up. Unpopularity was the price of his boldness. It cost him everything politically, but a confident Canada came of age, and we lost that chip on our shoulder.

I smiled when some claimed he was the most divisive Prime Minister in history, with scandals and ministers fired.

Well, as someone who was there covering it all, there were indeed resignations, because Brian Mulroney believed in accountability and that ministers should take responsibility — a belief which seems to have sadly been lost. It is a testament to leadership when principle withstands the elixir of power.

His partisanship was always respectful, knowing that the tables inevitably turn.

He embraced those who told him the truth.

At his core was a natural empathy. There was always a call, a note or a hand on your shoulder.

He never forgot a name or face — nor a grudge or slight, but he had heart.

He respected and listened to women, particularly Mila, his smartest adviser and true partner, with whom he raised four fine citizens.

As we mourn the loss of a good man, we remember Mandela’s plea:

Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.

If there is ever a time to invoke Theodore Roosevelt’s praise for a life lived “. . . in the arena . . .” it is when speaking of Martin Brian Mulroney. You know the words:

The credit belongs to the man . . . who spends himself in a worthy cause . . . so that his place shall never be with those . . . timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.

Prime Minister, rest in peace. You, sir, have earned it.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Honourable senators, in the minds of those who followed politics in the 1980s and the 1990s, the name Brian Mulroney is associated with the arrival of the GST, the first free trade agreement between Canada and the United States, the privatization of Petro-Canada, Air Canada and CN, and the list goes on.

On the constitutional issue, in the tradition of previous Progressive Conservative leaders such as Bob Stanfield and Joe Clark, he proposed a different idea that led to the Meech Lake Accord, after winning over a majority of Quebecers; unfortunately, that accord never came to fruition.

[*English*]

Brian Mulroney was also very famous for coining the right question or saying the right sentence. In 1987, he said to the Americans:

. . . why do think it is that the United States can do a nuclear weapons reduction treaty with it’s worst enemy, the Soviet Union, but you can’t do a free trade deal with your best friends, the Canadians?

That was a good question. That would lead to the first North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA.

I also remember that, in 1990, he was Canada’s only prime minister to use a section of the Constitution to appoint 8 extra senators in addition to the usual 105. This was to overcome partisan obstruction to the GST. Major changes to the Senate Rules followed, including time allocations for government business, and still leave a legacy.

• (1420)

Prime Minister Mulroney was also ahead of his time on the environment, mindful of the damage caused by acid rain on Canadian lakes and rivers. In 1991, he led a successful treaty with our neighbours and friends, the United States. His skills and networking continued to benefit Canadians after he left the Prime Minister's Office. The current Liberal government enrolled him to assist in negotiating the most recent free trade agreement with the U.S. and Mexico.

In conclusion, from humble beginnings to global leadership, he remained dedicated to his country, to his province, his friends and his family.

[*Translation*]

On behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, I offer our sincere condolences to his wife, Mila, their four children and sixteen grandchildren, and to all those who share their heartbreaking loss.

Thank you.

[*English*]

Hon. Denise Batters: Honourable senators, I rise to pay tribute to a political titan, the former Conservative Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney.

To me, growing up as a young political geek from Saskatchewan, Brian Mulroney was a rock star. I faithfully watched "This Week in Parliament" on TV every Saturday night, and I was awestruck by Mr. Mulroney. He was proudly, unabashedly Conservative. He would trounce the Liberals who sat across from him in the House of Commons, first as opposition leader and later as Prime Minister, but always with a dose of wit and his trademark Irish charm.

Mulroney fought one of Canada's toughest elections, the 1988 free trade agreement election. It was my first election, both as a voter and as a Progressive Conservative youth campaign volunteer. I attended two huge national PC party conventions in 1989 and 1991. This was like Disneyland to me, and a chance to hear incredible speeches live from Prime Minister Mulroney, one of the best political orators Canada has ever seen. His words were moving to a young person like me, for they spoke of a united, free and prosperous Canadian future.

Prime Minister Mulroney was a remarkably adept Conservative politician, winning two back-to-back majority governments, a feat unparalleled since Sir John A. Macdonald. Mulroney had a grand vision. He took real action on issues of vital importance because, as he said in his 1991 convention speech:

... we are not doing all these difficult things because they are popular. We are doing them because they are right for Canada.

Prime Minister Mulroney will be remembered for naming strong women to prominent positions both around his Conservative cabinet table and throughout his government, which inspired a politically interested young woman like me to dream

big about my own potential political future. From the time I was 12, I wanted to be a senator. My admiration for Mulroney and the talented women he promoted was a major reason for that.

Prime Minister Mulroney was also an early supporter of Ukraine. Under his leadership in 1991, Canada became the first Western government to recognize Ukraine's independence. He also appointed some excellent Ukrainian Canadians like Ramon Hnatyshyn, Don Mazankowski and senators Raynell Andreychuk and David Tkachuk.

This Prime Minister also significantly impacted my home province of Saskatchewan. The Mulroney government gave Saskatchewan farmers a \$1 billion aid package in 1986 when they were in dire need. Mulroney and Saskatchewan PC premier Grant Devine further worked together to create Saskatchewan's Cameco, now the largest uranium company in the world. Mulroney also overcame opposition to build our province's Rafferty Dam, a major source of irrigation and power in southeastern Saskatchewan.

I only met Brian Mulroney in person once, but it was memorable not only because of his substantial political presence but also since I experienced his legendary warmth and charm. I felt I was 12 again, awed by standing in the presence of greatness.

For all his many accomplishments, I'm certain that Mr. Mulroney will say his outstanding family was his greatest achievement. Mila, Mark, Ben, Nicolas, Caroline and your families, Canada mourns with you in this loss of a great Canadian man and leader. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Tony Loffreda: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to the eighteenth prime minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney. His loss was a shock to us all.

Mr. Mulroney, who governed our country from 1984 to 1993, left a lasting mark on our nation. He was a great statesman and an experienced diplomat with a unifying vision for the country.

[*English*]

In his tenure as Canada's Prime Minister, Mr. Mulroney's contributions to our political landscape include the free trade agreement and the acid rain treaty, fostering economic growth and environmental cooperation.

A man of great principle, his commitment to the fight against apartheid in South Africa remains one of his greatest achievements. In the face of a global outcry against apartheid, Mulroney advocated for sanctions, aligning Canada with the international community's stance on human rights and underscoring his principled approach to foreign policy. Through his leadership, he demonstrated the influence a nation such as ours can wield when driven by values.

[Senator Dalphond]

Brian Mulroney's legacy extends way beyond politics — it embodies a commitment to service and responsibility. He exemplified these values, navigating the complexities of leadership with unwavering dedication and leaving an indelible mark on our country's history. His focus on economic growth wasn't just a policy choice; it reflected a responsibility to ensure prosperity for all Canadians.

In times that demanded foresight, he demonstrated a remarkable sense of responsibility, steering the nation through many challenges. Today, as we bid farewell, let us remember and celebrate the enduring values he brought to public service.

Personally, I had the privilege to meet Brian Mulroney on many occasions. We both used to work in the same office tower in Montreal. We had many insightful discussions about politics and the economy, but what was most impressive was the way he made you feel. He mastered the art of instant intimacy. He would ask about your family and your work. He made you feel important. Every time we would be together, it didn't take much time before we would be surrounded by passersby who wanted to meet the former prime minister. He was always kind and receptive. At times, he would jokingly say, "Hold on, I'm speaking to Tony now." They all wanted to shake his hand. Some wanted his autograph.

Honourable senators, as we mourn the passing of a man who so richly contributed to our nation's economic, social and environmental prosperity, I offer my deepest condolences to his family, his friends and to all Canadians.

Mr. Mulroney, may you rest in peace, and may your legacy remind us all that good people with great intentions can do outstanding things. Rest in peace.

Hon. Colin Deacon: Honourable senators, the early 1990s were really tough. To be honest, at the time, I was not a fan of Prime Minister Mulroney. Canada's GDP growth had shrunk; our debt-to-GDP ratio had risen. Mortgage rates, having fallen, were still over 11%. Inflation was stuck despite the housing bubble that had burst in 1989. For many, our earnings and savings were deteriorating and our debt was growing.

But I was very wrong about former prime minister Brian Mulroney. He was the rarest form of political leader. He was focused on Canada's long-term prosperity and place in the world. Rather than focusing just on short-term priorities, Mulroney invested the bulk of his political capital into big policy objectives. When he prioritized them, they were far from being universally popular. Whether working to establish free trade with the U.S., implementing the goods and services tax, or GST, on virtually everything we consumed or expanding free trade to include Mexico, Progressive Conservatives and Canadians needed to be convinced.

While Prime Minister Mulroney ultimately won most big policy battles, he suffered politically. Yet his policy choices remained in place, and we've all benefited from a generation of competitive prosperity thanks to the foundation that he built. Remarkably, Brian Mulroney is also seen as Canada's greenest Prime Minister. Consider the acid rain treaty, the Montreal

Protocol and the Rio Earth Summit. Contrary to still so many today, he worried that time was running out to address climate change. Consider his words:

Whether the process proves to be Kyoto or something else, let's acknowledge the urgency of global warming and then let's work together to get the US to the table. It isn't by lecturing the Americans on their record on emissions reduction that we will succeed, especially when our own record is nearly twice as bad as theirs.

As I close, I want to recall Nelson Mandela's request to first address Canada's Parliament just months after being released from a generation in prison. That's how Mr. Mandela recognized Brian Mulroney's leadership and personal involvement in defeating apartheid. Remarkably, Mr. Mulroney achieved this while still maintaining strong relationships with two of our closest allies despite their very forceful protestations.

Generational accomplishments in prosperity, sustainability and equity — all three continue to be crucial priorities today. Former prime minister Brian Mulroney's track record proves to us that big things can be accomplished. Let's strive to follow in his footsteps. Thank you.

• (1430)

Hon. Andrew Cardozo: Honourable senators, it is an honour to stand in this august chamber to pay tribute to the late prime minister Brian Mulroney. I had the good fortune to work with his government on several important issues, whether it was exerting pressure from the outside or working closely with his ministers and officials in drafting policies and legislation.

I want to focus my tribute on highlighting Mr. Mulroney's deep and comprehensive understanding of the identities and diversity of Canadians. It started with his pulling together a grand coalition of support, which was new for the Progressive Conservative Party, and resulted in his unprecedented electoral victory — Prairie Conservatives, Quebec nationalists, moderate Conservatives from Ontario and the Atlantic provinces, as well as ethnic minorities in the big cities.

Certainly, regarding Quebec, the Meech Lake Accord demonstrated his commitment to national unity, and even though it ultimately did not succeed, we had an important national debate on who we are.

[Translation]

It's important to remember that at the heart of the Meech Lake Accord there was the following provision:

2. (1) The Constitution of Canada shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with . . .

b. the recognition that Quebec constitutes within Canada a distinct society.

[*English*]

Beyond this, his government established the Court Challenges Program, which assisted Canadians in accessing their Charter rights in the courts — most notably women; Canadians with disabilities; and ethnic, racial, religious and linguistic minorities.

His government passed the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988. He was the first prime minister to issue an apology for past wrongs by the Government of Canada, as he did for Japanese Canadians. As part of that settlement, he established the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

On immigration, his government increased annual levels considerably from just 84,000 when he took office in 1984 to 256,000 in 1993 — his last year in office.

In 1990, his government announced that RCMP officers would be able to wear religious and traditional headwear, such as the turban, the kippah or a braid. The same went for the Canadian Armed Forces.

In 1991, he established the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, or RCAP.

Lastly, Canada — under his personal leadership — has been widely recognized as playing a major role in bringing an end to apartheid in South Africa.

Prime Minister Mulroney understood that government could be a force for good, and he was well in tune with the issues of the 1980s and 1990s that defined modern Canada and advanced equality in human rights. While diversity, equity and inclusion are under attack today from some quarters, it was the Mulroney government that put in place many policies that focused on bringing Canadians together in a respectful way. His was a legacy worth upholding.

Hon. Victor Oh: Honourable senators, much has been said of the late prime minister Brian Mulroney and his many accomplishments. For my part, I want to share a personal story of how an unexpected moment of curiosity and warmth shaped my early views of Canadian politicians.

In winter 1985, my young family and I were vacationing in Barbados. Midway through our trip, we noticed that the number of broad-shouldered men in suits and dark sunglasses outnumbered those in sandals and swimsuits. Unbeknownst to us at the time, an international summit was taking place on the grounds.

During our last day at the beach, my son, Derek, pointed over my shoulder at a stately man in a pale suit, with imposing bodyguards trailing behind him. In the minutes that followed, I came to learn that this was none other than Canada's newly elected Progressive Conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney. He was in Barbados for the summit and wanted a moment of fresh air before returning to the sessions.

What I could never have expected from this chance encounter was his warm and welcoming manner. He effortlessly engaged with us and was pleasantly surprised when we answered "Toronto, Canada" to his question of where we were from.

Before parting ways, he kindly offered to take a photo with us. This photo — a testament of this significant moment — was so special. Senators, I would share the photo with you if it were not for the prime minister looking dapper in a three-piece suit while my family and I stood next to him exposed by comparison, as I was in my neon swim trunks. That moment, however brief, stayed with me.

There, I came to believe that Canadian politicians upheld their international reputation of warmth and openness. There was a genuine curiosity about me and my family, and, regardless of his monumental professional position, I felt as if we were equal. In that moment, I believe I caught sight of his character. This true statesman, who was politically daring and legislatively aggressive, was also a family man and a respectful compatriot. I like to think that these positive attributes are what Canadians will remember because it will certainly be what I recall of him. He is truly the people's prime minister.

May you rest in peace.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mary Coyle: Honourable senators, we are gathered today to mourn and pay homage to the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney — Canada's eighteenth prime minister.

I first met Brian Mulroney and his brilliant partner in everything, Mila Mulroney, in 1999. They were at St. Francis Xavier University, or StFX, for Brian's fortieth homecoming, which coincided with the fortieth anniversary of the Coady International Institute. At a Friday event honouring Brian Mulroney, Jabulani Manombe-Ncube, a powerful Southern African Coady leader, gave an impassioned shout-out to Mr. Mulroney for helping to end apartheid in South Africa.

The following day, while sitting at the homecoming football game with the Mulroneys and StFX President Sean Riley, Brian leaned over and pointed to a hilltop location across from the field, indicating it would be the ideal location for his prime ministerial library. While that library wasn't built, Mr. Mulroney, with the guidance of his daughter Caroline, created something far more impactful.

Last week, I took my teenage grandson, Niko Brown, to visit the Brian Mulroney Institute of Government at StFX — an innovative centre for the study of government, public policy and leadership. We signed the book of condolences in the recreated prime ministerial office with its original furnishings and view. The Brian Mulroney Institute of Government was bustling with students, professors and people — like Niko and me — who had come to pay their respects. Throughout the building are displays highlighting Brian Mulroney's political career, including his many leadership contributions on North American free trade, as a U.S. ally, as Canada's greenest prime minister, as a bridge builder with Quebec — with la Francophonie — as a humanitarian and as a statesman.

Included among his many awards, treasures and photos with world leaders on display is this 2004 letter from Nelson Mandela:

Dear Brian,

On this 10th anniversary of our democracy, one recalls the momentous time of our transition and remembers the people involved both within and outside South Africa.

As Prime Minister of Canada and Chairman of the Commonwealth, you provided strong and principled leadership in the battle against apartheid. This was not a popular position in all quarters, but South Africans today acknowledge the importance of your contribution to our eventual liberation and success.

• (1440)

Colleagues, as Mr. Mulroney said:

Leaders must have vision and they must find the courage to fight for the policies that will give that vision life. Leaders must govern not for easy headlines in ten days but for a better Canada in ten years . . .

Colleagues, let's keep Brian Mulroney's legacy alive by boldly striving for a better Canada and a better world.

Rest in peace, Brian Mulroney. And, colleagues, his institute at St. Francis Xavier University awaits your visit.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Peter Harder: Honourable senators, I would like to rise to say a few things on behalf of those of us who began our public service and political career under Brian Mulroney. That goes back more than a year or two.

I want to make three points. First, Brian Mulroney practised the politics of addition, not subtraction. At the 1983 convention, I was supporting the previous leader. I had been the chief of staff to Mr. Clark and, when he left the leadership to contest it, with Erik Nielsen as the interim leader. Going across the booth to vote on the last ballot, he came over to me and said, "Peter, everything is going to be all right."

The next morning, I went to see him to hand in my letter of resignation. He said, "Put that away." We began to talk about the addition necessary in politics. I said, "So there won't be any retribution?" And he said, "I believe in John Kennedy. When John Kennedy got the Democratic nomination in 1960, he was asked, 'Mr. Kennedy, will there be any retribution?' And he said, 'Only in Massachusetts.'"

So the politics of addition is something I believe we could all return to and learn from. He practised it not just on that day but where, later that night, if you recall, he spoke to Erik Nielsen on the platform, in public, on TV. He said to Erik Nielsen, "I know I wasn't your first choice, but you were my first choice to be deputy leader." By that act, he practised the politics of addition and brought a caucus with him that had not supported him, at least in the first ballots.

My point here is that we have much to learn about addition in politics.

Second, he was consequential not only in his tenure but also in his achievements. You achieve in politics, unlike in the private sector, when you use your political capital. You don't save it. You use it to achieve things. Many of you have spoken about the achievements, so I won't rehearse that list except to knowledge the breadth of it.

Senator Batters referred to Ukraine. He announced that decision while visiting in Kennebunkport with an American president, who said, "Please, don't do it. Defer this for two weeks." He did it right away.

When you talk about South Africa or the work on NAFTA or the Meech Lake Accord or the GST, it was all about using political capital to achieve something. That, too, is a gift and an insight that we could talk a bit more about even today.

The final point is this: All politics is personal. Every place I have been to for the last week, I have encountered people who told me their story of a call from Brian Mulroney or the like. I want to end with my story. When I got a call on a late Friday afternoon and was pulled out of a meeting, I thought my son had broken his leg. But it was, "Hello, Peter. This is Brian." And he read the order-in-council appointing me as Deputy Minister of Immigration — a position that I did not seek and to which I did not know I was about to be named. All politics was personal.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Éric Forest: It was with great sadness that we learned, on February 29, of the passing of a distinguished statesman, a visionary leader and a staunch defender of Canada's regions.

[*English*]

Brian Mulroney, former prime minister of Canada, has passed away, leaving behind an indelible legacy that significantly shaped our country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mulroney understood the vital importance of ensuring that people from every corner of Canada felt represented, heard and included at the federal level. His collaborative approach and willingness to work in partnership with provincial and territorial governments have strengthened the bonds that unite our diverse country.

It should be noted that he chose to run in two rural ridings, first being elected in the Nova Scotia riding of Central Nova and then in the riding of Manicouagan, our neighbours across the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The riding of Manicouagan was, above all, a natural choice for the "little guy from Baie-Comeau." His leadership, firmly rooted in his fundamental values of fairness and equity, was marked by significant achievements in areas such as economic reform, international relations and the promotion of human rights. Personally, I mostly remember him for — as has been mentioned time and time again — the free trade agreement

with the United States, his courageous efforts to put an end to apartheid in South Africa, when he did not hesitate to show leadership and stand apart from our natural allies, the United States and the United Kingdom, and the acid rain agreement he signed with the United States. This was a very important commitment to the environment.

He demonstrated his commitment to Canada's regions through initiatives designed to stimulate regional economic development, invest in infrastructure and promote the cultural and linguistic diversity that makes our nation so rich.

Bilingual and bicultural, he made a meaningful effort to reach out to the two linguistic communities that founded our country.

Quebecers are unlikely to forget that he was perhaps the first and last prime minister to include Quebec nationalists in the federal cabinet, in a sincere effort to repair the damage done in 1982 and bring Quebec into the Constitution "with honour and enthusiasm."

[English]

In this time of national mourning, we remember with gratitude Brian Mulroney's exemplary leadership, dedication and contribution to building a more respectful and united Canada.

