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Wednesday, March 20, 2024

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,  
Speaker

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## THE SENATE

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

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

Prayers.

### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

#### CHILD RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**Hon. Margo Greenwood:** Honourable senators, I have spent the majority of my career focused on the health and well-being of children. As a mother of three sons and a grandmother to one beautiful granddaughter, I am personally vested in their health and well-being and that of all children.

Children are a gift to us. They hold our past, our present and our future. But the reality is that children hold fewer rights and protections than adults. Unlike you and I in this chamber, they do not have a voice at the table when decisions impacting their lives are being made. Laws and policies that fail to consider the rights of children and their well-being negatively impacts all Canadians today and for generations to come.

In 1991, Canada ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was the first international convention to integrate civil and political rights with economic, social and cultural rights. The Honourable Landon Pearson, the “Children’s Senator,” played a pivotal role for Canada in the development of the convention. I had the privilege to co-author General Comment No. 11 on Indigenous children and their rights under the Convention.

The convention is a living document that has reshaped our nation’s understanding of how our laws and policies impact children and how their basic needs are rights that must be protected and provided. But, sadly, children are still overlooked in government decision making. That’s why advocates and organizations such as UNICEF Canada have called for governments to introduce a child rights impact assessment in their decision-making processes. This assessment is grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and would ensure that impacts on children are considered before decisions are made that affect their lives.

In July of last year, the Department of Justice released a process to help ensure that children and adolescents are not overlooked in legislation and policy decisions. However, the use of this assessment tool is not mandated and is optional for departments. Countries such as Austria, South Korea, New Zealand and Scotland have adopted child impact assessments in law or in their strategic plans. As senators, we can ensure a child rights impact assessment tool is used consistently and robustly as intended and ensure decisions taken in this place are good for all children.

Honourable senators, if the Government of Canada can mandate gender equality, privacy and environmental protection in its decision-making processes, then it is time for us to include a child rights impact assessment. Colleagues, I would be happy to work with you to make this a reality. Thank you. *Hiy Hiy.*

### MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, in 2016, Senator Harder and I had the privilege of attending the fifteenth anniversary celebration of the Mennonite Centre in Molochansk, Ukraine. Established in the summer of 2000, the centre has provided humanitarian aid to individuals residing in former Mennonite villages in southern Ukraine for almost 25 years now.

After Russia’s escalation of its war with Ukraine in February 2022, the centre served as a temporary bomb shelter for citizens and provided critical humanitarian assistance such as food, supplies and medical aid. It was a lifeline for the local residents and surrounding communities, continuing to operate even after the Russians invaded and took over Molochansk. In September of 2022, the Mennonite Centre building — a school built by Mennonites — was seized by the Russian authorities. In spite of this, the centre continues its work thanks to organizations such as the Mennonite Central Committee, known as MCC.

Since the escalation of the war in 2022, MCC has raised \$20 million for emergency relief response projects in Ukraine — \$17 million of this has been spent directly on program costs, locally purchased goods and material resources, shipped to support more than 150,000 people. As of last month, MCC had shipped 30 containers to Ukraine, including 64,000 comforters — many of which were made by members of churches right in my small community of Landmark — 72,000 hygiene kits, 25,000 relief kits and 125,000 pounds of canned meat. They have seen over 300,000 meals served to the hungry, 130,000 food packages distributed and almost 4,000 people provided with temporary shelter. It has been one of MCC’s most significant disaster responses and is only possible because of generous donors and committed local partners.

Since Putin’s escalation of this brutal war, we have seen a lot of grandstanding by the Liberal government, but little in the way of substantive assistance. They are very good at photo ops, symbolic gestures and empty promises, but they fail when it comes to providing Ukrainians with what they need to win the battle of their lives. The best the government can do is introduce legislation, which does nothing to help Ukrainians.

Honourable senators, while the government likes to grandstand and pound its chest about all they have promised, MCC is on the ground risking their lives and giving sacrificially of their time, effort and finances in order to provide substantive, effective relief to Ukrainians who are in dire need. I welcome you to join me in saluting the Mennonite Central Committee for its tremendous work and significant efforts to help Ukraine in its hour of need. Thank you.

[Translation]

### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

**Hon. Réjean Aucoin:** Honourable senators, the International Day of La Francophonie is a special opportunity to celebrate the linguistic and cultural diversity of French-speaking communities around the world.

On this day when we celebrate La Francophonie, it is vital to remember the importance of recognizing, protecting and preserving the French language, especially in regions where it is the minority language.

French is one of Canada's official languages and a pillar of our national identity. However, francophone minority communities face unique challenges ranging from assimilation to difficulty accessing government services.