[Translation]

His legacy will live on in the policies he championed, the bridges he built and the lives he touched. In this time of sadness, our thoughts and prayers are with Brian Mulroney's family and loved ones. May they find comfort in the precious memories they shared with him and in the lasting legacy he leaves behind. May his spirit of service and dedication continue to inspire future generations to work together to ensure a better future for a more respectful and united Canada throughout all its regions.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Diane Bellemare: Honourable senators, as we mark the passing of the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, I wish to extend my sincere condolences to his wife, Mila, his children and his friends, and pay tribute to him. Irish Quebecer Brian Mulroney was a masterful speaker and skilful listener, talents we rarely see today. I witnessed that for myself on three occasions. Shortly after taking office in 1984, Prime Minister Mulroney wanted to demonstrate that he intended to govern for all Canadians and build consensus. He brought 300 economic leaders from business associations and unions together for a major gathering in Ottawa. I was a university professor at the time, and I attended with my province's union delegation as a workshop rapporteur.

In his opening remarks, Brian Mulroney made it very clear that he was there to listen. I also saw him at work abroad in 1989, when he headed up a Canadian delegation of businesspeople in Moscow to support President Gorbachev's perestroika. I was there with my husband. I was very impressed by the weight of his words and the hopefulness he expressed about the decentralization of the Soviet Empire. Big challenges didn't scare him.

[Senator Forest]

Then, in the summer of 2015, I was privileged to have a one-on-one with him. We spent over an hour talking about Senate modernization. I wanted to run my ideas by the former prime minister, who'd had to contend with a Senate that wasn't very receptive to his free trade and GST proposals. Those were revolutionary ideas at the time.

• (1450)

We discussed the role of the Senate and the institutional conditions needed to ensure it could better play its role as a chamber of sober second thought. At first, he listened to me carefully. Then, before I even had the time to finish my analysis, he interrupted me, saying that we had to put an end to the two-party system in the Senate, that the temptation for the governments in power to try to control the Senate was too strong, and that this was all too easy to do when senators were appointed and there were only two groups of senators. Brian Mulroney confirmed my analysis and went a step further.

I asked him whether he was encouraging me to try to create a third group of independent senators, like in the House of Lords. He answered yes, and added in a serious voice, "but wait until after the next election." I followed his advice.

Brian Mulroney was a master of dialogue and negotiation. He knew how to listen to groups and individuals alike, a prerequisite for achieving meaningful change. I thank the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney for his memorable contribution to Canada's development.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Percy Mockler: It is with great sadness that I address you today in this august chamber, the Senate of Canada, following the passing of a friend, mentor, builder, visionary and true national and international statesman.

For me, Brian Mulroney embodied friendship, loyalty and principles. He was also a leader who was deeply committed to making his region, his beloved Baie-Comeau, his province and his country a better place to live, work and raise children, a better place to offer a helping hand to the most vulnerable.

[English]

Honourable senators, no one can doubt that in the last 40 years, I have followed and worked very closely with Prime Minister Mulroney. The "little guy from Baie-Comeau" captivated Canadians of all stripes and influenced world leaders in terms of the importance of respecting the rights and freedoms of individuals. In this regard, I also think of Nelson Mandela.

I will always cherish three of Prime Minister Mulroney's principles:

International cooperation is key in addressing global issues such as climate change and poverty.

Leadership means making tough decisions in the best interest of the country, even if they are unpopular.

Affirming Indigenous Canadians had an inherent right of self-government.

[*Translation*]

Prime Minister Mulroney cared about one very important thing: The people of Acadia had a special place in his government, as did francophones outside Quebec.

Let's take a few moments to remember some of the highlights. Under his leadership, New Brunswick became a permanent member of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. What is more, New Brunswick's Bill 88 was enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, recognizing the equality of the two peoples. Prime Minister Mulroney also spearheaded the first amendments to Canada's Official Languages Act, and he was responsible for appointing the first francophone Acadian to the Supreme Court of Canada, the Honourable Justice Gérard La Forest.

[*English*]

Honourable senators, as for Atlantic Canada, we cannot forget Prime Minister Mulroney's steadfast and unwavering leadership with his government: in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Hibernia project; in Prince Edward Island, the Confederation Bridge linking P.E.I. to the rest of Canada.

Let us also remember the shipbuilding of 12 frigates in New Brunswick, which has since propelled this great industry for Atlantic Canadians and for Canadians across the country.

As Atlantic senators, let us not forget the creation of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, or ACOA, which has since become a magnanimous tool for creating and enhancing our economic developments.

To his family, Mila and the four children, I offer my sincere condolences.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Leo Housakos: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to a great prime minister, a mentor and a friend.

To me, there were three essential elements that defined Brian Mulroney. Obviously, he was a great statesman and leader. He was elected by a huge majority in 1984. Over the following decade, he went on to do big things. We spoke about some of them today: free trade, GST and acid rain treaty agreements. He led on the world stage in recognizing Ukraine, fighting apartheid and being the first Canadian prime minister to recognize the Armenian genocide. He went on to do big things.

Prime Minister Mulroney always said that leadership is not for the timid and the timorous, the weak and the meek; it is for those who are bold and courageous. When you are sitting in the Senate,

in the House of Commons or in government, do things that the Canadian public will remember you for. That's what Brian Mulroney was all about.

A second, important element of Brian Mulroney is that he was a family man. He was very proud of Mila and his children.

I had the opportunity to sit down with Prime Minister Mulroney a year ago. As he normally would, he opened his house to me and we spent some time together. Unlike all the previous meetings — and I guess, looking back, it was a precursor — we didn't spend as much time reminiscing about campaigns, the times with Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, fighting the Iron Curtain and all those wonderful stories that he indulged a young Conservative with on a regular basis. Rather, he spent a lot of time talking about Mila, Caroline, Ben, Mark, Nicolas and his 11 grandchildren. He was beaming. Of course, he was always a larger-than-life individual when talking about politics, but he was beaming about his family. He said, "Leo, once the lights are turned off and the cameras are shut down, whatever you are doing in life, the last thing that remains — the most important thing and your most important legacy — is your family." I took that as a message.

The third element was his kindness. Brian Mulroney was a great human being. For those of us who have been in the arena of politics for a long time, sometimes it's difficult to combine politics and humanity, and he did that probably better than anybody I know in this business. He was kind to friends and foes alike.

In life and in the political world, there are highs and lows. In my experience, whenever there was a high, there was always a quick note from Brian Mulroney extending his congratulations. More importantly — and we have heard countless such stories from across the country — whenever you had a low or whenever you were crying, with Brian Mulroney, you never cried alone. He always called to offer a word of encouragement, to tell you to keep your chin up and keep fighting the good fight. Decency in politics is less and less evident today, but he epitomized all of that.

I pay tribute to someone who always opened his heart and his office to young Tories. There was a parade of young Conservatives that I would bring through his office when he was Prime Minister — from Vanier College and McGill University. He always found time for them. It's amazing the notes I received from so many over the last week, remembering those moments when he took the time to share his wisdom — both while he was Prime Minister and after he left office.

On behalf of all Canadians and all those young Tories whom he touched, Prime Minister, may you rest in peace.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

The Hon. the Speaker: On behalf of all senators and all those associated with this place, I extend my deepest condolences to the family and friends of the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney.

[*English*]

Honourable senators, I would ask that you all rise and join me in a minute of silence in his memory.

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

• (1500)

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of our former colleague the Honourable David Tkachuk.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of participants of the Fifteenth Canadian Parliamentary Seminar of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of representatives from Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Plett.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Dr. Yipeng Ge. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Woo.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Gina Valle. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Loffreda.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[The Hon. the Speaker]

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Ruifeng Zhen, President of the Chinese Association of Mississauga, and association board members. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Oh.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

AUDITOR GENERAL

2024 SPRING REPORTS TABLED

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2024 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada to the Parliament of Canada, pursuant to the *Auditor General Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. A-17, sbs. 7(5).

[*English*]

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AFFECT SITTINGS ON
MARCH 21 AND 22, 2024

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, and in relation to any bills for granting to His Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending either March 31, 2024, or March 31, 2025:

1. if the Senate receives any message from the House of Commons with such a bill during the sitting of March 21, 2024, the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading at the next sitting;
2. if the Senate receives any message from the House of Commons with such a bill during the sitting of March 22, 2024, the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading later that sitting, provided that if the message is received after the point where the Senate would normally have dealt with the bill at second reading, the bill either be taken into consideration at second reading forthwith, or, if another item is under consideration at the time the

message is read, the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at second reading as the next item of business; and

[*Translation*]

MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2023

3. during the sitting of March 22, 2024:

FIRST READING

(a) if such a bill is read a second time, it be taken into consideration at third reading forthwith;

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate) introduced Bill S-17, An Act to correct certain anomalies, inconsistencies, out-dated terminology and errors and to deal with other matters of a non-controversial and uncomplicated nature in the Statutes and Regulations of Canada and to repeal certain provisions that have expired, lapsed or otherwise ceased to have effect.

(b) if the Senate is dealing with such a bill at 4 p.m., or such a bill is on the Orders of the Day at that time, the adjournment of the sitting be postponed until all proceedings on such bills have concluded for that sitting, subject to other provisions of this order;

(Bill read first time.)

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

(c) if, at any time during the sitting, the Government Representative or the Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative states that receipt of a message with such a bill is expected during the sitting, no motion to adjourn the Senate be received and the rules regarding the ordinary time of adjournment or suspension, or any prior order regarding adjournment, be suspended until either:

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

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO
EXTEND DATE OF FINAL REPORT ON STUDY OF
MINORITY-LANGUAGE HEALTH SERVICES

(i) the message has been received and all subsequent proceedings, including proceedings pursuant to this order, have concluded, provided that if the Senate completes business before the message is received, the sitting be suspended to the call of the Speaker, with the bells to ring for 15 minutes before the sitting resumes; or

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

That, notwithstanding the order of the Senate adopted on Thursday, March 9, 2023, the date for the final report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages in relation to its study on minority-language health services be extended from October 31, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

(ii) the Government Representative or the Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative indicates that the receipt of such a message is no longer expected;

• (1510)

QUESTION PERIOD

(d) the Government Representative or the Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative be authorized to invoke the provisions of rule 16-1(8) at any time during the sitting if there is any bill then awaiting Royal Assent; and

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

(e) the Senate only deal with Government Business on that day.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, after consultations with the leaders and facilitators it has been agreed that we should more strictly adhere to the times allowed during Question Period. The reading clerk stands 10 seconds before times expire during Question Period, and the Speaker will stand once time is exhausted, irrespective of whether a question or answer is concluded. Senators should resume their seats at that time.

The console operators have received a general direction to cut microphones whenever the Speaker stands, whether during Question Period or at other times. This respects the fact that, when the Speaker rises, rule 2-7(2) requires that senators resume their seats, which also means that any interventions should cease.

[English]

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Leader, in October 2022, the Trudeau government promised to provide satellite communication services to the Ukrainian government and non-government partners. The government claims this promise is in progress. In January 2023, the Trudeau government announced it would donate a national advanced surface-to-air missile system to Ukraine. It hasn't been delivered. In October 2023, the Trudeau government announced it would donate naval ammunition, artillery smoke and mortar smoke to Ukraine. It hasn't been delivered yet. Do you see a pattern here, leader? When will this inept Trudeau government follow through on these promises to Ukraine?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. Canada's support for Ukraine remains strong; indeed, it is unwavering. This Government of Canada has committed over \$2.4 billion in military aid, from tanks to armoured vehicles to ammunition, and has announced an additional \$3.02 billion. When it comes to delivering on its commitments, the government will continue to do so.

Senator Plett: Last month, in response to Senator Dagenais, you said the Trudeau government was a faithful partner to Ukraine. A few days later, on February 19, *Le Devoir* reported that 58% of military aid promised by the Trudeau government to Ukraine had not been delivered. Is that how a faithful partner acts, Senator Gold? What is the current percentage of military aid promised by your government but not delivered, Senator Gold?

Senator Gold: Though I'm not aware of the percentage, I do know that ongoing efforts are continuing between Canada and Ukraine to deliver on the commitments that we've made and to continue to support Ukraine during this difficult time.

CANADA-UKRAINE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Hon. Denise Batters: Senator Gold, the Trudeau government's carbon tax will increase again to \$80 a tonne next week. It will continue to skyrocket to \$170 a tonne. In contrast, Ukraine's carbon tax is apparently tiny, yet the Trudeau government won't tell us what it is. Three weeks ago, Minister of International Trade Mary Ng testified at the Senate committee about the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. The minister said she didn't know what Ukraine's carbon tax was. None of her senior officials there to testify knew either, including the "Deputy Chief Negotiator of Trade Negotiations." They said they'd let the committee know. By later that day in third-reading debate, the committee still didn't have that answer.

[The Hon. the Speaker]

Senator Gold, it is now three weeks later. You expect us to vote on this bill in a few hours, yet your government can't get us a basic answer on this contentious amendment to the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. What's the answer? How much is Ukraine's carbon tax?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. I don't know what the carbon tax of Ukraine is. What I do know is it was a decision by Ukraine to have a carbon tax. What I do know is this was a matter that was not imposed upon Ukraine, despite the misleading rhetoric that has swirled around this now for many months. I'm surprised it's still in the air. Rather, it was something in the agreement that was negotiated between two sovereign nations respecting and pursuing their respective interests.

Senator Batters: Senator Gold, the Trudeau government repeatedly states that Ukraine has had a carbon tax for a long time. The government's frequent rationale is that Ukraine wants to get into the EU, and the EU wants Ukraine to have a carbon tax, but you said Ukraine already has a carbon tax. How does this contentious amendment help them to get into the EU? Why not admit the truth: The Trudeau government is shamefully pushing this for purely domestic wedge politics?

Senator Gold: No, that's not the truth, with all respect, Senator Batters. The truth is that Ukraine is pursuing its interests as it best sees fit as a sovereign country, and Canada is respecting, as a valuable trade partner, Ukraine's sovereign decisions as to what it chooses to do.

[Translation]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Hon. René Cormier: Senator Gold, your government's decision to cap the number of foreign students allowed into Canada is having a negative impact in the public sphere. It is jeopardizing the upcoming session for a number of universities and colleges.

This is Francophonie Month, a time to recognize the vital role that francophone post-secondary institutions in official language minority communities play in helping those communities thrive. What positive, concrete measures does your government intend to take to compensate for the direct negative impact of this decision in order to comply with the new requirements of the Official Languages Act?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. Francophone institutions are key to strengthening francophone minority communities across the country. They are very important. That's why the government has invested unprecedented amounts since 2021 and made these investments permanent in the new action plan. The proposed cap on new study permits is a necessary measure to protect the integrity of the International Student Program.

Senator Cormier: Senator Gold, while the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-2028 includes some innovative measures, it still fails to deliver on your government's 2021 election promise of allocating \$80 million per year in permanent funding for post-secondary institutions in official language minority communities.

Does your government intend to honour this promise? Do we have to wait until the next federal election in 2025 for this commitment to materialize?

Senator Gold: The government launched the first federal program to support post-secondary institutions in minority communities, and, this year the government announced an additional investment of up to \$128 million over the four years of the 2023-2028 action plan to support funding for post-secondary institutions in minority communities.

[English]

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CANADA DIGITAL ADOPTION PROGRAM

Hon. Tony Loffreda: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, last month we learned that most of the Canada Digital Adoption Program, or CDAP, will be cancelled. First announced in Budget 2021, the CDAP was part of a larger, \$4-billion effort to help Canadian small businesses become more efficient, go digital, take advantage of e-commerce and become more competitive in Canada and abroad. I strongly believe that helping our community of small to medium-sized enterprises increase its online presence is crucial in helping our entrepreneurs create wealth and good-paying jobs.

Can you provide us with the government's rationale for suddenly winding down this program? What will happen with the millions of dollars earmarked for this program that remain unspent?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. I've been informed that the federal government has closed intake for the Boost Your Business Technology, BYBT, stream of the Canada Digital Adoption Program, known as CDAP, as it has reached full subscription. It's important to note, colleagues, that the applications for the Grow Your Business Online Grant are still open, and businesses who have already signed their BYBT grant agreements prior to Monday will continue to benefit from the program, including access to BDC financing, despite the closing of the intake.

I'm not aware of specific plans the government has for potential remaining earmarked funding. However, the government will continue to look at what can be done to support small and medium-sized businesses.

• (1520)

Senator Loffreda: Thank you for that answer. Can you assure us that the Canada Digital Adoption Program will undergo a proper evaluation in order to assess its overall performance, including take-up rates, benefits, shortcomings and value for money?

According to staff in the minister's office, this program has been extremely successful in supporting tens of thousands of small businesses across Canada, which makes this decision somewhat perplexing. Surely, there's a good reason that motivated this decision.

Senator Gold: Thank you. As you know, the grant has been extremely successful in supporting tens of thousands of small businesses across Canada that need support to grow and to succeed. The government is always interested in learning lessons from previous programs in order to improve its delivery and design of programs, although I'm not aware of any full evaluation of the program, or whether a full evaluation will occur. I will certainly raise this with the minister.

CROWN-INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Hon. Paul J. Prosper: Senator Gold, eight years ago, Prime Minister Trudeau stated that no relationship was more important to him than the one with Indigenous peoples. Your government has often emphasized the importance of nation-to-nation relations, yet unilateral decisions by government departments, like Fisheries and Oceans Canada, or DFO, have only served to hurt First Nation fisheries. From shutting down the elver fishery, to not increasing the total allowable catch for Indigenous companies like Clearwater — despite signs supporting an increase — to proposing marine-protected areas with boundaries that would cut off 10% of Clearwater's lobster fishery, DFO continues to impose policies that are harmful and prejudicial to First Nation fishers.

Senators, treaties clearly protect Mi'kmaq resource rights. Further, the UNDRIP implementation act commits your government to aligning its laws and policies with UNDRIP. Will your government commit to taking a rights-based approach to all fishery-related discussions and policies —

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. Indeed, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples remains a core priority of this government, as are recognizing and respecting Indigenous rights and Indigenous rights holders. I've been informed that Fisheries and Oceans Canada is prioritizing collaborative relationships with Indigenous fish harvesters through agreements, through understandings and through dialogue. However, there remains, as in all of these areas, much more work to do.

I've been assured that Fisheries and Oceans Canada is committed to being partners with Indigenous communities to implement their rights, and it is committed to seeing this important work continue in the years to come.

Senator Prosper: Senator, since February, I've been engaged in a listening tour throughout Mi'kma'ki where chiefs and council leaders and subject-matter experts have shared their issues and priorities with me. In Newfoundland, several Mi'kmaq chiefs shared with me about their participation in an assessment of the redfish industry in 2017. They requested 25,000 metric tonnes and, instead, 25,000 metric tonnes were awarded to all redfish fishers. Only 10% was carved out for Indigenous people.

Senator Gold: Thank you. I understand the thrust of your question, senator. The government understands the importance of the redfish industry to coastal and Indigenous communities. That's why, following extensive consultations, and based upon the latest scientific data, Minister Leboutillier announced the reopening of the commercial redfish fishery for 2024. But, since this fishery was under a moratorium for 30 years, it's important to get it right, and that's why it's proceeding as it is.

FINANCE

CANADA CARBON REBATE

Hon. Andrew Cardozo: My question is for the Government Representative, and it is regarding the Canada Carbon Rebate.

I feel that the debate has, for some time, lost its way. Senator, can you take us back to square one on this? What is the message that the government wants to provide to Canadians? This isn't a trick question between you and me, but what's the message the government wants to give to Canadians about the objective of the policy and the policy itself?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. The government has been clear from the very beginning that putting a price on pollution is the most efficient and effective market-driven response to address climate change. Understanding the impact that this could have on Canadians, the government also introduced, concurrent with that, a program of rebates. This program has the effect, largely speaking, of returning money to individuals and families — in 8 out of 10 cases — at least as much or virtually as much, if not more, than they otherwise would have paid in carbon pricing. That ranges, for a family of four, from \$1,800 in Alberta to \$1,200 in Manitoba, and so on and so forth. It is an effective measure so that behavioural changes can occur while mitigating the financial impact on Canadians.

Senator Cardozo: My supplementary regards next steps. Given that a number of premiers are asking the government to pause on hiking the carbon charge, what is the government planning to do? What is the government's position with regard to Saskatchewan's approach, which is to not remit the tax that they collect?

Senator Gold: This government, like all governments, expects all Canadians, and, indeed, all governments in Canada, to obey the law. The framework for the price on pollution has been

upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada therefor. As I mentioned, families in Saskatchewan would receive \$1,800, on average, in rebates. If the Government of Saskatchewan does not abide by that, I'm afraid the people of Saskatchewan will suffer.