• (1410)

It is our duty to support these francophone communities and to take meaningful action to preserve and promote the French language.

That involves establishing inclusive language policies and making investments in education and culture.

I think it's a fitting time to highlight the impact that the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney had on francophones in this country.

He not only modernized the Official Languages Act, but he also stood up for francophones across the country. He was a friend to the Acadians and a staunch defender of francophones in minority communities.

Today, I want to celebrate a shining example of resilience and determination: the Acadians in my hometown of Chéticamp, Nova Scotia. The fact that we have been able to preserve the French language in Chéticamp is nothing short of remarkable, especially since the village is located in an English-speaking province, where francophones and Acadians account for just over 3% of the population.

The Acadians of Chéticamp, like those of other Acadian villages in Nova Scotia, have had to overcome a lot of adversity to preserve their language and identity.

Chéticamp is a gem of a village nestled on the shores of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, but it is more than just a village. It is a bastion of the French language, a place where ancestral traditions are cherished and passed down from generation to generation, defying the unrelenting forces of assimilation.

During the week of March 3 to 8, 2024, the people of Chéticamp celebrated *Mi-Carême*, the midpoint of Lent, a tradition that has all but disappeared from the rest of Acadia and Quebec.

On this International Day of La Francophonie, let us pay tribute to the Acadians of Chéticamp and to all francophone communities that passionately defend their language and culture.

Let us commit to protecting and preserving the beautiful French language, not just in Canada, but around the world.

Thank you and *vive La Francophonie!*

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

[English]

### VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Angela Arnone. 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!

### ANTI-SEMITISM

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Honourable senators, this morning, mainstream newspaper *La Presse* exercised appalling judgment by publishing an anti-Semitic cartoon depicting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a manner reminiscent of those published in 1930s Germany about Jewish people. The fact that *La Presse* permitted the publication of this image, even though it clearly draws upon anti-Semitic tropes, such as “blood libel” — the idea peddled by Jew-haters that they murdered Christians in order to use their blood in rituals — is extraordinarily offensive to hundreds of thousands of Jewish Canadians and millions of Jews around the world. It is an insult to the memory of the 6 million Jews who died in the Holocaust.

In fact, Nosferatu, the vampiric inspiration for this cartoon, was also a source of inspiration for Julius Streicher, the chief editor of Hitler's anti-Semitic newspaper *Der Stürmer*. Dozens of caricatures of vampire-like Jews appeared in the pages of that publication, stoking hatred toward Jews in Germany that would eventually lead to the Holocaust.

Meanwhile, *La Presse* is following in their footsteps. The fact that this anti-Semitic trope was published in the first place reveals either gross ignorance or blatant anti-Semitism within the ranks of the media in this country. It also demonstrates the validation that many Canadians feel in expressing these views as a result of the actions of politicians in this country. The most recent example is the motion that was adopted on Monday night in other place, where a moral equivalency was once again drawn between Israel and the terrorist group Hamas.

It is even worse that this was published during a time when anti-Semitism is on the rise in our country.

It is possible to criticize the Prime Minister of Israel without resorting to these disgusting caricatures. This, however, will only intensify the levels of hate that Jews have experienced in Canada since the October 7 massacre. I urge *La Presse* to apologize to the Jewish community in Canada for publishing this cartoon, and to pledge to never again succumb to such a moral failing.

Moreover, I urge all politicians to stop playing cynical diaspora politics and vote banking in this country. When politicians delegitimize Israel's right to defend itself against a genocidal terrorist organization like Hamas, thereby rewarding Hamas for the horrific attack on October 7 and the ongoing captivity of innocent Israelis — as they did in the other place on Monday night — they are justifying the narrative that anti-Semitism is okay as long as it is cloaked in anti-Zionism.

Like I said, banking votes and playing diaspora politics to prioritize one's own political fortunes over the safety and security of Jewish Canadians leads to those Canadians being increasingly targeted, because politicians have given others the green light to do so.

Thank you, colleagues. "Never again" should mean never again.

#### THE HONOURABLE NANCY J. HARTLING

**Hon. Wanda Thomas Bernard:** Honourable senators, it is my pleasure to rise today — on this Algonquin Anishinaabe territory — for my annual National Social Work Month statement. I pay tribute to all social workers, but I have a special tribute I want to pay today to my fellow social worker, Senator Nancy Hartling.

I first met Senator Hartling in November 2016 at a television interview regarding our appointments to the Senate. We soon realized how much we have in common. We were both born in Nova Scotia, and we were both social workers for over 30 years. We both had a sister named Valerie who had transitioned far too soon. We also share the most rewarding job in life: being a grandmother. And we are both social workers moonlighting as senators.