[*Translation*]

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

SPECIAL ECONOMIC MEASURES ACT

Hon. Claude Carignan: My question is for the Leader of the Government. Leader, in December 2022, the Trudeau government issued a press release entitled "Canada starts first process to seize and pursue the forfeiture of assets of sanctioned Russian oligarch," targeting well-known Russian Roman Abramovich.

The press release stated the following:

This is the first time that Canada is using its new authorities that allow the government to pursue the seizure of assets belonging to sanctioned persons. This means that Minister Joly will now consider making a court application to forfeit the asset permanently to the Crown.

A year and a half later, nothing has happened. Why is it taking so long? How long will Minister Joly continue to "consider," and when will she take action?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. I cannot provide a timeline for the government's actions. Canada has a robust system of sanctions and has legislation in place to ensure that we can move forward. I am confident that the minister and the government will ensure that the sanctions are applied in a reasonable manner.

Senator Carignan: A Russian cargo plane has been held at the Pearson airport in Toronto for two years now. The Trudeau government does not want to tell us what is happening with that cargo plane. Rumour has it that Canada is waiting for permission from other countries before turning over the plane to Ukraine. Senator Gold, is that true? Does the Trudeau government need permission from other countries to decide how to help Ukraine?

Senator Gold: The answer is no. Canada is working in close cooperation with its allies around the world to ensure that our actions are coordinated and effective. Canada is part of a coalition of democratic countries that are working together to ensure that Ukraine is protected and supported.

[*English*]

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

Hon. Leo Housakos: Senator Gold, a few weeks ago, I asked you about Ukraine's request for a surplus CRV7 rockets currently being stockpiled by our Armed Forces. You responded again today to a question from Senator Plett. Your responses always seem to say your government "has committed" or your government "has announced." Can you tell us what your

government has actually delivered? I suspect the only thing your government has delivered to Ukraine and to Canadians are empty words and empty promises.

Listen to this: You've cancelled the program to provide RADARSAT images. You have not used Magnitsky sanctions for fear of offending Russia by saying his name. You have refused to provide lethal aid before the war to help deter Russia's invasion. You have failed to ramp up production of munitions. You have contradicted your own sanctions by returning the gas turbine to Russia, and thereby ensuring Europe's continued reliance on Putin's Russian energy. You have rejected proposals to send Canada's used and surplus equipment. Those are the facts.

So, Senator Gold, quite simply, are you able to tell me when your government might actually deliver any military aid to Ukraine?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question.

• (1530)

As I've said on many occasions, Canada has delivered a great deal of military aid to Ukraine and will continue to work with Ukraine as a valuable partner to support it in its fight against the illegal Russian aggression.

Senator Housakos: You guys are good with words. Senator Gold, I just mentioned your government's cancellation of the program to provide Ukraine with RADARSAT images. This was a program of the previous Conservative government that you almost immediately cut in January 2016 in your rush to get rid of anything that had been brought in by your opponents.

Why does your government prioritize your domestic political fortunes when it comes to writing foreign policy? Please answer us this: What have you delivered concretely, other than just words, to Ukraine?

Senator Gold: You make it so hard, Senator Housakos, to avoid getting into political Ping-Pong with you, but I shall refrain.

This government has taken important measures to help Ukraine and will continue to do so. Changes that this government introduced in 2016 did not include only cancelling or changing some decisions of your previous government but also returning funding and proper support for areas of the Canadian economy that had been sadly and shamefully neglected by the previous government.

FINANCE

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Hon. Iris Petten: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

The Coalition for a Better Future, co-chaired by the Honourable Anne McLellan and the Honourable Lisa Raitt, released a 2024 scorecard report update this month entitled

Fragile Growth: An urgent need to get the basics right. In this report, they stressed a need to make economic growth a top policy priority for all. They outlined specific aspirational targets for the country by the end of this decade — 21 metrics in total — that gauge Canada's competitiveness in some way and provide a running score on whether Canada is on track to reach its full economic potential.

Will Budget 2024 prioritize Canada's economic growth to address some of the shortcomings that the report identified?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, senator.

As you will well appreciate, although I cannot comment nor speculate on any of the potential measures that will be included in the upcoming budget, I can say the government will be focused on issues like providing support to build more homes and build them faster, making life more affordable for Canadians and creating good jobs. I will also note that the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, or OECD, projected that Canada will have the strongest economic growth in the G7, on average, in 2025.

The government plans to continue its work to benefit all Canadians, who deserve a strong, healthy economy for themselves and their families.

Senator Petten: Senator Gold, on the critical measures of living standards, output per capita and labour productivity, the report indicates the country is moving in the wrong direction:

Canada's productivity record has been dismal. We're experiencing the largest decline in productivity outside of recession since at least the 1950s.

How is the government working to address this serious issue?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question.

It is correct to say that the issue of productivity remains a perennial issue for Canada. There are many issues that contribute and have led to decreased productivity, but the government has launched several programs and provided funding opportunities for both industries and sectors to innovate and increase productivity in Canada. To cite one example, government launched the Global Innovation Clusters, which strengthen Canada's most important industries, where private sector, academic institutions and others can work together.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELLING

Hon. Robert Black: My question is for the Government Representative.

The recent announcement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture regarding "Product of USA" labels on meat, poultry and eggs raises significant concerns for Canada's producers and the integrity of our supply chains, with the final rule stipulating

that “Product of USA” labels will only be allowed for products derived from animals born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the United States.

What measures is the Canadian government planning to take to address potential disruptions in supply chains and safeguard the interests of Canadian producers while ensuring continued cooperation and trade between Canada and the U.S. in the agricultural sector? Thank you.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for this important question, senator.

The government remains very concerned about any measures that may cause disruptions to what is a very highly integrated North American meat and livestock supply chain. I have been informed that the government is disappointed that the final rule does not appear to take into account the concerns that were repeatedly raised by the government in this regard. I understand the government is reviewing the final rule very carefully and will closely monitor its impact and implementation to ensure that Canada’s meat sector can continue to enjoy predictable and unhindered access to the United States’ market.

Senator Black: Thank you, Senator Gold.

Given the disappointment expressed by Canada’s Minister of Agriculture and Minister of International Trade regarding the apparent oversight of concerns raised by Canada, could you provide insight into how the Canadian government intends to engage with its U.S. counterparts to ensure that concerns raised around the bilateral trading relationship are adequately addressed? Thank you.

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question, senator.

I have been advised that the Canadian delegation intends to raise this with its counterparts during the agricultural ministers’ trilateral meeting with representatives from the United States and Mexico, which is to be held in Colorado later this month.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Leader, Ukraine asked Canada for help in breaking Europe’s dependence on natural gas from Russia. Sadly, their plea was ignored. It has become yet another way in which the Trudeau government has failed Ukraine, as well as our European allies and Canadian energy workers. In August 2022, the German chancellor brought a delegation to visit Canada for the specific purpose of obtaining Canadian liquefied natural gas, or LNG. Prime Minister Trudeau dismissed them, saying that when it comes to sending Canada’s natural gas to Europe, “There has never been a strong business case . . .”

Leader, Germany went on to build an LNG terminal in 194 days and signed a 15-year supply deal with Qatar. Does the Prime Minister now admit that he was wrong?

[Senator Black]

Senator Housakos: Trudeau is going to send them electric cars. Send them mine.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question.

No, I would not say that the Prime Minister believes that he is wrong. Again, we work closely with Ukraine.

I am struck by the number of questions, though — and I’m glad you are raising important questions about Canada’s support for Ukraine in this chamber. I wonder whether that’s a harbinger of how you are going to vote on the free trade agreement later today as you seek to rehabilitate your reputation from the shameful display last fall, when you voted time and time again against measures of ideological opposition to pricing pollution. Again, I’m only speculating.

Senator Martin: Two years ago this week, not long after Putin’s invasion of Ukraine began, the Trudeau Liberals voted against a Conservative motion in the House that called upon the government to undertake measures to ensure natural gas pipelines can be approved and built on Atlantic tidewater.

Leader, isn’t it true the Prime Minister said “no” to helping Europe displace Russian gas because of his government’s anti-energy policies and agenda?

Senator Gold: The answer is “no.” This government has invested both financial and political capital to ensure that Western resources can get to market efficiently and effectively. However, it does require the support and consent of provinces and territories where these facilities will lie, and that remains a challenge in this federation.

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): What is shameful, Senator Gold, is you questioning our motives in asking important questions about Ukraine.

Leader, the Trudeau government announced \$4.4 million in funding for two Canadian manufacturers to develop plans on how to increase the production of 155-millimetre artillery shells. This announcement wasn’t made in February 2022 in the aftermath of Putin’s invasion of Ukraine. It also wasn’t announced last fall, when we learned the Canadian Armed Forces had only a three-day supply of artillery available for our own defence. No, leader, it was announced two weeks ago, on March 7, more than two years after the war in Ukraine began.

I’m sorry that you think these questions are shameful, Senator Gold. How do you justify this inaction?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question.

I started my answer last time by saying I’m glad that you are raising important questions about Ukraine. I’m not belittling the question. I’m just surprised at the intensity with which you are focusing on this issue on the same day that we are having a vote that you deferred.

• (1540)

To address your question, I don't have specific information about why this particular contract and project was launched, but, again, this government has stood by Ukraine from day one and will continue to do so.

Senator Plett: This is blowing smoke. It's always the same old story with this Prime Minister: big talk and no action.

Ukraine needs more military assistance, but the Prime Minister isn't following through on any of these promises. Where has the urgency been, leader? Why were there a lot of contracts for "ArriveScam" but not to make desperately needed ammunition for our soldiers and Ukraine?

An Hon. Senator: Hear, hear.

Senator Gold: This government — unlike previous governments — has increased defence spending year over year, from approximately 1% of our GDP to a significantly higher proportion, if memory serves me correctly. It continues and will continue to do so. Those are the actions. This is not blowing smoke. This is not rhetoric. These are dollars that are being invested in our defence forces.

CONFLICT IN GAZA STRIP

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: My question is for Senator Gold.

On January 26, the International Court of Justice ordered Israel to comply with provisional measures to prevent genocide in Gaza. Since then, we hear words about peace, but see action for war. Ongoing material support of Israel's military by powerful nations signals distressing complicity in Gaza's deepening crisis — the transferring of weapons, diplomatic obstruction of resolutions and silence — as famine sets in and thousands more have died in Gaza.

States bear legal and moral responsibilities to protect civilians, prevent war crimes and uphold international law. Can you please confirm that Canada is not now supplying arms and ammunition to Israel? When will the Government of Canada call for a permanent ceasefire linked to the disarmament of Hamas?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your questions.

As the Minister of Foreign Affairs has announced, Canada has ceased sending any military equipment to the state of Israel for some time.

With regard to your question about a ceasefire, Canada is on record as calling for a humanitarian pause and a ceasefire. It involves more than simply Hamas laying down its arms. It involves the release of the hostages and a great deal more in order not to reward the genocidal, terrorist organization Hamas for having launched its genocidal attack on innocent Israeli civilians on October 7.

Senator McPhedran: About a month ago, Amnesty International, the Danish Refugee Council, Humanity & Inclusion, Oxfam International, ActionAid International and the

Association of International Development Agencies released a joint statement. They asked this question: What is Canada doing now to ensure the protection of civilian lives, the release of Israeli hostages, as well as unlawfully detained Palestinians, and full, unhindered access for humanitarian aid —

Senator Gold: The assertions in that statement are not necessarily true. They are assertions. Canada has been working with its allies, working in the region with Israel and others, to ensure that humanitarian assistance is provided and international law is being respected.

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CANADA EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE BILL

MESSAGE FROM COMMONS—SENATE AMENDMENT
CONCURRED IN

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons returning Bill C-35, An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada, and acquainting the Senate that they have agreed to the amendment made by the Senate to this bill without further amendment.

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, pursuant to the order adopted December 7, 2021, I would like to inform the Senate that Question Period with the Honourable Ya'ara Saks, P.C., M.P., Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, will take place on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 4 p.m.

[Translation]

BILL TO AMEND THE CRIMINAL CODE AND THE WILD ANIMAL AND PLANT PROTECTION AND REGULATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE ACT

SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Klyne, seconded by the Honourable Senator Harder, P.C., for the second reading of Bill S-15, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act.

Hon. Claude Carignan: Honourable senators, I hadn't planned to participate in this debate until just recently. However, now that I've read the bill, listened to the speeches and seen how much pressure has been put on senators to move it forward, I've realized that I have to express my thoughts on what is going on here with this piece of legislation. It's quite clear to me that this bill is the government's way of making fun of Canadians in general and senators in particular. To be clear, I have nothing against animals, and I like elephants and great apes.

I would like to start by talking about the three main causes of elephant extinction. The first is poaching. Elephants are being slaughtered illegally for their meat and hides, but mostly for their ivory. Every year, poachers kill between 20,000 and 30,000 elephants.

The second is the conversion of forested areas to agricultural use and infrastructure development. Roads, dams, mines and other industrial facilities have fragmented the elephants' habitat, significantly reducing the animals' chances of survival.

Finally, as a result of growing human populations and shrinking natural habitats in both Africa and Asia, humans and elephants are increasingly competing for space and food, often with serious consequences. People are losing their crops, their livestock and sometimes even their lives, and animals that are already threatened or endangered are being killed in retaliation or to avoid future conflicts.

Honourable senators, Canada's Criminal Code is certainly not one of the causes of the drastic decline in elephant populations, nor is it one of the solutions for protecting them. This bill is not about solving a problem that puts the health, safety or financial well-being of Canadians at risk. It is also not about responding to a court decision that imposes a deadline. In theory, it's about giving legal protection to the 23 elephants and 30 great apes in Canada.

I want to reassure everyone that no human being will suffer, regardless of whether Bill S-15 is passed or not, now or in two years' time. In theory, only 53 animals would be affected, and I want to stress that this is only in theory, because, as I pointed out earlier, these animals are already protected by a grandfather clause. As far as future importation is concerned, ministerial authorization is required, so, basically, this bill serves absolutely no purpose other than to ease some people's consciences.

The only zoo that plans to continue keeping or breeding elephants in the future, and therefore the only zoo affected by the legislation, is African Lion Safari, and it will get an exemption under the bill. As a result, the bill does not offer any additional protection and does not improve the welfare of a single great ape or elephant in Canada.

Furthermore, honourable senators, under the existing legislation, no elephant or great ape can be imported into Canada without the minister's express authorization. None. Also, the minister has the discretion to refuse these kinds of imports or exports for any reason.

Bill S-15 does literally nothing for animal welfare, except to tick a box on the minister's mandate letter. Colleagues, are we going to join in such a travesty of government action?

I deplore the fact that the government is putting tremendous pressure on the members of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee to begin studying the bill as quickly as possible. Senator Klyne welcomed the fact that Bill S-15 would be studied before any other bill at the committee. Once again, where's the urgency? I'll say this again: This bill will in no way affect or improve the life, health or material situation of any Canadians.

• (1550)

Seriously, I see only one explanation for Senator Gold's stubbornness in pushing Bill S-15. This bill, in my opinion, is nothing but a misstep the government is asking the Senate to take because it wants to please a handful of activists and because this government is not showing much legislative competence.

To try to hide from Senators and Canadians that, after eight years, this government is still incapable of steering its legislative ship, the Liberals are inventing emergencies — Quick, we must pass Bill S-15 this week.

Colleagues, the sad thing is that this bill will delay consideration by the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee of eight bills that would directly affect the lives of Canadians. These include Bill C-291, which has been stalled in the Senate for more than a year, even though it was passed by a unanimous vote of 323 to 0 at the other place.

Honourable senators, once Bill S-15 has been passed by the Senate, it will join the following bills in the House of Commons: Bills S-6, S-7 and S-9, which were passed by the Senate in June 2022, and Bills S-11, S-13 and S-14, passed by the Senate last December.

Without the slightest regard for the rigorous work of the Senate, all these bills have two characteristics: The government leader has described them as urgent, and they always languish at either first or second reading in the other place, which is distressing and unifying for the institution we represent.

Perhaps I'm being too cynical. Maybe the government really believes that Bill S-15 meets an urgent need. If that's the case, I sincerely wonder about this government's ability to connect with reality.

More than 70% of Canadians agree with the statement that Canada is broken. I think that statement reflects our reality. I don't understand how the government can make the theoretical protection of 23 elephants and 30 great apes such a legislative priority. How did the Liberals, in a collective failure of imagination, get so out of touch that they think Canada has a serious ape problem?

Honourable senators, our Armed Forces are not adequately equipped. Our soldiers are having to buy their own clothing in Latvia, but this government is putting the comfort of great apes first.

Canada's international reputation is the worst it has been in over a century. What is the solution? Let's make Canada a model for elephant protection, to quote Senator Klyne.

China, Russia and other countries act with impunity in Canada to spy on us or influence our political system, but that is no big deal because our zoos will be closely monitored.

Our immigration system is in disarray. Refugees, fake students, temporary workers who become permanent: Anyone can enter Canada, so the first thing we need to do is to tighten the rules on elephant arrivals. That is discouraging.

What is worse, there is a femicide in Canada every other day. Since 2015, violent crime has increased by 39%. The national homicide rate hasn't been this high in over 30 years. Last year, 874 Canadians were murdered.

Six million Canadians do not have a family doctor. The wait times to see a specialist are at an all-time high. More than 31,000 Canadians died last year waiting for surgery.

However, Canadians can take comfort in the words of Senator Klyne, who said, and I quote:

Elephants are also altruistic. They try to revive sick or dying individuals, including strangers, lifting them with their tusks to get them on their feet.

A new report indicates that the average asking price for rental housing in Canada was \$2,193 a month in February, which represents a year-over-year increase of 10.5%. What is the government's priority? Elephant habitat.

The number of bankruptcies in Canada rose by 41.4% in 2023. Food banks are expecting an 18% increase in demand in 2024, meaning that one million more people will have to rely on their services to survive. The Senate will debate the fate of orangutans. In Toronto alone, there were 2.53 million visits to food banks between April 2022 and March 2023, and one in ten people had to use a food bank.

Rest assured, the government will tighten the screws on the African Lion Safari, but not on Loblaw's or Metro.

Canada's ports, airports and other infrastructure are falling into disrepair, but we're going to focus on zoos.

The government will be hard-pressed to keep the deficit to \$40 billion and it will have to cut services, but fear not, there will be plenty of public servants to manage the 30 great apes.

Anti-Semitic and Islamophobic acts are multiplying. The police are struggling to come up with structured interventions because of the contradictory messages from the Liberal government, but we can be confident that the orders will be clear when it comes to taking action against zoo keepers.

The government has plunged to an all-time low in the polls. Only 3% of Canadians want Justin Trudeau to stay on — that's 3% — yet he's found a way to unite Canadians around his vision: a great debate on apes and elephants.

Honourable senators, as I'm sure you know, I could go on like this all afternoon.

With all due respect for its supporters, I consider this bill ineffective and bordering on the absurd. Such minor changes to the Criminal Code should be included in a bill containing several other amendments.

If the Minister of Justice was out of ideas about what changes to make to the Criminal Code, he just needed to let us know. We have a long list of relevant changes addressing problems far more topical, practical and urgent than apes and elephants.

As I said earlier, I don't know whether the government is using this sham of a bill to pretend it's doing something and waste the Senate's time, or whether it is so worn down and disconnected from the reality of Canadians that it actually believes that Bill S-15 could improve the lot of a single one of them.

Regardless of the answer, two conclusions are obvious.

The first is that we need an election as quickly as possible so that Canada can choose a serious government that will know how to make proper use of the Senate. At \$130 million a year, the Senate should have other priorities.

The second conclusion is this: The Senate must stand up and vote against Bill S-15 at second reading. We need to show the government that this is a serious institution with no time to waste on a frivolous bill that has no bearing on the reality of Canadians. We must also demonstrate that we prefer to work on finding concrete solutions to real problems that Canadians are facing. That seems like common sense to me.

Thank you.

Hon. Chantal Petitclerc: Honourable senators, I rise again today in the interest of animal welfare and protection, this time in support of Bill S-15.

As you can imagine, my speech will be quite unlike Senator Carignan's.

My interest in advocating for animal welfare predates my Senate appointment by a long time. That interest became a priority for me thanks to many of my honourable colleagues, including Senator Moore, whose Bill S-203 ended the captivity of whales and dolphins; Senator Stewart Olsen, who worked to ban cosmetics testing on animals in Canada; and, of course, Senator Sinclair, whose Bill S-218 made us even more aware of and informed about the reality of elephants and large mammals.

[*English*]

Senator Klyne, I thank you for keeping this project alive by introducing Bill S-241, and for currently sponsoring this bill.

• (1600)

One great strength of this place, I believe, is that it allows us to access a large dose of wisdom which, once combined with reliable and verified data, can lead us to change. My sensitivity to this issue has also been sharpened through my role as a parent.

I've said it in other speeches, and I want to insist and repeat the following: My son and young people of his age impress me with their relationship with animals and nature — which is not one of domination, but one of respect and inclusion. They grow up with the awareness of being part of nature, which they already know to be very fragile. This fills me with both a sense of hope and a great responsibility not to let them down.

Every time we have a bill before us that aims to ensure animal welfare and to protect nature, I can't help thinking that we're also doing it for our children and the world in which we want them to grow up.

[*Translation*]

We need to recognize that animal welfare in Canada involves a number of players and different approaches by different levels of government. The measures proposed in Bill S-15 will become part of an animal protection ecosystem in which the provinces and territories each already have their own laws and regulations, because animal protection is largely within their jurisdiction.

In addition to provincial and territorial laws governing specific aspects of animal welfare and specific species, the Criminal Code protects animals from cruelty and neglect. Many other federal mechanisms have also been put in place to reinforce animal protection across the country. Alongside these legal and regulatory provisions, we have accrediting bodies that issue animal care and treatment certifications.

Of course, we mustn't forget the animal rights organizations that are doing a great job of helping to enforce laws and raise awareness about the importance of animal life.

[*English*]

It's in this ecosystem where the measures set out in Bill S-15 fit in.

I will not revisit the fact that elephants and great apes are very intelligent and sentient animals, and that they need an environment that respects their natural behaviour and needs — and that they do not belong in captivity. Over the last few years, we have heard a great amount of compelling scientific data and literature. Let's see what the bill intends to do.

[*Translation*]

By adding a new offence to the Criminal Code, the government aims to prohibit the possession, breeding or impregnation of elephants and great apes in captivity. Owners of these animals would also be responsible for preventing their natural reproduction in captivity. In addition, a new offence would prohibit the use of captive elephants and great apes for entertainment purposes, with a maximum fine of \$200,000. The other amendment concerns the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act.

[Senator Petitcherc]

This act, once amended, would prohibit the importation of elephants and great apes into Canada or their exportation from Canada.

[*English*]

There are, however, several exceptions to all these prohibitions. For example, an exception may be granted if it's in the best interests of the animal, or for conservation or scientific programs authorized by the federal or provincial government. Since it's not a total ban, it will be vital to ensure that these safeguards are strong and rigid when those exceptions are made. The criteria must be rigorous and based on facts, because clearly this is where everything will play out.

In this regard, I'm reassured that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, has stated:

New elephant or great ape captivity in Canada should require meeting a very high bar, in terms of value for the best interests of the animal's welfare, conservation, or science, based on the evidence and weighing the alternatives. . . .

When announcing the tabling of this bill, Minister Guilbeault also said that he was open to discuss “. . . with senators about potential amendments to this Bill.” His openness to improving this bill leads me to address the limited scope of Bill S-15 compared to what has already been proposed to us in Bill S-241.

[*Translation*]

In response to the point of order on Bill S-241, Senators Gold, Dalphond and Klyne clearly outlined the differences between the two bills. Personally, I had no issue with the inclusive intention of Bill S-241, which aimed to protect, in addition to elephants and great apes, close to 800 other wild animal species in captivity, thereby extending new legal protections to them as well. I also supported the mechanism that would have allowed for the removal or addition of certain protective measures by order-in-council, based on factors relating to the well-being of the animals in captivity, something that Bill S-15 does not do.

You may recall the tragic events that occurred in New Brunswick back in 2013, when two boys were killed by a python. This tragedy prompted Senator Klyne to include protections in his bill for all venomous reptiles and dangerous reptiles, including crocodiles, alligators and 12 anaconda, python and boa constrictor species. These measures, created for public safety reasons, were left out of Bill S-15.

[*English*]

Senator Klyne has pointed out that Bill S-15 does not prohibit the possession, import and export of reproductive material from elephants and great apes. He informs us that this omission could have concrete effects on the possible use of this material for the artificial insemination of Asian elephants.

He also informed us that, unlike Bill S-241, Bill S-15 does not provide an exception for assisting distressed species without a permit. These are all valid observations, and I have no doubt that they will benefit from further study in committee.

Bill S-241 was certainly complex, but covered more animal species. Bill S-15 is basically an initiative that could phase out elephants and great apes in captivity over the years.

[*Translation*]

During the 2021 election campaign, the parties included measures to protect animals in their platforms. Senator Gold reminded us of this:

Wild animals in captivity remain a growing concern for Canadians and for many people around the world.

Many zoos, sanctuaries and parks, here and elsewhere, have themselves chosen to take action to ensure greater respect for the natural environments of the animals they keep in captivity.

[*English*]

In 2011, Toronto City Council voted to send the Toronto Zoo's three remaining African elephants to a sanctuary in California.

[*Translation*]

The Granby Zoo has already taken the initiative to not bring in any more elephants in the future. That is where we are at. When it comes to animal welfare, it's clear that what was practised and accepted just a few decades ago no longer is.

We need to imagine a line between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable or no longer acceptable. This line is not fixed in time. It moves. What seemed perfectly acceptable to us when we were children are all things of the past, such as animals in small, unsuitable cages, with no stimuli, circus performances where you could hear the sound of whips between acrobatic tricks, or the possibility of riding an elephant while it was being disciplined with a bullhook used by trainers to control the animal. It's normal for our practices to change as we learn and become more aware.

[*English*]

And so, this line separating what is acceptable from what is not is moving. We can assume that this line will continue to shift, and that what seems right today may no longer be right in a few decades.

• (1610)

Our laws must be in harmony with the information and scientific data we have today, as well as our level of social acceptance.

[*Translation*]

World Animal Protection, a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting animals whose Canadian head office is in Toronto, said the following:

While this bill only addresses protections for elephants and great apes, it is still a very important step forward. If passed, Canada would be the first country in the world to enact such laws at a national level.

I support that statement.

[*English*]

Could this bill have gone further? Certainly. That being said, Bill S-15 doesn't claim to solve everything. It is targeted and, through the specific objectives it has, can make a difference.

In truth, colleagues, this legislation is important and, in my view, includes the bare minimum that needs to be done. It is past time to do it. We have debated this issue, bill after bill. I'm sure we all agree that we know more about elephants than we ever thought we would or need to. It's time to take a position and legislate.

[*Translation*]

Honourable colleagues, I invite you to support the referral of this bill to committee for further study.

Thank you.

[*English*]

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, this bill has not been debated much at all. It was an entirely different bill that was debated — one which was withdrawn. We are, in fact, at the genesis of debating this bill.

Colleagues, I rise today to speak to Bill S-15, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act. This bill amends two pieces of legislation in order to prohibit the captivity, breeding and trade of live elephants and great apes, except in limited circumstances.

Colleagues, as noted by Senator Klyne in his second reading speech, "... Bill S-15 is essentially a piece of Bill S-241" It is a piece of it. My opposition to Bill S-241 was no secret. It was a horrible bill. It was frivolous and served absolutely no value to our country. He has withdrawn it.

I am pleased to see that the majority of the problematic proposals contained in that legislation have not been included in this bill, obviously because the government also realized they were problematic. Bill S-241 was withdrawn following, and because of, my point of order.

Nonetheless, I continue to have a number of concerns about this legislation that need to be examined at committee. Senator Carignan did an excellent job of pointing out the ridiculousness of us dealing with this. I will reiterate some of those concerns.

Before I delve into what needs to be examined, I want to reiterate that I wholeheartedly support addressing the lack of protection for animals held in captivity, not animals held in human care.

In fact, I completely concur with the statement made by Senator Gold in his second reading speech on this bill. He said:

Provinces and territories have primary responsibility for protecting animal welfare, and the federal government recognizes the significant role that many provinces play in regulating animals in captivity. It has been well-documented, however, that differences exist across jurisdictions, and that these differences may result in gaps in the protection of wild animals in captivity in Canada. . . .

Those are Senator Gold's words.

I was also pleased to hear that — as I recommended in my second reading speech — the government is going to take a consultative approach in addressing that problem, as stated by Senator Gold:

. . . the Government of Canada has committed to engaging with provinces, territories and stakeholders to discuss the potential value of a national approach to protecting animal welfare and public safety in relation to captive wildlife and to build on existing federal and provincial roles and best practices.

Bringing together partners and stakeholders to advance discussions on issues like roadside zoos or dangerous wild animals being kept by private individuals will lead to improved outcomes for captive wildlife. The scope and focus of the national engagement will be determined following initial consultations with the provinces and territories.

This is precisely the approach that should be taken with respect to this issue.

However, I am somewhat perplexed, colleagues, that we find ourselves with this legislation before us today when those consultations have not yet taken place. As we have seen over and over again, this is typical of this government. They talk a big game.

Second, colleagues, aside from ticking a box on the minister's mandate letter, I fail to see what Bill S-15 accomplishes. Let me take a few moments to explain.

The government's briefing materials on Bill S-15 begin with this statement:

The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change's mandate letter includes a commitment to introduce legislation to protect animals in captivity.

This, colleagues, is the government's rationale behind this legislation, which basically means that this is the metric we must use to evaluate it.

Will the bill help to protect animals in captivity? As I said earlier, Bill S-15 prohibits the captivity and trade of two species — great apes and elephants — except in limited circumstances. It establishes three offences in order to achieve this.

It will be a criminal offence to: one, possess an elephant or great ape that is kept in captivity; two, breed or impregnate a captive elephant or great ape; and three, fail to take reasonable measures to protect natural breeding of an elephant or great ape kept in captivity.

This bill also creates an offence with respect to using great apes or elephants for entertainment in a performance.

At first glance, you might agree with these measures. I know that some Canadians do because my inbox, and I'm sure yours, has been cluttered with emails about this bill. The only problem is that the concerns expressed by the writers are based on inaccurate information. Allow me to explain, beginning with a look at great apes.

As Senator Klyne said:

Approximately 30 great apes live in Canada at four locations, with chimpanzees at Fauna Sanctuary near Montreal, gorillas and orangutans at the Toronto Zoo, and gorillas at the Calgary Zoo and Zoo de Granby . . .

He continued by saying:

. . . I commend these organizations for their excellent work and commitment to the well-being of the great apes in their care.

Colleagues, this begs the question: Where are the great apes that need to be protected in Canada? Senator Klyne himself says all the ones that are in captivity are well taken care of. Every single great ape in the country is already held in an accredited facility approved by both Senator Klyne and Jane Goodall herself.

Furthermore, colleagues, in addition to the top-notch facilities which hold great apes in Canada, it is already forbidden under federal law to import a great ape without the express approval of the federal government. You simply cannot do it today.

To understand this, we need to talk about the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, or CITES. It is an international agreement between governments which aims to ensure that the international trade of specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

• (1620)

CITES was drafted after a meeting of members of the International Union for Conservation of Nature in 1963 and officially came into force internationally on July 1, 1975. Canada had already ratified the treaty on April 10 of that year, with it coming into force on July 9.

The convention classifies plants and animals according to three appendices, based on the degree of protection that they need.

Appendix I is the strongest protection. It includes species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix II includes species not necessarily threatened with extinction but in which trade must be controlled to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.

Appendix III contains species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES parties for assistance in controlling the trade.

Colleagues, here's why this is significant and relevant to Bill S-15. All species of great apes — including gorillas, chimpanzees, orangutans, bonobos and gibbons — were listed under Appendix I of CITES on January 7, 1975. That's almost 50 years ago. As with every species listed under Appendix I, "Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances" and never without the express approval of the federal government.

I realize that Senator Gold said in his speech that "Bill S-15 . . . would strengthen the protections afforded to elephants and great apes in federal law."

Colleagues, this is simply not true. Under the act, the minister already has complete latitude to deny a permit, as subsection 10(1) allows the minister to grant or deny the permit ". . . on such terms and conditions as the Minister thinks fit . . ."

In other words, there is currently no obligation on the minister to grant a permit to import great apes under any circumstances. This means that if Bill S-15 were to become law tomorrow, it would do nothing to enhance protection for the great apes which are currently held in Canada, and it would add nothing to the existing prohibition preventing the importation of great apes into Canada.

This, colleagues, is a textbook example of virtue signalling: Create the appearance that you are doing something important, while actually achieving nothing. We clearly remember just a few months ago dealing with Bill C-21. It is exactly the same thing.

Every great ape in Canada today is in excellent care, according to both Senator Klyne and Jane Goodall, and not a single additional one can be imported without the express approval of the federal government. As far as great apes go, Bill S-15 does nothing to fulfill the commitment in the environment minister's mandate letter to introduce legislation to protect animals in captivity.

What about elephants? Senator Klyne told us that 23 captive elephants live in Canada. He went on to say:

African Lion Safari near Hamilton holds 17 Asian elephants, the largest group in North America, with at least two born in the wild. The Edmonton Valley Zoo is home to a lone Asian elephant named Lucy, born in the wild. In Quebec, Parc Safari has two African elephants, both born in the wild. Zoo de Granby has three African elephants, of which two were born in the wild. . . .

All of these numbers and locations were correct, but then Senator Klyne concluded this thought by saying:

Obviously, removing elephants from Africa and Asia for display in North American zoos is counter to elephant conservation.

Colleagues, there is a problem with that statement. While seven of Canada's elephants were born in the wild, not one of them was obtained from the wild by their current owners — none. Not a single elephant in human care in Canada was removed from Africa or Asia in order to be held in one of our Canadian zoos.

Not only has this not happened, colleagues; it cannot happen under today's existing laws. That's because Asian elephants have been listed under Appendix I of CITES since 1975, and most African elephants were moved to Appendix I of CITES in 1989.

Only elephants from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe currently maintain a listing under Appendix II. But even then, if you want to import an elephant to Canada, you would need permission from both the country of origin and the Canadian government, and you can be certain, colleagues, this is not going to happen.

There is not a single elephant in human care in Canada which was taken from the wild in order to be placed in a Canadian zoo, and, as with great apes, it is impossible to do so today without the express permission of the government.

Colleagues, when it comes to elephants, the Edmonton Valley Zoo has a long-standing commitment that after Lucy passes away, they will not be acquiring more elephants. Zoo de Granby is also on the record that they, too, are phasing out the keeping of elephants. Parc Safari does not breed their elephants and has no plans to acquire new ones.

This means the only zoological institution in Canada whose operations would be impacted by this legislation would be African Lion Safari. African Lion Safari is located near Hamilton, Ontario. If you haven't been there, you should go. Trish Gerth, the General Manager, has extended open invitations to all senators. She is here in our chamber today. I'm sure she would welcome your visits with open arms.

It will open your eyes. It's amazing how many people in this chamber know all there is to know about elephants and have never visited one. They have never visited a zoo, but they are the experts. It will open your eyes to the truth about elephants in captivity like no speech can.

However, if you do go, be sure also to tell Senator Klyne about your experience because he, as the sponsor of this bill, has never bothered to take that short visit, and his misunderstandings about elephants are clear evidence of that.

Why would somebody want to sponsor a piece of legislation and not study the impact and the actual reason for this bill? He has never been there.

African Lion Safari is not a typical zoo, colleagues. It has an area of over 750 acres, 250 acres of which provide animals with large areas of bush, grasslands or forest in which they can interact naturally with other animals. Their herd of 19 Asian elephants, colleagues, has over 200 acres where they can freely roam.

I was there a few months ago. I watched these elephants play in the bush. I watched these elephants pick apples off of trees. They weren't being punished. They were having a great time. I didn't see any hooks around, by the way.

The park welcomes over half a million visitors every year during the six-month period that they are open to the public. They have 50 full-time staff and hire 400 seasonal staff. They have over 1,000 animals representing over 100 species, and one third of their animals are endangered species.

- (1630)

The park has been successful in breeding 30 species that are considered endangered and 20 species that are considered threatened. It is renowned for its research and conservation efforts, including giraffes, Asian elephants, blue-throated macaws, Eastern loggerhead shrikes, barn owls, bald eagles and rhinos. Moreover, African Lion Safari and other zoos like it play a crucial role in the successive generations of young Canadian zoologists and conservationists by making learning about these animals more accessible in this vast country of ours. African Lion Safari's operations play a key role in instilling a sense of wonder and purpose in Canada's next generation of animal scientists, which has intrinsic conversation value.

In conducting their research, they have collaborated with prestigious universities, such as McGill University, Queen's University, Cornell University, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, University of Florida, University of Guelph, University of Melbourne, University of Pretoria and many more. They take their role seriously.

Yet in spite of this impressive track record, neither the drafters of Bill S-15 or Bill S-241 have bothered to take the time to visit African Lion Safari or consult with its managers. Consequently, when it comes to elephants, they keep repeating a long list of misinformation.

Let's begin with whether or not elephants should be kept in captivity. Bear in mind that we are not talking about whether elephants should be taken from the wild and placed in captivity. That is already a thing of the past in Canada. We are talking about whether the ones which are currently held in human care are suffering and whether they should be prevented from breeding solely because they are in human care.

In his speech, Senator Klyne made the following statement:

A grandfathered phase-out is recommended by scientists and other independent experts due to elephants' serious health, behavioural and reproductive problems in captivity. . . .

Again, bear in mind, he has never been there.

I assume the scientists and independent experts that Senator Klyne refers to are those in the letters he provided on this issue who concluded that:

Elephants are not suited to any form of captivity, as no captive facility can fulfil the basic biological, social, spatial, cognitive and intrinsic requirements of elephants. . . .

Colleagues, there is an abundance of scientific evidence that says the exact opposite. In fact, according to other experts, "The idea that elephants are not or cannot thrive in zoos is an outdated and biased perspective." They note that, on the contrary, "Captive populations of elephants have become vital to the survival of the species."

In response to the letter referenced by Senator Klyne, these experts state:

Regrettably, most, if not all, of the claims made in the . . . letter are intentionally misleading and lack sufficient, current scientific support.

Colleagues, this is not merely their viewpoint. It is the conclusion drawn from study after study on this question, many of which are referenced in their letter which was provided to every senator on November 27 of last year.

Although I have unlimited time, I will not go through the rebuttal letter in its entirety, but I encourage you to do so carefully with an open mind. If you do, you will find that the facts speak for themselves and convincingly refute the arguments made in Senator Klyne's letter.

However, allow me to read a few excerpts:

First, zoos participate in conservation actively by managing populations for *ex situ* reproduction and contributing support to field-based recovery programs.

Second, the International Union for Conservation of Nature Species Survival Commission, or IUCN-SSC, Asian Elephant Specialist Group openly addresses the importance of *ex situ* management of Asian elephants, as it represents almost one third of the Asian elephant population.

Third, in their October 2023 position statement, the IUCN-SSC emphasizes the importance of zoos, botanical gardens and aquariums. Zoos allow people who would otherwise never encounter elephants to be able to see them in person. They support research on a variety of elephant-specific projects that benefit the welfare of both in situ and *ex situ* populations, and they create security for the future of wild elephants.

Colleagues, in case you are not aware, the IUCN-SSC stands for the IUCN's Species Survival Commission. It is the world's leading authority on the conservation status of biological species. It was the organization I mentioned earlier which played a critical role in the development of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, or CITES, and continues to play a critical role in providing scientific advice and guidance on biodiversity conservation, particularly the assessment and monitoring of species' risk of extinction.

This past October, the IUCN-SSC released a position statement supporting the value of zoos in the fight for species conservation. I was pleased to hear Senator Gold note this fact in his speech when he said:

The Species Survival Commission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature recently published a report supporting the role of botanical gardens, aquariums and zoos in species conservation. Likewise, scientific research may be vital to our understanding of these animals and assist us in ensuring their survival in the wild. Finally, in some cases, the captivity may be in the best interests of the elephant's or great ape's welfare itself.

Senator Klyne has repeatedly made it clear that he believes there is no conservation benefit when elephants are in human care. But this position is in direct conflict with the best authorities in this field and even contradicts the position of the government.

In his second reading speech, Senator Klyne attempted to paint a picture that suggests elephants in Canadian zoos are suffering. He made the following statement:

. . . In North American zoos, elephant deaths outpace births at a rate of two to one, meaning their captivity does not have conservation value. . . .