During our time in this place, Senator Hartling and I have collaborated on a number of issues, most notably our collective work on the Human Rights Committee. We have also worked together to make social work more visible by being co-sponsors of the Social Work on the Hill events that we have held since 2020 on site and virtually.

This year's theme for National Social Work Month is "Seven Points of Unity: Many Possibilities" in commemoration of the Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles.

Senator Hartling's unwavering commitment to social work and social justice is reflected in these seven shared values. I see them in action. Senator Hartling founded and ran the organization Support to Single Parents Inc., supporting the unique needs of single parents in New Brunswick for over 34 years. Senator Hartling was a founding member of St. James Court Inc., which offered housing for single parents.

I admire Senator Hartling's valuable contributions in supporting and advocating for these families — not some of the time, and not just during National Social Work Month, but all of the time.

Senator Hartling, thank you for reminding us every day of the many possibilities for the future of social work in Canada, and how we can help move the dial through our work here in the Senate. *Asante*. Thank you.

**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 Doug and Linda Wray. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Simons.

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

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

#### DOUG AND LINDA WRAY

**Hon. Paula Simons:** Honourable senators, in 1998, Doug and Linda Wray — who ranched and farmed in Irricana, Alberta, about 60 kilometres northeast of Calgary — committed their own quiet act of revolution: They took 1,000 acres of fields that had been used for growing crops and turned the land back to pasture.

• (1420)

In 2024, when buzzwords like "regenerative agriculture" are all the rage, what the Wrays did might not seem radical. But in 1998 — more than a quarter century ago — the Wrays were early adopters of a style of agriculture designed to enrich the soil with carbon and nitrogen and replenish cropland that was losing its fertility.

I'm pretty sure some of their neighbours thought they were crazy. Why take land that grew profitable crops and return it to forage? But the Wrays stuck with it. They planted grasses, clovers and legumes. They adopted new rotational grazing strategies. They fed their soil, and, in turn, the soil fed their cattle. Then the cattle, through what might be politely referred to as "nutrient cycling," fed the soil in turn.

The Wrays didn't just enrich their land. They enriched their community. Doug served on the Alberta Forage Council and was one of the founders of the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association and its chair from 2010 to 2015. In 2016, he won the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association Leadership Award. This past summer, Doug and Linda, together with Doug's nephew Tim and his wife, Joanne, won both the Alberta Beef Producers' Environmental Stewardship Award and the 2023 National Environmental Stewardship Award from the Canadian Cattle Association.

Shortly after those awards were announced, the Wray Ranch hosted members of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry as part of our in-depth study of soil health. We saw first-hand how the Wrays' forage strategies were allowing them to thrive even in the midst of drought. Their environmental stewardship and mentorship weren't just serving as an ethical example of how to manage prairie grasslands, reduce the need for irrigation and fertilizer and sequester carbon.

Doug and Tim, uncle and nephew, have preserved a ranch that has been in their family since 1909 and turned it into a flourishing fourth-generation operation in the face of climate change.

The Wrays showed the visiting senators tremendous hospitality this past August, and I'm delighted that we in the Senate can return the favour today, as Doug and Linda are in town this week to receive their national award — and in our gallery this afternoon.

Please join me in congratulating them on their achievement and thanking them for their moral and practical leadership and love of the land they tend.

**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 Ms. Mona Abuamara, Chief Representative of the Palestinian General Delegation, and Mr. Mohammad Younis, Delegation Second Secretary. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator McPhedran.

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

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

[*Translation*]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### THE ESTIMATES, 2023-24

MAIN ESTIMATES—SIXTEENTH REPORT OF NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TABLED

**Hon. Percy Mockler:** On a personal note, I want to say that I am very pleased and honoured to rise in this illustrious chamber to present my final report as senator and Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance.

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the sixteenth report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, entitled *Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024*.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Your personal note is duly noted.

[ Senator Simons ]

## L'ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

BUREAU MEETING AND ANNUAL SESSION, JULY 4-8, 2023—  
REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Éric Forest:** On a personal note of my own, I'd just like to acknowledge Senator Mockler's unifying leadership as Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance. I want to thank him for his generous contribution. Thank you very much, Senator Mockler.

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

**Senator Forest:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Bureau Meeting and Forty-eighth Annual Session, held in Tbilisi, Georgia, from July 4 to 8, 2023.

SESSION OF THE AMERICA REGIONAL ASSEMBLY,  
SEPTEMBER 5-7, 2023—REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Éric Forest:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Thirty-eighth Session of the America Regional Assembly, held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, United States of America, from September 5 to 7, 2023.