He went on to talk about stillbirths, reproductive disorders, infant mortality, calf rejection and infanticide.

Colleagues, the numbers used by Senator Klyne were from a 2012 article in *The Seattle Times*. *The Seattle Times* looked at 50 years of elephant ownership by zoos, tallied up births and deaths and came up with their two-to-one ratio. The ratio is accurate, but the picture it presents is not.

For starters, while Senator Klyne said the ratio represented zoos in North America, it does not. That ratio only applies to zoos in the United States, not North America — misinformation. Canada's experience is quite different, and I will show you shortly.

Secondly, the ratio which shows that more elephants are dying than are being born is skewed because of the demographic of elephants in captivity in the United States. To put it bluntly, the majority of the elephants are old. Old people die; old elephants die.

This is because between 1960 and 1975, 520 Asian elephants were imported from the wild into Canada and the United States. Whereas from 1976 to 1999, there were only 24. Keep this in mind: 520 to 24.

• (1640)

The result is an elephant demographic heavily weighted with older elephants, which drives up the proportion of deaths to births. The statistic gives you a false impression of the reality of elephant care in Canada.

Third, the statistic is sharply skewed because it does not reflect the fact that the overall welfare and birth rate of elephants in zoos have significantly increased over time. It digs back into what was a very different time for elephants in captivity, and zoos in general. The accredited zoos of today are nothing like those that were around 30, 40 or 50 years ago. The improvements to animal welfare and the contributions being made by zoos to the conservation of species are significant, as admitted by Senator Klyne when he noted:

. . . captive breeding has played a role in over half of the cases where extinction has been prevented for birds and mammals.

African Lion Safari is one of those institutions that has made significant contributions to conservation, including that of Asian elephants. Since 1991, African Lion Safari's elephant herd has had 27 live births. They have had no instances of infanticide and no stillbirths. Just this year, they welcomed two new baby elephants, who are healthy and thriving. Not only is their track record impressive, it is the best in North America. As noted by more than a dozen elephant experts, this track record:

. . . indicates that these elephants are thriving in their environment and that African Lion Safari provides optimal conditions for their reproduction and overall well-being. Out of the 17 elephants currently in the herd, 14 were born at African Lion Safari, and the herd has had births of elephants to both the second and third generations.

The grim picture that Senator Klyne has painted regarding the welfare of elephants in Canada is simply not true.

Senator Klyne went on to say:

Other considerations include the fact that all Canadian zoos with elephants have individuals taken from the wild; the need to keep these huge, wide-ranging creatures indoors for much of the Canadian winter; the ongoing risk of cruel separations of mother-daughter pairs in commercial transactions; the use of bullhooks in Canada, which are implements used to control elephants through pain and fear; and the use of elephants in recent years in Canada for rides and performances for entertainment.

I would like to address these points one at a time, starting with the assertion that all Canadian zoos with elephants have individuals taken from the wild. Since we covered this point already, I won't go over it again other than to quote from the letter provided by the elephant experts to all senators:

The claim that elephants are still being obtained from wild populations in order to populate zoo displays is not factual. Wild imports of elephants to western zoological facilities are all but prohibited. Additionally, these captures are typically initiated by governments in those countries, and occur as a result of human-elephant conflict and habitat destruction. There are strict rules in place when an animal is being moved from the wild into a captive population.

Colleagues, the second fallacy is the assertion that elephants must be kept indoors for much of the Canadian winter. If you talk to those who work with the elephants at African Lion Safari — or if you visit them — you will discover that the elephants in their care love the four seasons. This is partly because most of their herd of Asian elephants were born and raised in Canada, and they are very acclimatized to our winters. In fact, their elephants actually prefer the cold to the heat, partly because there are no bugs. They also love to run and play in the snow and break the ice on the lake and go swimming. Many of us saw the video that African Lion Safari sent out to all senators. If you don't have it and you would like to see it, I'm happy to make it available for you.

They have a heated enclosure in the winter where they can come and go at will, and they do not hesitate to venture outside to enjoy the winter. These are all things that Senator Klyne and Senator Gold would have known if they had visited African Lion Safari.

I've been to their indoor facility. I may be exaggerating when I say it's the size of this chamber, but not a whole lot. It is a huge facility, and they can come and go as they choose. Elephant experts tell us this:

The claims that elephants do not do well in cool or cold conditions have been repeatedly disproven. There have been no instances recorded in scientific literature that state that elephants have had hypothermia. To the contrary, the real concern is their vulnerability to overheating. As elephants are such large animals, they have a low surface area to volume ratio, as well as thick skin and an inability to sweat, which makes it very difficult for them to cool down in excessive heat.

Colleagues, you should also be aware that the best peer-reviewed research in the world on how elephants cope in cold weather has come out of the work done by none other than African Lion Safari.

Third, the claim that elephants in Canada are being abused by the use of bullhooks is also outdated and not representative of current practices. African Lion Safari does not use bullhooks. They use a tool known as a guide to provide directional cues. This guide is used without exerting any force.

The fourth claim is that elephants have been used in recent years in Canada for rides and performances for entertainment. Once again, while this did happen at one time, there is not a single zoo in Canada that offers elephant rides, and there has not been for some time. The suggestion that Bill S-15 will stop elephant rides is not accurate; there are no elephant rides to stop. If you want an elephant ride, go visit the ones in Asia and Africa. They use them there for work. They put a whole lot heavier stuff on their backs and necks than the grandchildren who used to ride the elephants in Canada.

Finally, in his speech on Bill S-241, Senator Klyne brought up the 2019 incident at African Lion Safari in which an elephant injured a trainer. As I noted in my speech back then on Bill S-241, there was a 2019 isolated incident at African Lion Safari with an elephant, but a thorough investigation of the incident was completed by the Ontario Ministry of Labour, and African Lion Safari was never charged or found guilty of any kind of misconduct or animal abuse.

Regrettably, such incidents can and sometimes do happen at even the best zoological facilities — with all animals. For example, in 2013, a zookeeper at the Calgary Zoo — an institution that Senator Klyne says is a great institution and should house great apes — was injured after being attacked by a gorilla inside its enclosure. This followed a number of other gorilla incidents at the Calgary Zoo, where, thankfully, nobody was injured. But this one time, the handler was injured. Senator Klyne did not mention those repeated incidents at the Calgary Zoo, but only the one at African Lion Safari.

I wonder why.

He uses this one incident as a defence for his argument that nobody in Canada should hold elephants in human care, but, for some reason, the same standard is not applied to those with great apes.

Colleagues, when it comes to animal welfare, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change's mandate letter said he was to do two things: The first was to work with partners to curb illegal wildlife trade and end elephant and rhinoceros tusk trade in Canada. It hasn't happened in years. The second was to introduce legislation to protect animals in captivity. This legislation does neither of those things.

• (1650)

This bill amends two pieces of legislation in order to supposedly prohibit the captivity and trade of live elephants and great apes, except in limited circumstances. In reality, it does nothing for great apes and limits the captivity and trade of live elephants in only one circumstance — African Lion Safari, where the elephants are flourishing and contributing to the pool of knowledge essential to the conservation of elephant populations in the wild.

Colleagues, Bill S-241 was trying to address a real problem in a way that would have been extremely counterproductive. Bill S-15, on the other hand, doesn't even pretend to address a problem.

In fact, I struggle to understand why Senator Klyne would characterize this bill as a “. . . great day for animal welfare in Canada” and “. . . one of the strongest animal welfare bills in Parliament’s history” when it does absolutely nothing for animal welfare.

What he describes as promoting animal welfare is closer to inducing animal cruelty by preventing the elephant herd at African Lion Safari from continuing to procreate and welcome new members into their family. Instead, the legislation would subject the herd to a future of mourning. We have heard so often — and earlier today from Senator Petitclerc — that these are social animals and smart animals. Yet, we want to subject them to a future of mourning as they slowly say goodbye to their family members who will pass away, one by one, over the next 50 to 60 years until the final elephant is left to grieve and die alone. That is what this bill would do.

Senator Klyne said himself that:

Elephants and great apes are self-aware, highly intelligent, emotional and social. They love their friends and families, mourn their dead and use tools. . . . In many ways, these remarkable creatures are very much like us.

Yet, he wants to subject them to slowing dying off by themselves.

I understand the desire to prevent new captivity of elephants and great apes taken from the wild. But this bill does not do that. Those measures are already in place.

Animal welfare is not a partisan issue, and it is not a political issue. It is supported by every political party and by Canadians from coast to coast to coast. But it must be done right.

The government has committed to a national engagement on the issue of closing the gaps in the protection of animals in captivity, and it is my view that the best course of action is to ensure that this consultation is completed before any legislation is implemented. This will ensure that the legislation receives broad support and that animals receive the protection they deserve.

Colleagues, I have always said that I support legislation going to committee. I would be inconsistent and hypocritical if I tried to stop this from going to committee. On division, I will support this bill going to committee for further study. But I will ask that committee members examine these issues carefully. I look forward to the committee’s report back to this chamber. Thank you, colleagues.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

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

Hon. Senators: Question.

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

Some Hon. Senators: Agreed.

An Hon. Senator: On division.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time, on division.)

[*Translation*]

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

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

(On motion of Senator Klyne, bill referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, on division.)

[*English*]

THE ESTIMATES, 2024-25

NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY MAIN ESTIMATES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF VOTE 1 TO BE STUDIED BY JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of February 29, 2024, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025, with the exception of Library of Parliament Vote 1;

That, for the purpose of this study, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance have the power to meet, even though the Senate may then be sitting or adjourned, with rules 12-18(1) and 12-18(2) being suspended in relation thereto;

That the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in Library of Parliament Vote 1 of the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025; and

That, in relation to the expenditures set out in Library of Parliament Vote 1, a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that house accordingly.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

• (1700)

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE

Hon. Donna Dasko moved second reading of Bill S-283, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (demographic information).

She said: Honourable senators, I rise to speak to Bill S-283, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (demographic information).

Bill S-283 will strengthen our democracy by increasing the transparency of our Parliament and political parties, for the benefit of all Canadians. First, we will have more information on who is running for federal office. Second, we will have more information on what the political parties are doing to elect more women and more candidates from other diverse groups.

How is Canada doing? Back in 1991, the report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, known as the Lortie Commission, noted, “All things being equal, the House of Commons should reasonably reflect the country’s diversity.”

But things are not equal. Since 1921, the first election in which women could run federally, there have been 38,614 candidates: 83% men and 17% women. There have been 25 candidates of other gender identity. Today, women hold 30.4% of the seats in the House of Commons, although in the 2021 Census, they constituted 50.9% of Canada’s total population. More than one in four women, 25.8%, are part of the racialized population, and 4.5% are Indigenous.

In 1997, when the Inter-Parliamentary Union first published its world rankings of seats held by women in national parliaments, Canada stood twenty-first in the world. Today, Canada stands sixty-fourth. Our ranking in the world is falling because other countries are accelerating change. Intentional and legislated measures have been essential to improving women’s representation around the world and across all types of electoral systems.

The representation gap for women may be the largest gap, but it is not the only one. Other groups are under-represented in the House of Commons compared with the diversity of the population of Canada. The 2021 Census tells us that First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples make up 5% of the population. The Library of Parliament confirms that 3.3% of MPs elected in 2021 have Indigenous origins. The same comparison of 2021 Census results with 2021 election results reveals that 26.5% of the population is racialized compared with 15.7% of MPs, although the latter figure varies depending on the source used.

In the case of LGBTQ2+ people in Canada, the comparison is 4% of the population, according to the Library of Parliament, compared with 2.4% of MPs elected in 2021. According to the 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability, 27% of Canadians aged 15

or older live with at least one disability that limits their daily activities. However, we have been unable to find figures on their representation.

So why am I undertaking this bill?

Colleagues, getting more women elected to public office has been an abiding goal for me for over three decades. When I just started my polling profession back in 1988, I joined a group of women called the Committee for ’94. Our goal was that half of the House of Commons would be women by 1994. What a goal that was. That group folded in utter frustration after a few years because of the lack of progress.

In 2001, about 40 women of all political stripes met in my living room to try it again; thus, we founded Equal Voice, which is devoted to electing more women to all levels of government and is determinedly multi-partisan. I am very proud that Equal Voice thrives to this very day, and many in this chamber know and support the organization and its goals.

Since I was appointed to the Senate in 2018, and drawing upon my work as a founder and former national chair of Equal Voice, I have been determined to find a way for Parliament to address the poor representation of women. Increasing the diversity of the House of Commons in all respects is an important goal, and statute law will deliver a clear message of its importance.

I am also motivated by the desire to improve and enhance our democratic institutions in these troubling times when the world is facing threats not seen since the Second World War. Building a Parliament that better reflects all Canadians will improve outcomes and decision making and will build trust in our democratic institutions.

This subject matter is entirely appropriate for a Senate public bill. I have said many times before that the Senate has not only the right but also the responsibility to deliberate and to show leadership on all aspects of our democracy and our democratic institutions.

Bill S-283 has two main parts. The first is about data collection and reporting by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada of demographic information about electoral participants, including candidates, those in nomination contests and leadership contestants. The second part is about disclosure of action plans by major political parties registered under the Canada Elections Act on steps being taken to increase diversity in the selection of candidates, including targets and timetables for women.

This bill is based on recommendations to Parliament from two parliamentary bodies: the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada and the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

Let me begin with data collection. A constant theme that I have heard in this chamber since arriving here almost six years ago is a call for better and more data to assess our progress in so many areas. When it comes to Parliament, the call for better data comes from this country’s top election official. In his report to

Parliament in June 2022 on the forty-third and forty-fourth general elections, the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, Stéphane Perrault, stated:

There can be little doubt about the value of working toward a Parliament that reflects the true diversity of Canadian society; but that work must start with high-quality information, not only about members of the House but about all participants in the electoral ecosystem.

Recommendation 9.4.1 of his report states:

To further progress toward a more inclusive and representative electoral system, a new legislative mandate should be included in the Act to allow Elections Canada to collect, on a voluntary basis, and make publicly available anonymized demographic data about electoral participants, including gender, ethnic origin, age, Indigenous status and disability.

• (1710)

Mr. Perrault has stated clearly that he does not currently have the statutory authority under the Canada Elections Act to collect this important demographic information about candidates and other electoral participants, and he is asking for this mandate. Bill S-283 will give him this mandate.

I note that a similar recommendation concerning the need for better data was made by the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women. That committee, chaired by Member of Parliament Karen Vecchio, undertook a significant study of the barriers and opportunities to advance for women in electoral politics in this country and reported its findings in its April 2019 report, titled *Elect Her: A Roadmap for Improving the Representation of Women in Canadian Politics*. Among its recommendations is Recommendation 11:

That the Government of Canada consider making changes to allow, with candidates' permission, the collection of intersectional data on candidates in nomination races, including data on gender identity.

That recommendation is coming from two sources.

The second part of Bill S-283 requires major political parties registered under the Canada Elections Act to tell Canadians what actions they are taking to increase diversity in the selection of candidates, including their targets and timetables for women candidates.

This part of the bill also draws upon the recommendations from the Standing Committee on the Status of Women report.

Recommendation 8 from that report states in part:

That the Government of Canada consider making changes to encourage gender equality and diversity in electoral politics . . . and to require registered parties to publicly report on their efforts to recruit female candidates from diverse backgrounds after every federal general election.

Recommendation 9 from that report states in part:

That the Government of Canada encourage registered parties and registered electoral district associations to set goals and publicly report on their efforts to nominate more female candidates . . . and to establish search committees for candidates in federal general elections and by-elections.

Colleagues, I take confidence in the two sources of these recommendations, namely, the Chief Electoral Officer and the standing committee report. I trust you also take confidence from these sources — and the expertise, experience and study behind them.

In drafting Bill S-283, I have purposely drawn on established Canadian legislation and practice designed to track and to increase diversity in this country, including the Employment Equity Act and the Canada Business Corporations Act.

First, to establish the scope of the bill, I have incorporated the definition of “designated groups” from the Employment Equity Act into proposed section 1 of the bill. The collection of demographic information by the Chief Electoral Officer from electoral participants and the reporting on action plans by parties is intended to be inclusive. It must be done for at least the four “designated groups,” which in the Employment Equity Act are currently women, people with disabilities, visible minorities and Aboriginal peoples — modified in use as “Indigenous peoples.” The Chief Electoral Officer and political parties may choose, if they wish, to include other groups as well.

Any changes to the definition of “designated groups” arising from the work of the Employment Equity Review Task Force are intended to —

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Sorry to interrupt, Senator Dasko.

Honourable senators, it being 5:15 p.m., I must interrupt the proceeding. Pursuant to rule 9-6, the bells will ring to call in the senators for the taking of a deferred vote at 5:30 p.m., on the third reading of Bill C-57.

Call in the senators.

• (1730)

CANADA-UKRAINE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION BILL, 2023

THIRD READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Harder, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Francis, for the third reading of Bill C-57, An Act to implement the 2023 Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the question is as follows: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Harder, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Francis:

That Bill C-57, An Act to implement the 2023 Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine, be read the third time.

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed on the following division:

YEAS
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Al Zaibak	Kutcher
Arnot	LaBoucane-Benson
Aucoin	Loffreda
Audette	MacAdam
Bellemare	Massicotte
Bernard	McBean
Black	McCallum
Boehm	McNair
Boyer	McPhedran
Brazeau	Mégie
Burey	Moncion
Busson	Moodie
Cardozo	Omidvar
Clement	Osler
Cordy	Oudar
Cormier	Pate
Cotter	Patterson
Coyle	Petitclerc
Cuzner	Petten
Dagenais	Prosper
Dalphond	Quinn
Dasko	Ravalia
Deacon (<i>Nova Scotia</i>)	Ringuette
Deacon (<i>Ontario</i>)	Robinson
Dean	Ross
Duncan	Saint-Germain
Forest	Simons
Francis	Smith
Galvez	Sorensen
Gerba	Tannas
Gignac	Varone
Gold	Verner
Greene	Wallin
Greenwood	White
Harder	Woo
Kingston	Yussuff—73
Klyne	

NAYS
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Ataullahjan	Martin
Batters	Mockler
Carignan	Oh
Housakos	Plett
MacDonald	Poirier
Manning	Seidman
Marshall	Wells—14

ABSTENTIONS
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Nil

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Dasko, seconded by the Honourable Senator Petitclerc, for the second reading of Bill S-283, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (demographic information).

Hon. Donna Dasko: Honourable senators, I had just finished explaining the definition of “designated groups” for purposes of Bill S-283.

Now let me describe how the bill implements the recommendations with respect to demographic data.

• (1740)

The Chief Electoral Officer is required to collect demographic information from electoral participants, including nomination contestants, candidates and leadership contestants, by way of a voluntary, confidential, self-identification questionnaire. Collected information may be used for the purpose of public reporting by the Chief Electoral Officer on general elections, by-elections and leadership contests. Reporting must be done on an anonymized basis. These provisions address accuracy and privacy considerations.

The Chief Electoral Officer has full discretion as to the content and format of the questionnaire, provided that it must include at least the measures related to the designated groups as I have mentioned, and the format for collection of the data must support disaggregation and analysis of intersecting variables. Upon receipt of these reports on the demographic data, the Speaker of the House of Commons must submit them to the house without delay.

These provisions will come into force on Royal Assent.

Now let me describe how the bill implements the recommendations for improved public reporting on action plans with respect to candidate selection. Let me provide some context.

The road to the House of Commons for any Canadian is overwhelmingly through political parties competing in federal elections as governed by the Canada Elections Act. The Samara Centre for Democracy estimated in a 2019 study that:

More than 99% of the Members of Parliament . . . elected to Canada's Parliament over the last 30 years were elected as representatives of a political party.

The Lortie commission described national political parties as “. . . gatekeepers of access to candidacy”

Let me shift for one moment. As you may know, public corporations subject to the Canada Business Corporations Act are required to report on how they are advancing diversity on boards of directors and for senior management. The provisions in Bill S-283 address public reporting by political parties on their action plans related to diversity by drawing on this framework. I will review the bill's reporting requirements for political parties first and then speak to why I believe this framework is the best choice.

To the extent that any party wishes to compete in federal elections and hold leadership contests, it is subject to the Canada Elections Act in carrying out those functions. If parties wish to be eligible for direct public benefits under the act, including identification on the ballot with their candidate's name and financing for election expenses, they can apply to the Chief Electoral Officer to be registered.

Let's remember that taxpayers in Canada also support registered political parties indirectly through revenue foregone in relation to the federal political contribution tax credit.

Currently, there are 16 registered political parties that vary in electoral participation and success. The Canada Elections Act requires certain registered parties to file quarterly financial statements. This same threshold has been adopted in this bill to require that the following registered political parties must report on diversity in candidate selection. That is, those parties:

. . . whose candidates for the most recent general election received at that election at least 2% of the number of valid votes cast, or at least 5% of the number of valid votes cast in the electoral districts in which the registered party endorsed a candidate.

These parties, with this threshold, are already required to report. This would add another reporting requirement for them.

The five parties currently represented in the House of Commons are the only parties that currently meet this threshold. It is clear from the constitutions of each of these parties, which are published on their websites, that nomination rules are set and controlled at the national level of the party as opposed to the electoral district association or riding level.

The bill makes these parties directly accountable to Canadians by requiring that they publish their nomination rules on their site. Currently, three of the five parties do so. Further, they are required to publish on their internet sites their policies, plans and implementation measures, including whether the party requires formal search committees “. . . for the purpose of achieving greater diversity in the selection of candidates.”

Indeed, research shows that formal search committees are important for recruiting diverse candidates, since they involve going beyond the established networks from which women and others may be excluded. The parties are required to report on cumulative progress on achieving greater diversity in candidate selection, overall and by group. Where a party has not taken any or all these initiatives, it must tell Canadians why it has chosen to go that route.

The bill provides that the Chief Electoral Officer has the same powers of enforcement for non-compliance with these reporting requirements as is the case for omitting to perform other statutory obligations. These provisions come into effect two years after Royal Assent, giving the registered parties to which they apply sufficient time to prepare to report.

As I have mentioned, the reporting provisions for political parties draw directly upon what is called the “Disclosure Relating to Diversity” transparency requirements under the Canada Business Corporations Act.

Since 2020, federally incorporated public companies must tell their shareholders annually what they are doing to increase diversity of their boards and senior management teams. The federal approach to disclosure on diversity draws on provincial securities rules which have been in place since December of 2014.

You may have heard these federal and provincial regimes described as what is called “comply or explain.” This is the terminology they use to describe, characterize and capture these regimes. Companies have the option to state how they are complying with the required disclosure or to explain why they are not choosing to comply. Companies design the policies, plans and timetables that suit them best, and shareholders hold them accountable as they see fit.

Colleagues, I have drawn upon the corporate disclosure regime because it is working. A January 22, 2024, editorial in *The Globe and Mail* said of this “comply or explain” approach, “It's a basic first step: Quantifying where you're at is key. Disclosure rules have helped propel progress”

We have nine years of information with respect to representation of women, and three years with respect to the representation of visible minorities, Indigenous peoples and persons with a disability. The respected Osler report *Diversity Disclosure Practices* speaks of progress in a number of these areas even over a three-year period. “Comply or explain” is producing results.

It is also working in another important way as well. “Comply or explain” in the corporation business sector has changed the conversation. It has moved the dial. It has turned up the heat on the lack of diversity in boardrooms and C-suites. It has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable performance so that there is no going back; there is only going forward. That is precisely what we need to have happen with diversity in candidate selection.

Let me give you an example of this phenomenon of raising the bar. I offer this example in memory of former prime minister Brian Mulroney. Prime Minister Mulroney appointed six women to his first cabinet in 1984. By doing so, he went well beyond the token one or two women appointed by his predecessors to their cabinets, and he raised the bar for future prime ministers. There was no going back from what he did, and that is the phenomenon we are talking about when we talk about this process.

• (1750)

I now come to the provisions of the bill implementing the second recommendation from the standing committee, which deals with goal setting for women candidates. In Recommendation 9, the standing committee’s report explicitly calls on parties “. . . to set goals and publicly report on their efforts to nominate more female candidates”

Some context-setting will be helpful here. What exactly explains the gender gap in representation? First, we know the gender gap cannot be blamed on voters. There is little or no voter bias against women. People vote for parties. If a candidate for the favoured party is a woman, you are no less likely to vote for a woman than a man.

A study of more than 21,000 candidates since women first began running for the Canadian Parliament in 1921 shows that female election candidates receive just as many votes as their male counterparts, after controlling for those important factors. So, it’s not the voters. We can’t blame them.

Some people blame the under-representation of women on our particular electoral system, but extensive comparative country research conclusively shows that all electoral systems, even those based on proportional representation, require intentional measures to improve women’s legislative representation.

The gender gap also cannot be blamed on women for not stepping forward — and I hear this a lot. The Library of Parliament data shows, for instance, that 762 women — 38% of all candidates — ran in the 2021 federal election. That is enough women to fill the House of Commons twice over with just women. That is how many women ran. That is a lot of women running. There is no shortage of women who are willing to step forward. I think we have to understand that fact.

In the 2021 election, 44% of the candidates of the five registered parties currently in the House of Commons were women. I do want to acknowledge and I do want to note that Canada’s political parties have been increasing the overall number of women candidates over recent elections, so there has been some progress on that front, and this is good.

Yet, although 44% of the candidates of the five parties were women, they won only 30.5% of the seats. Opening the lens, the big question is why.

Political scientist Dr. Jeanette Ashe put it succinctly in her testimony to the House committee:

Party selection processes are the main cause of women’s under-representation. . . . Women do come forward in sufficient numbers, but party selectors and officials disproportionately select men.

Data-based evidence tells us two important things about the sources of inequality in candidate selection. First, party selectors disproportionately choose men to run in so-called stronghold ridings, ridings in which their party has a very good chance to win. Women are more likely to be candidates in ridings where their party is less competitive. Melanee Thomas and Marc André Bodet have stated, in a leading Canadian study:

In the aggregate, we find evidence that women are disproportionately nominated in districts they cannot win

If the same number of women was nominated as candidates, but the distribution of women candidates across district competitiveness matched that of men’s, the gender balance in the Canadian Parliament would change considerably. . . .

That’s the first factor.

Second, where the party is the incumbent in a district, the chosen candidate will tend to be a man whether the same candidate is running again or the party is choosing a new candidate to run in a district it held in the last election.

So, how women are treated in districts where parties judge that they have an electoral advantage is one of the keys to narrowing the gender gap. This bill applies this knowledge. Parties must report whether they have any rules in place that relate to the nomination of women as candidates in stronghold districts, which are defined to be districts in which the party’s candidate came within a margin of 10% or less of the votes cast for the winning candidate in the last election or by-election.

Parties must also report whether they have any rules in place that relate to the nomination of women in districts which the party held in the last election or by-election, that is, where the party is the incumbent, but the incumbent candidate for that party is not running again.

Colleagues, these are the main provisions of Bill S-283. To summarize, this bill implements recommendations from Canada’s Chief Electoral Officer with respect to measuring diversity, and from the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women in its April 2019 report with respect to improving diverse women’s representation in electoral politics. It draws upon extensive Canadian experience in the use of action plans to

promote diversity in the workplace and on corporate boards and management, and it draws upon decades of research on women in politics.

This bill does not prescribe mandatory structural changes to either the electoral system or political parties, apart from those which political parties choose to make themselves. While 93 countries around the world have established quotas for women in elected politics, according to the United Nations, which measures this, this bill takes a different approach. It does not set goals or timetables for political parties. It asks parties to report on their goals, timetables and plans. The bill is built on data collection and reporting.

Bill S-283, I believe, will improve transparency, public accountability and trust in our political parties by enhancing information about their candidates and their candidate selection processes. The bill respects and challenges the leadership of our major political parties to ensure that the House of Commons is representative of the country, and it leaves plenty of room for parties to lead and to innovate.

Honourable senators, I seek your support for this bill at second reading. Thank you very much.

The Hon. the Speaker: Will the honourable senator accept a question from Senator Omidvar?

Senator Dasko: Yes.

Hon. Ratna Omidvar: Thank you, Senator Dasko, for this proposal and your deconstruction of it. It speaks to your two key strengths. I've known you for a very long time, and ever since I've known you, you've been about women in politics and about evidence. It brings those two key strengths together.

I have a couple of questions about the use of the data. Your proposal will enable the Chief Electoral Officer to gather data at a national level and report it out. Could that data be disaggregated at the riding level?

Senator Dasko: Thank you for your question, Senator Omidvar. The data can be disaggregated to the extent that it doesn't violate confidentiality and anonymity. That's really a question about analysis and the extent to which the interactive aspects of the data analysis will be possible. It will be analyzed on an intersectional basis to the extent that anonymity and confidentiality are not violated.

The Chief Electoral Officer thinks these are very important aspects of the data — that it be confidential and anonymized because he wants to make sure that this will work. He feels that it will work if the data is treated that way, so that candidates will be able to provide the data and be confident that it is not going to be revealed at the individual level.

• (1800)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, it is now six o'clock and pursuant to rule 3-3(1), I am obliged to leave the chair until eight o'clock, when we will resume, unless it is your wish, honourable senators, to not see the clock.

Is it agreed to not see the clock?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm going to ask the question again. Is it agreed to not see the clock?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: So ordered. Senator Dasko.

Senator Dasko: Thank you, Your Honour. That is the way the anonymity and confidentiality of the questions will be guaranteed in the analysis. That's the bottom line. Thank you.

Senator Omidvar: I have a brief second question. Senator Dasko, in your remarks you referred a number of times to the Employment Equity Act designated groups, as they affect Bill S-283. It's remarkable how similar the bill I spoke to on charity governance is to your bill, so I'll ask you a question that has preoccupied me as well.

The government is planning to change the language in the Employment Equity Act to expand the definitions of "designated groups." How will these changes, which may come after — hopefully — your bill is passed, affect the legislation?

Senator Dasko: Thank you for the question, senator. Of course, using the designated groups in the Employment Equity Act is a really good way to characterize this and to measure the groups. We have experience measuring this from the Employment Equity Act. We have experience from the Canada Business Corporations Act. Your bill, as you mentioned, has those categories in it.

A review of the Employment Equity Act is currently under way, and changes are starting to be proposed. It is the intention of this bill that those changes will flow through from those efforts to this effort. That can happen either through what are called consequential amendments or, depending on which bill would pass first, amendments to one bill or the other to take these into account. The intention is definitely for changes to flow through.

We know that the number of categories of designated groups may be increasing. We know that some of the definitions may even be increasing. We've seen that from the review undertaken by the review committee.

The hope and intention is that those changes will flow through to this bill; it was drafted that way. Thank you.

[Translation]

Hon. Lucie Moncion: I wanted to say that Senator McPhedran did indeed say no, Your Honour. I don't think that you saw or heard her. Perhaps you could ask the question again? In all fairness to our colleague, I think that is our duty here. I saw her twice.

The Hon. the Speaker: I asked the question twice. Senators need to raise their voice or even stand up, or wait until everyone has finished saying yes or no to express their disagreement. So, we will move on.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

[English]

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS BILL

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Housakos, seconded by the Honourable Senator Seidman, for the second reading of Bill C-281, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law), the Broadcasting Act and the Prohibiting Cluster Munitions Act.

(On motion of Senator Tannas, for Senator Patterson, debate adjourned.)

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR EYE CARE BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Ravalia, seconded by the Honourable Senator Woo, for the second reading of Bill C-284, An Act to establish a national strategy for eye care.

Hon. Andrew Cardozo: Honourable senators, I have a few comments on Bill C-284. I want to start by acknowledging the sponsor of the bill, Senator Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia, and congratulating the originator of the bill in the House of Commons, the Honourable Judy Sgro, who has put her considerable parliamentary experience toward making this a strong bill.

Also, a shout-out to the following organizations who represent Canadians who are blind: the Canadian Council of the Blind, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Canadian Ophthalmological Society, Fighting Blindness Canada and the OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation.

Canadians from these organizations have called for and helped craft Bill C-284. The full name of the act is Bill C-284, An Act to establish a national strategy for eye care.

As the preamble to this bill notes, “. . . millions of Canadians live with eye disease that could lead to vision loss or blindness if not treated . . .” Eye care is a serious issue. It is thought that 8 million Canadians are living with an eye condition that leaves them at risk of blindness. That is 20% of the population.

A report by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind found that the cost of vision loss to Canada is about \$33 billion a year.

It is estimated that 75% of vision loss is preventable, but Canadians are not getting their eyes tested when they should be. Guidelines suggest we should be having annual eye tests, but where provincial and private insurance coverage exists, it is often only for a test every two years. The inevitable consequence is that one third of Canadian adults have not sought vision care because they cannot afford to do so. Prevention is obviously better than cure, and in Canada, we are not doing enough with respect to prevention.

Access to eye care differs from province to province, but if we accept that this is a problem for all Canadians, and a serious one at that, then developing a national strategy is what is needed. We need to get the provincial and federal governments to work together to improve our nation's eye health care. That's what this bill is about — cooperation, planning and coordination.

I want to read briefly from the website of the Canadian Council of the Blind:

Bill C-284 has come far, but much still needs to be done. The imminent passage of this Bill —

— they are quite optimistic —

— promises improved quality of life for many and signifies a commitment to equality and accessibility in eye care services. Collaborative efforts with vision organizations underscore the collective call for fairness. In essence, Bill C-284 is not just legislation; it's a pivotal step toward a more inclusive and efficient eye care system for all Canadians.

• (1810)

Honourable senators, that is why I am supporting Bill C-284, the national strategy for eye care act. Thank you.

[Translation]

Hon. Marie-Françoise Mégie: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak in support of Bill C-284. This private member's initiative is sponsored by our colleague, Senator Ravalia, and I thank him for that. This bill seeks to establish a national strategy for eye care.

The other place unanimously passed this bill on October 25, 2023. Senator Ravalia outlined why this legislation is important for the health of our population. He also warned us that our society will incur significant economic costs if we do not act now.

The Association des optométristes du Québec ran an awareness campaign to warn parents that about one in four school-aged children has vision problems. I really like the association's tag line about seeing to eye health.

In addition, a 2019 estimate pegged the potential cost of vision loss in Canada at \$32.9 billion. Then there's the not insignificant human impact. In fact, eight million people in Canada are at risk of losing their sight.

According to the Merck manual, macular degeneration is the leading cause of irreversible vision loss among seniors. It is important to keep in mind that deteriorating vision disrupts normal, everyday activities. It hastens the loss of independence and has a negative impact on aging.

Bill C-284 offers a unique opportunity to meet the growing needs of millions of Canadians and positively transform their vision health.

In 2020, Statistics Canada reported that the percentage of the population with self-reported good vision without correction was about 75% among young people of both sexes aged 12 to 19. This percentage was considerably lower among people aged 45 to 49, and was close to 25% among those aged 55 and older.

There is no doubt that as people get older, they have a greater need for eye care professionals. Being able to see well throughout one's life is the key to maintaining autonomy and overall good health.

The Canadian Ophthalmological Society surveyed Canadians to find out how much they know about major eye diseases. Over half, or about 62%, of Canadians are familiar with cataracts, and yet only a quarter of them know that cataracts are the leading cause of blindness in the country. When it comes to age-related macular degeneration, the proportion drops to 39%, even though this disease is the second leading cause of blindness and affects nearly two million Canadians. As for glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy and dry eye syndrome, the proportion drops to under 26%, sitting at about 22%.

These figures on eye disease awareness clearly demonstrate the need to educate Canadians about eye disease prevention.

Despite how important it is, eye care often lacks the necessary attention and resources. It's time for Canada to take a proactive approach to vision health, and Bill C-284 is an important first step in that direction.

Bill C-284 proposes to establish a national eye care strategy that would address several fundamental aspects of vision health. First, it would establish regular screening programs to detect eye problems early and prevent serious and costly long-term complications.

The proposed national strategy would promote access to quality eye care for all Canadians, regardless of where they live or their socio-economic status.

All too often, marginalized and disadvantaged populations have limited access to eye health services, which exacerbates health inequalities.

By passing Bill C-284, we would be committed to ensuring that every citizen has access to adequate eye care, thereby contributing to a more just, equitable and inclusive society.

Implementing this national strategy would also stimulate research and innovation in the field of eye health. Investing in research into eye diseases and new technologies would enable us to develop more effective treatments and improve outcomes for patients with visual impairments.

Bill C-284 would also encourage public education and awareness about the importance of eye care and preventive measures to support healthy vision. By informing and educating the public, we can encourage healthy behaviours and reduce the number of people suffering from preventable eye problems.

Honourable colleagues, support for Bill C-284 is a commitment to a better quality of life for millions of Canadians through equitable access to proper eye care. We can send a strong message that eye health is a national priority and that every Canadian deserves to live in a country where their health is taken seriously.

In closing, let us move this bill forward and support the unanimous and non-partisan will to establish a national strategy for eye care in Canada. Let us work together to make a real difference to our fellow citizens' quality of life and help create a healthier and more promising future for all.

Thank you.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

STUDY ON EMERGING ISSUES RELATED TO ITS MANDATE

FOURTH REPORT OF ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the fourth report (interim) of the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, entitled *Hydrogen: A Viable Option for a Net-Zero Canada in 2050?*, presented in the Senate on May 9, 2023.

Hon. Paul J. Massicotte moved the adoption of the report.

He said: Honourable senators, I move that the report, which includes a request for a government response, be adopted.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

[English]

LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

FIRST REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Ravalia, seconded by the Honourable Senator Busson, for the adoption of the first report of the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament, entitled *Quorum and Mandate of the Committee*, presented in the Senate on June 20, 2023.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

STUDY ON THE CANADIAN FOREIGN SERVICE AND ELEMENTS OF THE FOREIGN POLICY MACHINERY WITHIN GLOBAL AFFAIRS

TWELFTH REPORT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMITTEE AND REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Boehm, seconded by the Honourable Senator Forest:

That the twelfth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, entitled *More than a Vocation: Canada's Need for a 21st Century Foreign Service*, deposited with the Clerk of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, be adopted and that, pursuant to rule 12-23(1), the Senate request a complete and detailed response from the government, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs being identified as the minister responsible for responding to the report.

Hon. Peter Harder: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to our Senate Foreign Affairs and International Trade Committee's report entitled *More than a Vocation: Canada's Need for a 21st Century Foreign Service*. I won't repeat what our colleagues and members of the committee have said so far — they have astutely outlined the content of the report.

• (1820)

What I want to speak to is context.

I have long been a believer that studies are where the Senate really shows its unique worth. Senators are able to identify issues faced by Canadians and the international community, and turn those challenges into opportunities and actionable recommendations from a Canadian lens. And with the advantage of institutional memory, senators are able to take into consideration, from one administration to the next, what worked and what didn't.

We have seen groundbreaking studies and reports in past years, such as the still-cited Kirby report on mental health, the Nolin report on cannabis, or the report from the Special Senate Committee on the Arctic from the Forty-second Parliament.

I would say, somewhat biasedly, that this Foreign Affairs Committee report falls into the same category of diligence and excellence as those to which I have just referred.

Colleagues, the subject matter of this report is not “sexy,” but the importance of the content is invaluable to our public servants working at the Lester B. Pearson Building and, more importantly, the worldwide network of hundreds of missions.

As has been said, it has been four decades since the McDougall commission produced its recommendations, so an update was well overdue. Yet, somehow, our committee still came out ahead of the game. We received our order of reference and began our study before the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Mélanie Joly, announced her Future of Diplomacy review at Global Affairs Canada.

Not only were we ahead of the minister in her internal review, but our report was also completed and deposited with the Clerk last December. At that point in time, the Foreign Affairs and International Development Committee in the other place had only held their first meeting on a substantially similar study. In fact, their committee invited our Senator Boehm as a witness to testify for their study because we had already finished ours — imagine that.

Now is the time for us to put our work into action by adopting this report.

The adoption of a report is no menial task. Much work goes into the development of recommendations that can be agreed upon by the majority of our chamber based on factual witness testimony and pertinent questions from members.

The adoption of a report is an assertion by the Senate as a whole to oblige the government to thoughtfully consider our report as it pertains to public policy development and the identification of public policy issues and recourses. Our studies hold a certain merit disassociated from partisan leanings found in the House, and they hold up to scrutiny and time.

Because of this, we are asking the Minister of Foreign Affairs to provide a detailed and complete response to this report. The response must be tabled by the Government Representative in the Senate no later than 150 calendar days after we adopt the report, so the sooner the adoption, the sooner we receive our response.