PARLIAMENTARY MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS,  
SEPTEMBER 20, 2023—REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Éric Forest:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Parliamentary Mission to the United Nations, held in New York, New York, United States of America, on September 20, 2023.

LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP FOR FRANCOPHONE WOMEN  
PARLIAMENTARIANS, SEPTEMBER 25-29, 2023—  
REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Éric Forest:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Leadership Workshop for Francophone Women Parliamentarians, held in Bucharest, Romania, from September 25 to 29, 2023.

WORKING GROUP ON REFORMING THE APF CONSTITUTION,  
NOVEMBER 23-24, 2023—REPORT TABLED

**Hon. Éric Forest:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie concerning the Working Group on Reforming the APF Constitution, held in Geneva, Switzerland, from November 23 to 24, 2023.

[English]

## NATIONAL FINANCE

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO EXTEND DATE OF FINAL REPORT ON STUDY OF MATTERS RELATING TO FEDERAL ESTIMATES GENERALLY AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

**Hon. Percy Mockler:** 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 Tuesday, March 29, 2022, the date for the final report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance in relation to its study on matters relating to federal estimates generally and other financial matters, as described in rule 12-7(7), be extended from April 14, 2024, to December 31, 2025.

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## QUESTION PERIOD

### GLOBAL AFFAIRS

#### CONFLICT IN GAZA STRIP

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Leader, yesterday, Minister Joly told the *Toronto Star* that the NDP-Trudeau government will stop all arms exports to Israel. Israel's Ambassador to Canada said in response that this will "... actually weaken our possibility to defend ourselves against terrorism of Hamas. . . ."

Leader, this is a disgraceful betrayal by the Trudeau government of a fellow democracy — a long-standing friend and ally — during one of its darkest hours. Prime Minister Trudeau turned his back on Israel to appease his NDP coalition partners, didn't he? That's his main motivation, leader, isn't it?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** No, it is not. I know that the actions and the decision in the House on Friday caused considerable consternation within my community. Believe me — I know.

I know that the Ambassador to Israel has expressed his strong disagreement with aspects of that. The fact remains, however, that a proper reading of the resolution that was passed reaffirms Canada's long-standing position with regard to this dispute, one that is tearing communities apart and pitting them against each other. I am hoping — as we all are — that peace will be restored as soon as possible.

**Senator Plett:** I am indeed sorry, leader, that you — and MP Housefather — are taking the brunt of the hurt here because of an incompetent prime minister.

• (1430)

Prime Minister Trudeau has no moral compass, and we see that time and again.

In taking this action against Israel, he is showing everyone that he puts his own political self-interests above all else. He will turn on a friend in a time of need. He is willing to bring embarrassment on Canada by diminishing our reputation. Is it worth betraying Canada's principles to hang on to power?

**Senator Gold:** That is not a proper characterization of what transpired over the days leading up to the vote in the House of Commons. Again, I know all senators will join me in bemoaning the violence that took place on October 7 and beyond, and hope and pray for peace.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### ANTI-SEMITISM

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** In order to have peace, you have to stand on the right side of history.

Senator Gold, after months of the Trudeau government trying to play all sides in the ongoing war between Israel and terrorist Hamas, it culminated on Monday night with a motion in the House of Commons that sends a terrible message to our friends and allies. Moreover, it signals to terrorist Hamas that they will be rewarded for future attacks like October 7 and the ongoing captivity of innocent people. Perhaps what is most egregious in the message is it was sent to people right here in Canada. We have seen the result of that with this morning's publication of the worst kind of anti-Semitic trope in *La Presse* — the likes of which we haven't seen since the 1930s, and which I never thought I would see here in our country.

Senator Gold, does your government take any responsibility for the level of anti-Semitism that is being validated and unleashed in this country by creating an equivocation that somehow terrorist Hamas and democratic Israel are on the same footing?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** That is not the position of this government, and it is deeply disturbing for those allegations to be made. The hurt within the Jewish community and the pro-Israel community is deep and powerful. This government is a steadfast ally of Israel, and has been for decades and decades. Regardless of the attempts by your party, which go back decades, to use it as a wedge issue for electoral purposes, Canada's friendship and deep relationships with Israel — which have endured despite changes of government and the rhetoric — shall remain.

**Senator Housakos:** The only one engaging in partisanship is your government. Senator Gold, moments ago, your own Minister of Canadian Heritage was asked about this despicable cartoon in the media scrum. Not only did she refuse to condemn it, but she actually said it was a matter of bad timing — amazing. Sorry, is there a good time for this kind of anti-Semitism, Senator Gold, in the eyes of your government? Is there a good time?

Will the minister apologize for this, and will your government take responsibility for contributing to the kind of Jew-hatred going on in Canada?

**Senator Gold:** I was shocked when I saw the cartoon by Chapleau this morning. It's the first paper that I read in the morning. My understanding is that it has been taken down and justly condemned, as you did in this chamber.

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

### PROCUREMENT PROCESS

**Hon. Mary Coyle:** Senator Gold, in a recently published *The Globe and Mail* article, Tabatha Bull, President and CEO of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, said that the ArriveCAN controversy should be the catalyst for changing the Indigenous business program. The Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business is a set-aside program meant to support Indigenous businesses and workers. Any inappropriate uses of this program harm reconciliation efforts and take opportunities away from Indigenous businesses which are the targets of the program.

Senator Gold, what will the Government of Canada do to build better safeguards into the Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business program in order to reduce future abuses of the program no matter what comes of the recent ArriveCAN controversy?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question. I understand, as you would know, that Indigenous Services Canada maintains a directory of Indigenous organizations, which supports the Government of Canada in achieving its goal of 5% procurement from Indigenous-led businesses.

When a business registers with the Indigenous Business Directory, they must demonstrate to Indigenous Services Canada that it is both 51% Indigenous-owned and controlled.

I understand that, at the request of Public Services and Procurement Canada, post-award audits are under way, and a work plan for the audits is being implemented. The government is also currently in the midst of consulting on the transformative Indigenous procurement strategy, which also includes a review of the Indigenous Business Directory. The government will keep engaging with Indigenous partners on improvements and transformative approaches to Indigenous procurement.

**Senator Coyle:** Thank you for that answer. You have mentioned the consultation process that is going on to review the program.

Could you tell us what is being done in terms of consulting with Indigenous businesses, Indigenous communities and Indigenous organizations in that sort of evaluation, as well as any kind of updating that will be done on this important program?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for the question. In the brief time that I have, let me just list some of the groups with whom our consultations are ongoing: representatives from modern treaty rights holders; representatives from national Indigenous

organizations; representatives from Indigenous organizations with technical expertise in economic development; interested Indigenous leaders, or their delegates or representatives; and, of course, Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurs.

## FINANCE

### INCOME TAX

**Hon. Tony Loffreda:** My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, it's tax season. Tax experts will be called upon in the coming weeks to help Canadians file their taxes. But we also know that up to 12% of Canadians currently do not file their tax returns — which is why, since 2018, the Canada Revenue Agency, or CRA, has been delivering the SimpleFile service, allowing Canadians to auto-file their tax returns over the phone.

Budget 2023 announced that the service will be expanding so that 2 million Canadians will now be eligible. In 2022, only 53,000 tax returns were filed using this service.

Five years into the program, what assessment has been made by the CRA on the success of SimpleFile? Do we have any idea of the cost of running this program? What investments will be needed as it expands in the coming years?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. Though I don't have specific information about what audits or reviews are currently under way, I can tell you, senator, that already — in the period between February 5, 2024, to March 18, 2024 — over 18,000 people have filed their taxes using SimpleFile by phone. It's an important program, and one that we hope Canadians will take full advantage of. It helps especially lower-income individuals access the benefits and the credits to which they would be entitled by filing in a more simplified manner.

**Senator Loffreda:** Thank you for that answer. What is the agency's most recent estimation of the number of Canadians who don't file their taxes? Is there a breakdown by province? Do we know how many would be eligible for these benefits? The issue of non-tax filers has been raised often at our National Finance Committee, especially with respect to lower-income Canadians who might be missing out on valuable benefits that they are entitled to, such as the Canada Child Benefit or the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

**Senator Gold:** The only information I have — which is not, perhaps, as up to date as I would hope — is that about 12% of Canadians do not file their tax returns. I'm not aware of any updated estimates, and I don't have any information, unfortunately, with regard to the breakdown by province.



[Translation]

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

### ELVER FISHERY

**Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais:** Leader, Justin Trudeau's Liberals are killing the fishing industry in eastern Quebec and the Maritimes. The situation facing families and entrepreneurs is disastrous. By suddenly closing the elver fishery over safety concerns, the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard is only encouraging poaching and the organized criminals who continue to fish with impunity in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Why isn't your Prime Minister calling on the RCMP to intervene, instead of allowing these easily identifiable criminals to do as they please?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question and for drawing attention to a challenge facing many communities as a result of illegal fishery activities. Although I have no information about specific initiatives or investigations in progress, I will certainly pass on your perfectly legitimate concerns to the minister.