I expect the minister would be pleased to offer a response considering her own internal review of Global Affairs. There could be a coordination between the two documents, and I anticipate that has already been initiated.

But more than this, the timing of the adoption of our report allows the minister to officially respond in advance of the 2025 election. An adoption of the report this week — tonight — would mean an official response in the dead of August at the latest, giving senators ample time to respond to whatever the government might say.

This is a useful tool in democratic governance because it helps the public to understand where the government sits on policy issues. It outlines governmental intentions and provides insights into the balancing act of governance.

While foreign relations issues generally don't garner votes, an official response is necessary nonetheless as part of the edification process of those in governance, including ourselves. It allows us to ask tough questions in holding the government to account going forward — questions to ministers, at committees and, yes, even at the dog-and-pony show that is daily Question Period.

But we also need to consider this response with a bit of forethought. The political context we find ourselves in does not lead one to believe that the coffers will be unguarded for increased spending, especially in the foreign context. Certainly, there is a drive for fiscal management underlined with responsibility and prudence. This is in competition with calls counterweighing that same fiscal responsibility.

Consider, for example, the Treasury Board directive for ministries to reduce spending, amounting to billions of dollars. However, we are also seeing in the media cycle calls for Canada to meet the NATO target of 2% of GDP. That money would have to come from somewhere.

The reason I raise the 2% NATO contribution threshold is not because I think it's something worth adhering to or that it's even a good metric, but because there has been some indication that one way to achieve the 2% target would be to cut Canada's foreign aid contributions.

Colleagues, this is not only short-sighted, but it is also nonsensical. According to a NATO document entitled *Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2014-2023)*, Canada's contributions using GDP is 1.38% — twenty-fifth in NATO. In dollar figures, this is over \$39 billion — seventh in NATO. In order to reach the 2% of GDP, Canada would need to contribute roughly another \$20 billion, which would bring us only to fifth place if all else remained the same.

In comparison, Canada's foreign aid spending in the 2023 federal budget amounted to \$6.9 billion, which is approximately 0.24% of our GDP. Colleagues, we would need to contribute around three times our entire 2023 foreign aid budget to defence spending just to meet the NATO target and to appease our detractors.

Another metric is also used to gauge our contributions to official development assistance, or ODA. This metric is perhaps less known than the NATO target of 2%, but it is also important and was developed by a great Canadian in the mid-20th century. The 1972 Pearson report, as it is colloquially known, advanced the idea that official development aid should reach 0.7% of gross national income — a different but similar indicator to GDP. Senator Bellemare or Senator Clement could better describe the differences in those two points than I could.

This target is still being used by organizations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, or OECD, to track member countries' ODA contributions, but it is based on a percentage of gross national income. In 2022, Canada's ODA as a percentage of gross national income was 0.37% — roughly half of the target of 0.7%, and eighteenth out of all members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee. But akin to the NATO spending target, Canada jumps to sixth when considering purely dollar figures.

Colleagues, it is in this context that the government will have to take our report into account, along with other financial inputs I haven't mentioned. The theme that emerges is that we simply aren't investing enough or investing smartly in foreign affairs writ large. This is a theme that has persisted for quite some time, and the suspension on recruitment in the Foreign Affairs Department only exacerbated the problems we now see within the Foreign Service.

Canada is not a superpower; we are a middle power. And regardless of the musings of those who might claim Canada is broken, we are still a respected power. Reviewing and, where necessary, investing in all aspects of Canada's global presence is necessary now more than ever.

To quote Senator Boehm:

The world of today is increasingly unstable and violent, with impacts on our trading relationships, supply chains, sovereignty, and our influence around the world. . . .

As was stated in a February 22 article in *The Economist*, "Russia is becoming more dangerous, America is less reliable and Europe remains unprepared." Canada's presence in the world must adjust to these ever-changing realities. I fear we risk becoming Canada alone, as Kim Nossal, the distinguished academic at Queen's University, has argued.

As for *More than a Vocation: Canada's Need for a 21st Century Foreign Service*, diplomatic experience and expertise are invaluable. Canada's Foreign Service officers are some of the best in the world, and they deserve our support in order to continue the important diplomacy work that they must do in the face of the threats and uncertainties of our global community.

The recommendations speak for themselves: recruitment, training, knowledge of development, trade and linguistics, and the ability for public servants to apply their skills within the Foreign Service by secondment or interchanges. All of these recommendations would benefit Canada in our middle power role so that we can continue to punch above our weight.

• (1830)

Colleagues, only the executive branch — in a federation, this is the federal government’s unique responsibility — on behalf of the Crown, can conduct foreign affairs by virtue of a power devolved upon it following the U. K.’s enactment of the Statute of Westminster in 1931. This is also known as the Royal Prerogative, the exercise of which over foreign affairs has been likened by the Supreme Court of Canada to a “constitutional responsibility.”

In *Canada (Prime Minister) v. Khadr*, paragraph 39 can be interpreted to say the constitutional responsibility of the executive is:

. . . to make decisions on matters of foreign affairs in the context of complex and ever-changing circumstances, taking into account Canada’s broader national interests.

Colleagues, this is an additional dimension in which Minister Joly will have to judge our report’s recommendations. We know that the circumstances are complex, that they are ever-changing. With that in mind, and with foreign affairs powers being firmly vested in the federal government’s executive, this should take a higher priority from the minister’s end, as it is uniquely hers and the cabinet’s constitutional role to play.

That being said, colleagues, I ask that we undertake to adopt this report tonight — I understand there’s agreement to do that — so that we might receive a formal response from the minister as soon as possible. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Hon. René Cormier: First of all, I would like to congratulate the committee on this critical and formidable report, which is fundamental to the future of the Government of Canada’s foreign service. I read the report carefully, particularly recommendation 6, which reads as follows:

In foreign policy files involving multiple federal departments and agencies, the Government of Canada should clearly identify the role of each party, including the department or agency taking the coordinating or lead policy role. The Government of Canada should also identify the role that Canada’s missions abroad can play in advancing key foreign, trade and international development policy files.

I recently reread the report of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade on cultural diplomacy. I found a lot of similarities in terms of the identification of problems and objectives.

Senator Harder, do you think that, in the government’s study of this report, it should also include elements from the very important report your committee produced on cultural diplomacy?

[*English*]

Senator Harder: Thank you very much for the question. Let me say at the outset that the earlier report on cultural diplomacy is one that I very much embraced, and I commend the committee

for that work. Cultural diplomacy — when I was the deputy minister serving three different governments in that role at Foreign Affairs — was an important part of how Canada projects itself and influences.

This report is more about the plumbing — if I can put it that way — of the department. But certainly, the tool of cultural diplomacy is one we ought to embrace and one that the report builds on as a result of the study that was conducted earlier by our committee and to which you referred.

Hon. Peter M. Boehm: I move the adoption of the report.

The Hon. the Speaker: Are senators ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

[*Translation*]

ROYAL ASSENT

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that the following communication had been received:

RIDEAU HALL

March 19, 2024

Madam Speaker,

I have the honour to inform you that the Right Honourable Mary May Simon, Governor General of Canada, signified royal assent by written declaration to the bills listed in the Schedule to this letter on the 19th day of March, 2024, at 6:04 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

Ken MacKillop

Secretary to the Governor General

The Honourable
The Speaker of the Senate
Ottawa

Bills Assented to Tuesday, March 19, 2024:

An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada (*Bill C-35, Chapter 2, 2024*)

An Act to implement the 2023 Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine (*Bill C-57, Chapter 3, 2024*)

[Senator Harder]

[English]

THE SENATE

MOTION CONCERNING POSSIBLE EXIT OF ALBERTA FROM THE CANADA PENSION PLAN—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Simons, seconded by the Honourable Senator Greenwood:

That the Senate of Canada:

1. call on the Chief Actuary within the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions to publish an actuarial study that reports on:
 - (a) a possible exit of Alberta from the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), including an analysis of the viability of the CPP after such an exit by Alberta;
 - (b) a reasonable estimate of an exit cost of Alberta's share of the Canada Pension Plan fund; and
 - (c) any other information that the Chief Actuary deems to be relevant in the study of this issue; and
2. call on the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer to study a possible exit of Alberta from the CPP, including any fiscal and/or economic impacts of such an exit from the CPP on Canadians.

Hon. Paula Simons: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Motion No. 172, which proposes that the Senate of Canada call on the Chief Actuary within the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions to publish an actuarial study that reports on:

- (a) a possible exit of Alberta from the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), including an analysis of the viability of the CPP after such an exit by Alberta;
- (b) a reasonable estimate of an exit cost of Alberta's share of the Canada Pension Plan fund; and
- (c) any other information that the Chief Actuary deems to be relevant in the study of this issue

The motion further calls on the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer to study a possible exit of Alberta from the CPP, including any fiscal/economic impacts of such an exit from the CPP on Canadians.

As a proud Albertan and a proud Canadian, I think the voters of Alberta and the citizens of Canada need to have the most accurate, independent and non-partisan information possible about the economic consequences of Alberta's proposed withdrawal from the Canada Pension Plan.

This is a national issue because the impact of Alberta's exit on the security and sustainability of the CPP could be tremendous and also because Alberta is a province where Canadians from across the country come to work and to earn pensionable income. There are people living in Corner Brook and Charlottetown, Toronto and Tofino, Saskatoon and Saint John, Whitehorse and Winnipeg, who might have worked some or all of their careers in Alberta, and they have a right to know what will happen to their pensions if Alberta quits.

It's quite a possible scenario that if Alberta withdraws from the CPP, people who have worked in Alberta for most or all of their careers but moved and retired elsewhere would automatically be ineligible for the CPP. They would receive benefits from this proposed Alberta pension plan, but they wouldn't have had a chance to vote in the referendum that could have a real impact on their own retirements.

Let it be said that the Canada Pension Plan is one of the world's most successful pension plans. As of December 31, 2023, it was worth \$590.8 billion. It had a 10-year annualized net return of 9.3%, earning a cumulative net income of \$319.4 billion in the last 10 years. In a recent report published by the Global Pension Transparency Benchmark, which ranks the world's top 1,000 pension funds, the Canada Pension Plan ranked second out of 1,000 pension funds for overall transparency, cost and performance, second only to that of Norway. When it came to the category of governance, the Canada Pension Plan, or CPP, was ranked number one in the world.

• (1840)

The CPP's governance is jointly managed by the provinces and the federal government. However, the fund itself is administered by an independent board. No prime minister, finance minister or group of premiers can interfere with its investment decisions, and it's harder to change that government's structure than it is to amend the Constitution itself. Indeed, it would require the consent of two thirds of provinces representing two thirds of Canada's population.

The Canada Pension Plan Investment Board is a major international actor, with offices in London, Luxembourg, Mumbai, Hong Kong, New York, San Francisco, São Paulo and Sydney. Its goal isn't to fulfill anyone's political dreams or business ambitions. Indeed, only 14% of the fund's assets are invested in Canada. The strategy is to put our nest eggs in as many baskets as possible.

The CPP is also completely portable. It allows people to look for work in any province, knowing that their pension will follow them wherever they move next. Because of that security, someone who works in Edmonton can take a job in Ottawa. Someone who lives in Glace Bay can fly in regularly to work in Fort McMurray. Someone who lives in Grande Prairie can retire to Kelowna. This portability doesn't just help workers. It helps employers recruit the talent they need from across the country and to respond quickly to labour shortages in times of economic boom.

Indeed, you could call the CPP Alberta's secret weapon. No province in Confederation has benefitted more from this seamless system which makes it easy for Alberta businesses to bring in staff when and where needed. Perhaps that's why the CPP is so popular across Canada and within Alberta. A poll released late last month by Bruce Anderson and spark*advocacy found that 88% of Canadians — including 81% of Albertans — believe the Canada Pension Plan should be maintained as a national program.

So why is Alberta proposing to pull out of a successful, well-regarded pension plan?

Some Albertans argue that we pay a disproportionate amount into the national pension fund and don't get our fair share back. It is true that on a year-by-year basis, Albertans, in aggregate, pay more into the Canada Pension Plan than Albertans, in aggregate, get paid out. However, that's because our province has a young population with many young workers, an extremely high workforce participation rate and higher-than-average salaries — and, of course, because quite often, Alberta seniors head to warmer parts of Canada to retire.

As a province, we simply have more workers and fewer pensioners. That doesn't mean the fund is unfair. It means that individual Albertans will reap their benefits when they retire, wherever they retire, and most of them will individually draw larger pensions because they will have made more pensionable earnings.

Then, of course, there are Albertans who believe we should have our own pension plan specifically so that Alberta can use it to direct investment to Alberta's energy sector at a time when resource extraction companies are finding it harder and harder to attract international investment capital. One might wonder if micromanaging a pension fund to support a specific troubled industry is the best way to protect Albertans' retirements, especially contrasted with the CPP's global strategy.

Finally, there are some in Alberta who want us to withdraw from the CPP on principle — no matter the economic costs — as a symbol and signal of Alberta autonomy. They see an Alberta pension plan as the first step toward sovereignty-association or even separation. For them, this isn't an argument about economics or logic. It's about political independence and cultural identity.

Against this backdrop, this past September, the Government of Alberta released a report by consultants that outlined how Alberta might set up its proposed stand-alone pension plan. The report concluded that based on a literal reading of the legislation, Alberta was actually entitled to withdraw 117% of the total value of the Canada Pension Plan's assets. Yes, I said 117%.

However, the consultants recognized that such a plan — to withdraw more money than was actually in the fund — was probably impractical. As a compromise, they suggested a reading that would entitle Alberta to 53% of the fund's total assets. That's \$334 billion, which would, of course — for the record — be more than the entire earnings of the fund over the last 10 years.

Based on this provocative premise and the assumption that Alberta's population demographics remain younger than the national average, the report predicts Alberta workers and employers would make smaller contributions to a proposed Alberta pension plan than they now do to the CPP while drawing larger pensions than other Canadians when they retire. Predicated on those very particular assumptions, the consultants estimated that an Alberta pension plan could save top earners in the province as much as \$1,400 a year. The report, however, was silent on how much average or low-income wage earners in Alberta might be likely to save. However, those potential savings are indeed predicated on a model that would allow Alberta to pull out more than half the total value of the CPP as it left.

Albertans have been told that they will have a chance to vote in a future referendum on the establishment of an Alberta pension plan. But how can they make an informed decision without knowing whether that 53% estimate and the projections that flow from it are plausible? As well, how can they in good conscience decide without understanding the impact of their withdrawal upon their fellow Canadians?

That's why, last December, I gave notice of this motion, which calls on the Office of the Chief Actuary, or OCA, to prepare a report to answer these very questions.

The Office of the Chief Actuary is an independent unit within the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. Although its Chief Actuary, Assia Billig, reports to the superintendent, she is solely responsible for the content and actuarial opinions in her reports.

The Office of the Chief Actuary was created to provide actuarial and other services to the Government of Canada as well as the provincial governments, who are stakeholders in the Canada Pension Plan. Because the office exists outside of government, it is set up to be impartial and independent.

I'm happy to say that things have advanced somewhat since I first put this motion on the Notice Paper. Last month, Dr. Billig — who, as it happens, holds a PhD in Mathematics from the University of Alberta — struck an expert committee of five independent actuaries, who have been tasked with the job of reviewing the somewhat contentious legal and technical language of the Canada Pension Plan Act and coming up with their own analyses and assessments of what Alberta's fair share of the fund should be. That five-person panel is supposed to complete its work later this spring. Then the Chief Actuary will make her own report sometime late this autumn.

Given that update, the motion before us may now appear redundant. But Motion No. 172 goes further than just determining how much Alberta is owed. It explicitly asks for an analysis of the viability of the CPP after such an exit by Alberta, and it empowers the Chief Actuary to report on any other issues she deems relevant. What's more, so much of what has been going on in relation to this file has been happening very quietly behind the scenes, out of public view. On an issue such as this, I think it's important — indeed, it's essential — that we be transparent and put this request and the report it would produce on the public record.

As Senators, we represent our provinces and regions. If the independent Senate itself asks for such a report, it has a different significance than if a government that is party to the negotiations asks for it.

Motion No. 172 further asks the Parliamentary Budget Officer, or PBO, an independent officer of parliament, to prepare his own separate independent report on what Alberta's departure might mean for the federal exchequer and government finances more broadly. This is not a duplication. I'm not asking the PBO to produce a rival or separate analysis of what Alberta is owed. That should properly be the work of the Chief Actuary, who will have the most complete data set at her disposal.

However, the future viability of the Canada Pension Fund wouldn't just have an impact on pensioners. Stripping the fund of more than half its assets and thus reducing its influence in international markets could have far-reaching economic consequences for the country and the federal government, especially if Ottawa then has to step into the breach to take steps to backstop retirement plans for people in the other provinces. That's why I believe the Parliamentary Budget Officer should issue his own independent report on this matter.

I hope you will join with me in making this request — and in a timely fashion. Albertans need accurate, independent, objective data before they make this momentous decision, as do all other Canadians.

Thank you. *Hiy hiy.*

Hon. Karen Sorensen: Would you take a question, Senator Simons?

Senator Simons: I would be happy to take a question.

Senator Sorensen: I am an Albertan and a resident of one of Canada's top tourism destinations. There are a lot of people from other parts of the country who come to live and work in Alberta during the tourist season and then travel back to their own provinces for the rest of the year.

• (1850)

If Alberta were to leave the Canada Pension Plan, or CPP, and create its own pension plan, what do you think Alberta's ability to attract seasonal workers would be?

Senator Simons: Thank you for the excellent question, and I confess, when I was drafting my speech, I was thinking more about people who work in the oil and gas sector, but you are absolutely right. As I say, part of Alberta's magic formula is the ability to attract workers when they need them, and those workers know that their pensions are portable. The employers know they don't have to figure out another separate pension plan.

I think for seasonal workers, this is absolutely essential for Banff, Jasper and other national parks and tourist sites to attract workers. Indeed, there may be an impact on seasonal agricultural

workers, including those who come from other countries, because right now the CPP has agreements with I think 70 foreign countries to harmonize pension plans, and Alberta Pension Plan, or APP, wouldn't have that, not right out of the gate.

Hon. Donna Dasko: Would Senator Simons take another question?

Senator Simons: I would be delighted.

Senator Dasko: Senator, you mentioned that about 80% of Albertans support a national system for the CPP, and yet there is also this 53% figure floating around and the 117% of the fund that is coming. Is there any evidence that Albertans will buy into this disinformation about these figures? They're so incredible that who could ever believe them? But still, as we know, if something is told over and over again, it may well be believed by the public.

Do you have any sense that Albertans might actually come to believe these kinds of numbers, which, of course, seem absurd to me? Thank you.

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Simons, your time for debate is up. Did you want more time to answer the question?

Senator Simons: I would love to ask for five more minutes, but I realize I'm standing between the chamber and dinner.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted for Senator Dasko's question?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Simons: The Alberta government has been engaged in an extremely sophisticated messaging campaign to try and speak to Albertans and explain why they think an Alberta pension plan is viable, but it's been difficult to get consistent polling data, and as you would know, polling results depend on how you ask the question.

I saw a story just today in my former newspaper, the *Edmonton Journal*, where the paper had attempted to file an access to information request to get some of the documents from the round tables and the open houses that the government has been hosting. The government has refused to release those documents claiming that these question-and-answer sessions constitute advice to government and thus are to be held in confidence.

I think that Albertans, if they have the accurate information about what this pension plan would actually get in terms of starting assets, would have a very different response than being told that they will automatically get 53% of the fund. That's why

I think it is absolutely essential that we get this information and in the most timely way possible, so that Albertans can make up their own minds with objective data.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

**ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHINESE
EXCLUSION ACT**

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Woo, calling the attention of the Senate to the one hundredth anniversary of the *Chinese Exclusion Act*, the contributions that Chinese Canadians have made to our country, and the need to combat contemporary forms of exclusion and discrimination faced by Canadians of Asian descent.

The Hon. the Speaker: I wish to inform the Senate that if the Honourable Senator Woo speaks now, his speech will have the effect of closing the debate on this inquiry.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO EXTEND DATE OF FINAL REPORT
ON STUDY OF SEAL POPULATIONS AND DEPOSIT REPORT
WITH CLERK DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Bev Busson, pursuant to notice of February 27, 2024, moved:

That, notwithstanding the order of the Senate adopted on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, the date for the final report of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans in relation to its study on Canada's seal populations be extended from March 31, 2024, to June 30, 2024; and

That the committee be permitted, notwithstanding usual practices, to deposit with the Clerk of the Senate its report relating to this study, if the Senate is not then sitting, and that the report be deemed to have been tabled in the Senate.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(At 6:57 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 2 p.m.)