**Senator Dagenais:** It's common knowledge that elver poachers ship their products by truck from the Maritimes to Toronto and by air to China. Apart from Liberal complacency towards these criminals, why hasn't the Canada Border Services Agency taken action at the Toronto airport, where it could easily intercept shipments of illegally caught elvers? What is the Minister of Public Safety doing?

• (1440)

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for the question.

As I say all too often, I don't accept the premise of your question, although I do wholeheartedly agree on the importance of the issue you've raised.

That being said, it's always a challenge, in major centres like the airport and the port in Montreal, to investigate each and every item that leaves the country, but once again, I will add that to my list of questions for the minister.

[English]

## CROWN-INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

### INDIGENOUS HOUSING

**Hon. Brian Francis:** Senator Gold, yesterday, the Auditor General of Canada tabled a report on housing in Indigenous communities which found that Indigenous Services Canada, or ISC, and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, or CMHC, have made little progress over the past two decades and are not likely to close the housing gap by 2030. Another report on the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program found that Public Safety

Canada has poorly managed the program and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has not been able to fully staff positions funded through it.

Will the federal government finally allocate the necessary funding and resources to address what Ms. Hogan has described as "... a distressing and persistent pattern of failure" on federal programs intended to support Indigenous people?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. Both of the reports painted a disturbing picture of the progress that still must be made — though some has been made — on those files. The government has accepted all of the recommendations of the Auditor General with regard to her report on housing and a report on policing.

With regard to the financial dimensions, the issues are quite different, senator. There is no question that the gap that has persisted for decades — if not centuries — between adequate housing in Indigenous communities and elsewhere has now been stabilized thanks to significant initiatives by this government, which now offers the hope that, with more efforts and resources, that gap will be narrowed.

The issue with policing is more complicated engaging, as we know, the provinces and the territories.

[Translation]

## JUSTICE

### JUDICIAL REVIEW

**Hon. Claude Carignan:** My question is for the Leader of the Government.

In the last few days, we've learned that the then justice minister, Mr. Lametti, ordered a new trial in Justice Delisle's case, saying he had reason to believe that a miscarriage of justice had occurred. However, we also learned that Canada's Criminal Conviction Review Group had reached the opposite conclusion, in other words, that there was no justification for ordering a new trial and the expert panel found no evidence that a miscarriage of justice had occurred. How could the minister have had reasonable grounds to conclude that a miscarriage of justice had occurred in this situation?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question. Based on the information I have, the then justice minister had access not only to the report you mentioned, but also to the opinions of two retired judges. Although I can't disclose all the information, I have been advised that it was because of the opinions of the two retired judges, notwithstanding the report, that Minister Lametti made that decision.

**Senator Carignan:** This decision is both public and a matter of public interest. This is about trust in the justice system.

Will the government undertake to disclose these opinions from the two eminent legal experts? Before you claim solicitor-client privilege, given that the government is the holder of that privilege, will you waive the government's privilege with respect to these legal opinions?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for the question. The decision is in the hands of the current minister and, according to my information, he does not intend to disclose or publicly share these two legal opinions, which were requested by his predecessor.

[*English*]

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### INTEGRATED TERRORISM ASSESSMENT CENTRE

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Senator Gold, on March 2, anti-Israel protests in Toronto led to the cancellation of an event host by the Prime Minister to honour Italy's prime minister. Two G7 leaders and they cannot meet safely in Canada.

Open displays of hate are taking place on our streets on a regular basis. Terrible acts of violence and intimidation continue to target Jewish schools, synagogues and cultural events.

Last fall, the Trudeau government announced \$10 million for an expanded security infrastructure program to help places of worship and cultural centres enhance their safety.

Leader, how much of the money announced last year has been spent to date? That is, not promised, leader, but spent?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** I don't know exactly how much has been spent, Senator Plett, but thank you for your question. It is a great preoccupation in my community, and a great sense of distress, that for many years — in fact, more than a decade — we have had to have security at our places of worship and at our schools.

My own community of Montreal has already announced the amounts that it has received and how it is being invested. I cannot speak for other communities, but I know that the support that the government is giving to the institutions of the Jewish community is well appreciated and is being utilized quickly and with dispatch for the security of our community.

**Senator Plett:** I was asking for the entire country and not just for your community, so my question is still left unanswered.

The Trudeau government is good at making promises and not following through on them. Ukraine is a prime example. In the days following the October 7 terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas, Conservatives asked the Trudeau government to update Canadians on whether the threat assessment of the Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre has been re-evaluated. Leader, this was a reasonable request. Why haven't Canadians been given that information five months later?

[ Senator Carignan ]

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. I'm glad that you continue to focus attention on the important challenges that Ukraine is facing.

Time does not permit me to list all of the actual assistance that has been provided — military assistance to Ukraine, numbers of bullets and ammunition. However, I have the information in my hand. If you continue to ask me questions about it, I'll be happy to start going through the list for your benefit.

## HEALTH

### COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

**Hon. Stan Kutcher:** Senator Gold, a panel of experts chaired by Sir Mark Walport from the U.K. began a review into a limited component of the government's COVID-19 pandemic response. We were told that the panel's report would be available by the first quarter of 2024. Well, that's now.

Would you please tell us when we can expect this report to be made available to us? Could you please provide this chamber with a list of witnesses that the panel has heard from to date?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your questions, senator. I don't have that information at hand, but I will endeavour to inform myself as quickly as I can.

**Senator Kutcher:** Senator Gold, the mandate for this panel was very limited. It was definitely not a comprehensive review of our government's response to the pandemic.

Can you please tell us why this government did not initiate a comprehensive inquiry into the way Canada responded to the pandemic similarly to the reviews carried out in Australia and by the British Medical Association in the United Kingdom? Can we expect the government to follow these examples? If so, when? If not, why not?

**Senator Gold:** Well, thank you for your questions. I'll add them to the questions that I will address to the minister.

• (1450)

## CANADIAN HERITAGE

### MINORITY LANGUAGE CHILD CARE

**Hon. Iris G. Petten:** My question is to the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, on this International Francophonie Day, I want to ask you about francophone daycares in Newfoundland and Labrador. According to a Radio-Canada article, due to a lack of infrastructure and qualified French-speaking personnel, there is very limited access to French-speaking daycares.

The result is that many families are forced to put their children in English-speaking daycares. Since the government is so rightfully proud of its \$10-a-day child care agreements with the various provinces, what is your response to the families who would prefer to send their children to francophone daycares but are unable to do so?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question, and for underlining and highlighting International Francophonie Day. Access to quality child care is important for all children and families, including — of course — those who are members of official language minority communities. That's why the federal government has made sure that in all of its bilateral agreements with provinces and territories outside of Quebec, the provinces are committed to protecting and respecting the rights of official language minority communities in that regard. Ultimately, colleagues, as you know, the implementation of these agreements in the area of child care is the responsibility of the provincial governments, and the federal government will continue to work with them — Newfoundland and Labrador and others — to ensure that these agreements are successful.

**Senator Petten:** Senator Gold, 5% of the population in Newfoundland and Labrador can conduct a conversation in French. In 2021, 0.7% of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians spoke French at home regularly. In order to maintain or even improve the statistic, what is the government going to do to improve access to French resources in the province?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for the question. One of the things the government does is support minority language community organizations within the province, and under the Action Plan for Official Languages, the government has invested \$1.6 million in eight organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador, and that represents approximately a 33% funding increase since 2018. It will continue to do what it can to support those communities.

## GLOBAL AFFAIRS

### ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Senator Gold, yesterday, Minister Joly announced that Canada would no longer be exporting weapons to our ally Israel. She pointed to the fact that this was something included in the non-binding motion adopted on Monday in the other place, referring to that motion as “. . . a real thing.” I find it beyond troubling that your Minister of Foreign Affairs is now literally writing foreign policy on the back of a napkin based on an opposition day motion, not from the official opposition, not from a third party, but from your coalition fourth-party partners.

It strikes me as odd that she is so quick to implement something in that motion when there was a motion adopted by Parliament seven years ago — calling on the government to designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC, as a terrorist entity — that has yet to be implemented.

It's amazing how a terrorist group gets preferential treatment while a democracy gets none. For the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is the IRGC motion a fake one and the motion on Monday a real one?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Senator Housakos, as you know, since January 8, the government has not approved any new arms export permits to Israel, and, indeed, what the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced was simply an extension or affirmation of that position that was taken some months ago.

Again, with regard to the listing of that regime as a terrorist entity, as I have said on many occasions, there have been a very robust series of sanctions imposed on many institutions and individuals, and the issue of further sanctions or listings continues to be a matter of active review.

**Senator Housakos:** Thank you for confirming what your government is doing and where they stand. However, the question still remains.

Senator Gold, it's clear that the IRGC is funding Hamas and helped them plan and execute the October 7 attack on Israel. So why would your government move so swiftly to suspend arms to our ally Israel, which, it says, has the right to defend itself, but in five years has taken no action against Israel and Canada's enemy, the IRGC? That sounds like your government is picking sides, Senator Gold, and it's not picking the right side of history.