THE SPEAKER

The Honourable Raymonde Gagné

THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN THE SENATE

The Honourable Marc Gold

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

The Honourable Donald Neil Plett

FACILITATOR OF THE INDEPENDENT SENATORS GROUP

The Honourable Raymonde Saint-Germain

THE LEADER OF THE CANADIAN SENATORS GROUP

The Honourable Scott Tannas

THE LEADER OF THE PROGRESSIVE SENATE GROUP

The Honourable Pierre J. Dalphond

OFFICERS OF THE SENATE

INTERIM CLERK OF THE SENATE AND CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS

Gérald Lafrenière

LAW CLERK AND PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL

Philippe Hallée

USHER OF THE BLACK ROD

J. Greg Peters

THE MINISTRY

(In order of precedence)

(March 1, 2024)

The Right Hon. Justin Trudeau	Prime Minister
The Hon. Chrystia Freeland	Minister of Finance
	Deputy Prime Minister
The Hon. Lawrence MacAulay	Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
The Hon. Dominic LeBlanc	Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs
	Minister of Public Services and Procurement
The Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos	Minister of National Revenue
The Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau	Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Hon. Mélanie Joly	Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
The Hon. Diane Lebouthillier	President of the King's Privy Council for Canada
The Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan	Minister of Emergency Preparedness
	Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada
	Minister of Sport and Physical Activity
The Hon. Carla Qualtrough	Minister of Indigenous Services
The Hon. Patty Hajdu	Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario
	Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry
The Hon. François-Philippe Champagne	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (on parental leave)
The Hon. Karina Gould	Minister of International Development
The Hon. Ahmed Hussen	Minister of Labour and Seniors
The Hon. Seamus O'Regan	Minister of Veterans Affairs
The Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor	Associate Minister of National Defence
	Minister of Transport
The Hon. Pablo Rodriguez	Minister of National Defence
The Hon. Bill Blair	Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development
The Hon. Mary Ng	Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario
	Minister of Energy and National Resources
The Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson	President of the Treasury Board
The Hon. Anita Anand	Minister of Environment and Climate Change
The Hon. Steven Guilbeault	Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
The Hon. Marc Miller	Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada
The Hon. Dan Vandal	Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
	Minister of Northern Affairs
	Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages
The Hon. Randy Boissonnault	Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities
The Hon. Sean Fraser	Minister of Health
The Hon. Mark Holland	Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
The Hon. Gudie Hutchings	Minister of Rural Economic Development
	Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth
The Hon. Marci Ien	Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities
The Hon. Kamal Khara	Minister of Canadian Heritage
The Hon. Pascale St-Onge	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
The Hon. Steven MacKinnon	Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
The Hon. Gary Anandasangaree	Minister of Citizens' Services
The Hon. Terry Beech	Minister of Tourism
The Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada	Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Region of Quebec
	Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
	Associate Minister of Health
The Hon. Jenna Suds	Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
The Hon. Rechie Valdez	Minister of Small Business
The Hon. Arif Virani	Minister of Justice
	Attorney General of Canada

SENATORS OF CANADA

ACCORDING TO SENIORITY

(March 1, 2024)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
Jane Cordy.....	Nova Scotia.....	Dartmouth, N.S.
Mobina S. B. Jaffer.....	British Columbia.....	North Vancouver, B.C.
Pierrette Ringuette.....	New Brunswick.....	Edmundston, N.B.
Percy E. Downe.....	Charlottetown.....	Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Paul J. Massicotte.....	De Lanaudière.....	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.
Stephen Greene.....	Halifax - The Citadel.....	Halifax, N.S.
Michael L. MacDonald.....	Cape Breton.....	Dartmouth, N.S.
Percy Mockler.....	New Brunswick.....	St. Leonard, N.B.
Pamela Wallin.....	Saskatchewan.....	Wadena, Sask.
Yonah Martin.....	British Columbia.....	Vancouver, B.C.
Patrick Brazeau.....	Repentigny.....	Maniwaki, Que.
Leo Housakos.....	Wellington.....	Laval, Que.
Donald Neil Plett.....	Landmark.....	Landmark, Man.
Claude Carignan, P.C.....	Mille Isles.....	Saint-Eustache, Que.
Elizabeth Marshall.....	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	Paradise, Nfld. & Lab.
Judith G. Seidman.....	De la Durantaye.....	Saint-Raphaël, Que.
Rose-May Poirier.....	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent.....	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.
Salma Ataullahjan.....	Ontario (Toronto).....	Toronto, Ont.
Fabian Manning.....	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	St. Bride's, Nfld. & Lab.
Larry W. Smith.....	Saurel.....	Hudson, Que.
Josée Verner, P.C.....	Montarville.....	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que.
Jean-Guy Dagenais.....	Victoria.....	Blainville, Que.
Diane Bellemare.....	Alma.....	Outremont, Que.
David M. Wells.....	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Victor Oh.....	Mississauga.....	Mississauga, Ont.
Denise Batters.....	Saskatchewan.....	Regina, Sask.
Scott Tannas.....	Alberta.....	High River, Alta.
Peter Harder, P.C.....	Ottawa.....	Manotick, Ont.
Raymonde Gagné, <i>Speaker</i>	Manitoba.....	Winnipeg, Man.
Frances Lankin, P.C.....	Ontario.....	Restoule, Ont.
Ratna Omidvar.....	Ontario.....	Toronto, Ont.
Chantal Petitclerc.....	Grandville.....	Montreal, Que.
Yuen Pau Woo.....	British Columbia.....	North Vancouver, B.C.
René Cormier.....	New Brunswick.....	Caraget, N.B.
Nancy J. Hartling.....	New Brunswick.....	Riverview, N.B.
Kim Pate.....	Ontario.....	Ottawa, Ont.
Tony Dean.....	Ontario.....	Toronto, Ont.
Wanda Thomas Bernard.....	Nova Scotia (East Preston).....	East Preston, N.S.
Lucie Moncion.....	Ontario.....	North Bay, Ont.
Marilou McPhedran.....	Manitoba.....	Winnipeg, Man.
Gwen Boniface.....	Ontario.....	Orillia, Ont.
Éric Forest.....	Gulf.....	Rimouski, Que.
Marc Gold.....	Stadacona.....	Westmount, Que.
Marie-Françoise Mégie.....	Rougemont.....	Montreal, Que.
Raymonde Saint-Germain.....	De la Vallière.....	Quebec City, Que.
Rosa Galvez.....	Bedford.....	Lévis, Que.
David Richards.....	New Brunswick.....	Fredericton, N.B.
Mary Coyle.....	Nova Scotia.....	Antigonish, N.S.

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
Mary Jane McCallum	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Robert Black	Ontario	Centre Wellington, Ont.
Marty Deacon	Waterloo Region	Waterloo, Ont.
Yvonne Boyer	Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford, Ont.
Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate, Nfld. & Lab.
Pierre J. Dalphond	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.
Donna Dasko	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Colin Deacon	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Julie Miville-Dechéne	Inkerman	Mont-Royal, Que.
Bev Busson	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region, B.C.
Marty Klyne	Saskatchewan	White City, Sask.
Patti LaBoucane-Benson	Alberta	Spruce Grove, Alta.
Paula Simons	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.
Peter M. Boehm	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Brian Francis	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point, P.E.I.
Dawn Anderson	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife, N.W.T.
Pat Duncan	Yukon	Whitehorse, Yukon
Rosemary Moodie	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Stan Kutcher	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Tony Loffreda	Shawinigan	Montreal, Que.
Brent Cotter	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.
Hassan Yussuff	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Bernadette Clement	Ontario	Cornwall, Ont.
Jim Quinn	New Brunswick	Saint John, N.B.
Karen Sorensen	Alberta	Banff, Alta.
Amina Gerba	Rigaud	Blainville, Que.
Clément Gignac	Kennebec	Lac Saint-Joseph, Que.
Michèle Audette	De Salaberry	Quebec City, Que.
David M. Arnot	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.
Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Margo Greenwood	British Columbia	Vernon, B.C.
Sharon Burey	Ontario	Windsor, Ont.
Andrew Cardozo	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Rebecca Patterson	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Iris G. Petten	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Jane MacAdam	Prince Edward Island	West St. Peters, P.E.I.
Judy A. White	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. George's, Nfld. & Lab.
Paul J. Prosper	Nova Scotia	Hants County, N.S.
Joan Kingston	New Brunswick	New Maryland, N.B.
John M. McNair	New Brunswick	Grand-Bouctouche, N.B.
Réjean Aucoin	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton, N.S.
Krista Ross	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.
Rodger Cuzner	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton, N.S.
Marnie McBean	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Toni Varone	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Paulette Senior	Ontario	Pickering, Ont.
Mary Robinson	Prince Edward Island	Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Mohammad Al Zaibak	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Manuelle Oudar	La Salle	Quebec City, Que.

SENATORS OF CANADA

ALPHABETICAL LIST

(March 1, 2024)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
The Honourable			
Al Zaibak, Mohammad	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Non-affiliated
Anderson, Dawn	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife, N.W.T.	Progressive Senate Group
Arnot, David M.	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Independent Senators Group
Ataullahjan, Salma	Ontario (Toronto)	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative Party of Canada
Aucoin, Réjean	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Audette, Michèle	De Salaberry	Quebec City, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Batters, Denise	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Conservative Party of Canada
Bellemare, Diane	Alma	Outremont, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Bernard, Wanda Thomas	Nova Scotia (East Preston)	East Preston, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Black, Robert	Ontario	Centre Wellington, Ont.	Canadian Senators Group
Boehm, Peter M.	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Boniface, Gwen	Ontario	Orillia, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Boyer, Yvonne	Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Brazeau, Patrick	Repentigny	Maniwaki, Que.	Non-affiliated
Burey, Sharon	Ontario	Windsor, Ont.	Canadian Senators Group
Busson, Bev	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Cardozo, Andrew	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Progressive Senate Group
Carignan, Claude, P.C.	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Clement, Bernadette	Ontario	Cornwall, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Cordy, Jane	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Cormier, René	New Brunswick	Caraquet, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Cotter, Brent	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Independent Senators Group
Coyle, Mary	Nova Scotia	Antigonish, N.S.	Independent Senators Group
Cuzner, Rodger	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Dagenais, Jean-Guy	Victoria	Blainville, Que.	Canadian Senators Group
Dalphond, Pierre J.	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Dasko, Donna	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Deacon, Colin	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Deacon, Marty	Waterloo Region	Waterloo, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Dean, Tony	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Downe, Percy E.	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.	Canadian Senators Group
Duncan, Pat	Yukon	Whitehorse, Yukon	Independent Senators Group
Forest, Éric	Gulf	Rimouski, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Francis, Brian	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point, P.E.I.	Progressive Senate Group
Gagné, Raymonde, <i>Speaker</i>	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Non-affiliated
Galvez, Rosa	Bedford	Lévis, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Gerba, Amina	Rigaud	Blainville, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Gignac, Clément	Kennebec	Lac Saint-Joseph, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Gold, Marc	Stadacona	Westmount, Que.	Non-affiliated
Greene, Stephen	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Greenwood, Margo	British Columbia	Vernon, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Harder, Peter, P.C.	Ottawa	Manotick, Ont.	Progressive Senate Group
Hartling, Nancy J.	New Brunswick	Riverview, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Housakos, Leo	Wellington	Laval, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Jaffer, Mobina S. B.	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Kingston, Joan	New Brunswick	New Maryland, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Klyne, Marty	Saskatchewan	White City, Sask.	Progressive Senate Group
Kutcher, Stan	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Independent Senators Group
LaBoucane-Benson, Patti	Alberta	Spruce Grove, Alta.	Non-affiliated
Lankin, Frances, P.C.	Ontario	Restoule, Ont.	Non-affiliated
Loffreda, Tony	Shawinegan	Montreal, Que.	Independent Senators Group

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
MacAdam, Jane	Prince Edward Island	West St. Peters, P.E.I.	Independent Senators Group
MacDonald, Michael L.	Cape Breton	Dartmouth, N.S.	Conservative Party of Canada
Manning, Fabian	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
Marshall, Elizabeth	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
Martin, Yonah	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.	Conservative Party of Canada
Massicotte, Paul J.	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.	Independent Senators Group
McBean, Marnie	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Non-affiliated
McCallum, Mary Jane	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Non-affiliated
McNair, John M.	New Brunswick	Grand-Bouctouche, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
McPhedran, Marilou	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Non-affiliated
Mégie, Marie-Françoise	Rougemont	Montreal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Miville-Dechéne, Julie	Inkerman	Mont-Royal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Mockler, Percy	New Brunswick	St. Leonard, N.B.	Conservative Party of Canada
Moncion, Lucie	Ontario	North Bay, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Moodie, Rosemary	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Oh, Victor	Mississauga	Mississauga, Ont.	Conservative Party of Canada
Omidvar, Ratna	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Osler, Flordeliz (Gigi)	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Canadian Senators Group
Oudar, Manuelle	La Salle	Quebec City, Que.	Non-affiliated
Pate, Kim	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Patterson, Rebecca	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Canadian Senators Group
Petitclerc, Chantal	Grandville	Montreal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Petten, Iris G.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Independent Senators Group
Plett, Donald Neil	Landmark	Landmark, Man.	Conservative Party of Canada
Poirier, Rose-May	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.	Conservative Party of Canada
Prosper, Paul J.	Nova Scotia	Hants County, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Quinn, Jim	New Brunswick	Saint John, N.B.	Canadian Senators Group
Ravalia, Mohamed-Iqbal	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate, Nfld. & Lab.	Independent Senators Group
Richards, David	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.	Canadian Senators Group
Ringuette, Pierrette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Robinson, Mary	Prince Edward Island	Charlottetown, P.E.I.	Non-affiliated
Ross, Krista	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.	Canadian Senators Group
Saint-Germain, Raymonde	De la Vallière	Quebec City, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Seidman, Judith G.	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Senior, Paulette	Ontario	Pickering, Ont.	Non-affiliated
Simons, Paula	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Independent Senators Group
Smith, Larry W.	Saurel	Hudson, Que.	Canadian Senators Group
Sorensen, Karen	Alberta	Banff, Alta.	Independent Senators Group
Tannas, Scott	Alberta	High River, Alta.	Canadian Senators Group
Varone, Toni	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Non-affiliated
Verner, Josée, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que.	Canadian Senators Group
Wallin, Pamela	Saskatchewan	Wadena, Sask.	Canadian Senators Group
Wells, David M.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
White, Judy A.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. George's, Nfld. & Lab.	Progressive Senate Group
Woo, Yuen Pau	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Yussuff, Hassan	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group

SENATORS OF CANADA
BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

(March 1, 2024)

ONTARIO—24

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1	Salma Ataullahjan.....Ontario (Toronto)	Toronto
2	Victor Oh.....Mississauga	Mississauga
3	Peter Harder, P.C.....Ottawa	Manotick
4	Frances Lankin, P.C.....Ontario	Restoule
5	Ratna Omidvar.....Ontario	Toronto
6	Kim Pate.....Ontario	Ottawa
7	Tony Dean.....Ontario	Toronto
8	Lucie Moncion.....Ontario	North Bay
9	Gwen Boniface.....Ontario	Orillia
10	Robert Black.....Ontario	Centre Wellington
11	Marty Deacon.....Waterloo Region	Waterloo
12	Yvonne Boyer.....Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford
13	Donna Dasko.....Ontario	Toronto
14	Peter M. Boehm.....Ontario	Ottawa
15	Rosemary Moodie.....Ontario	Toronto
16	Hassan Yussuff.....Ontario	Toronto
17	Bernadette Clement.....Ontario	Cornwall
18	Sharon Burey.....Ontario	Windsor
19	Andrew Cardozo.....Ontario	Ottawa
20	Rebecca Patterson.....Ontario	Ottawa
21	Marnie McBean.....Ontario	Toronto
22	Toni Varone.....Ontario	Toronto
23	Paulette Senior.....Ontario	Pickering
24	Mohammad Al Zaibak.....Ontario	Toronto

SENATORS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

QUEBEC—24

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire
2 Patrick Brazeau	Repentigny	Maniwaki
3 Leo Housakos	Wellington	Laval
4 Claude Carignan, P.C.	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache
5 Judith G. Seidman	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël
6 Larry W. Smith	Saurel	Hudson
7 Josée Verner, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures
8 Jean-Guy Dagenais	Victoria	Blainville
9 Diane Bellemare	Alma	Outremont
10 Chantal Petitclerc	Grandville	Montreal
11 Éric Forest	Gulf	Rimouski
12 Marc Gold	Stadacona	Westmount
13 Marie-Françoise Mégie	Rougemont	Montreal
14 Raymonde Saint-Germain	De la Vallière	Quebec City
15 Rosa Galvez	Bedford	Lévis
16 Pierre J. Dalphond	De Lorimier	Montreal
17 Julie Miville-Dechéne	Inkerman	Mont-Royal
18 Tony Loffreda	Shawinegan	Montreal
19 Amina Gerba	Rigaud	Blainville
20 Clément Gignac	Kennebec	Lac Saint-Joseph
21 Michèle Audette	De Salaberry	Quebec City
22 Manuelle Oudar	La Salle	Quebec City
23
24

SENATORS BY PROVINCE—MARITIME DIVISION

NOVA SCOTIA—10

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth
2 Stephen Greene	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax
3 Michael L. MacDonald	Cape Breton	Dartmouth
4 Wanda Thomas Bernard	Nova Scotia (East Preston)	East Preston
5 Mary Coyle	Nova Scotia	Antigonish
6 Colin Deacon	Nova Scotia	Halifax
7 Stan Kutcher	Nova Scotia	Halifax
8 Paul J. Prosper	Nova Scotia	Hants County
9 Réjean Aucoin	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton
10 Rodger Cuzner	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton

NEW BRUNSWICK—10

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston
2 Percy Mockler	New Brunswick	St. Leonard
3 Rose-May Poirier	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent
4 René Cormier	New Brunswick	Caraquet
5 Nancy J. Hartling	New Brunswick	Riverview
6 David Richards	New Brunswick	Fredericton
7 Jim Quinn	New Brunswick	Saint John
8 Joan Kingston	New Brunswick	New Maryland
9 John M. McNair	New Brunswick	Grand-Bouctouche
10 Krista Ross	New Brunswick	Fredericton

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—4

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown
2 Brian Francis	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point
3 Jane MacAdam	Prince Edward Island	West St. Peters
4 Mary Robinson	Prince Edward Island	Charlottetown

SENATORS BY PROVINCE—WESTERN DIVISION

MANITOBA—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Donald Neil Plett	Landmark	Landmark
2 Raymonde Gagné, <i>Speaker</i>	Manitoba	Winnipeg
3 Marilou McPhedran	Manitoba	Winnipeg
4 Mary Jane McCallum.....	Manitoba	Winnipeg
5 Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler.....	Manitoba	Winnipeg
6		

BRITISH COLUMBIA—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Mobina S. B. Jaffer	British Columbia	North Vancouver
2 Yonah Martin.....	British Columbia	Vancouver
3 Yuen Pau Woo.....	British Columbia	North Vancouver
4 Bev Busson	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region
5 Margo Greenwood	British Columbia	Vernon
6		

SASKATCHEWAN—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Pamela Wallin.....	Saskatchewan	Wadena
2 Denise Batters	Saskatchewan	Regina
3 Marty Klyne	Saskatchewan	White City
4 Brent Cotter	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon
5 David M. Arnot.....	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon
6		

ALBERTA—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Scott Tannas.....	Alberta.....	High River
2 Patti LaBoucane-Benson.....	Alberta.....	Spruce Grove
3 Paula Simons	Alberta.....	Edmonton
4 Karen Sorensen	Alberta.....	Banff
5		
6		

SENATORS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Elizabeth Marshall	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise
2 Fabian Manning	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's
3 David M. Wells	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's
4 Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia.....	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate
5 Iris G. Petten	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's
6 Judy A. White	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. George's

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Dawn Anderson	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife

NUNAVUT—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1		

YUKON—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Pat Duncan.....	Yukon.....	Whitehorse

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