**Senator Gold:** The government is not picking sides, senator. It remains focused on doing the right thing by way of its sanctions regime and will continue to do so.

## FINANCE

### FEDERAL DEFICIT

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Government leader, in a recent report, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that he expects the NDP-Trudeau government's deficit will be \$46.8 billion for the current fiscal year. As well, a report released in February from Desjardins Securities estimated that the deficit for the current fiscal year will reach \$50 billion. Desjardins said higher government spending is “. . . almost singularly responsible for the erosion of the federal fiscal forecast. . . .” Leader, just a few short months ago, Minister Freeland's Fall Economic Statement said the deficit would be \$40 billion. Does your government still stand by that figure?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** I don't have any current information about changes to the government's projections. I am, though — as we all are — looking forward to the upcoming budget, which will contain measures to address the challenges that Canadians continue to face with regard to affordability, cost of food, housing and so on.

It is encouraging that — as the government projected — the rate of inflation continues to fall. It is encouraging that Canada is projected to have strong economic growth. As I mentioned yesterday, it is projected to have the strongest in the G7 in the year to come. All of that — though positive — does not change the fact that Canadians still struggle, and this government will continue to do what it can to help Canadians through difficult times.

**Senator Martin:** When recently asked about the Trudeau government's upcoming budget, the Governor of the Bank of Canada said:

If there are large spending increases ... that could start getting in the way of getting inflation back down to target on the timeline we've laid out.

Leader, will the Trudeau government pay any heed to this warning? Will your government fix the budget and rein in its wasteful spending?

**Senator Gold:** The government does not accept the premise that its spending has been wasteful. Its spending has been to help Canadians through difficult times, as it did through the pandemic and continues to do through this transition. I'm not in a position to — and you would not expect me to be able to — comment on what may or may not be in the budget. But I have every confidence that the budget will reflect a practical, prudent and responsible approach to the economic circumstances the country faces.

[*Translation*]

#### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I would ask you to make sure that your cellphones are on silent mode, please.

[*English*]

#### DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answers to the following oral questions:

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on November 30, 2021, by the Honourable Senator Patterson (*Nunavut*), concerning arctic sovereignty.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 12, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Francis, concerning the Canada Emergency Response Benefit — Employment and Social Development Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 12, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Francis, concerning the Canada Emergency Response Benefit — Canada Revenue Agency.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on October 4, 2022, by the Honourable Senator McPhedran, concerning Canada-China relations.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on October 6, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Martin, concerning the retention and recruitment of members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on October 20, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Martin, concerning arctic sovereignty.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on October 25, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Boisvenu, concerning reserve troops.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on February 7, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Plett, concerning illegal immigration — Public Safety Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on February 7, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Plett, concerning illegal immigration — Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on February 14, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Simons, concerning the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on February 14, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Plett, concerning the Roxham Road border crossing.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on February 14, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Martin, concerning drug-impaired driving.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 21, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Marshall, concerning military procurement.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 28, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Carignan, P.C., concerning the Royal Canadian Mounted Police — Public Services and Procurement Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 28, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Carignan, P.C., concerning the Royal Canadian Mounted Police — Public Safety Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 30, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Housakos, concerning money laundering.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on April 18, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Coyle, concerning the report of the Mass Casualty Commission.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on April 19, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Bernard, concerning the report of the Mass Casualty Commission.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on April 19, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Boisvenu, concerning the Portapique shooting — support for victims' families.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 2, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Woo, concerning anti-Asian racism.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 10, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Simons, concerning digital privacy.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 8, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Dupuis, concerning equality in health research.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 8, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Francis, concerning the renaming of Confederation Bridge.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 13, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Patterson (*Nunavut*), concerning aviation service standards.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 14, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Downe, concerning the Canadian Armed Forces — retention of members.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 14, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Pate, concerning the National Immigration Detention Framework.

• (1500)

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

### ARCTIC SOVEREIGNTY

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Dennis Glen Patterson on November 30, 2021)*

In August 2021, the Minister of National Defence and the United States Secretary of Defense signed a Joint Statement on NORAD Modernization that outlined priority areas for investment. This includes the replacement of the North Warning System (NWS) with more advanced technological solutions, including next-generation Over-the-Horizon Radar (OTHR).

In June 2022, National Defence announced a plan to modernize Canada's NORAD capabilities, supported by an investment of \$38.6 billion over twenty years (accrual). This includes new technological solutions such as the Arctic and Polar OTHR, which will significantly improve early warning and tracking of potential threats to North America. Arctic OTHR is a top priority for National Defence, with an aim to reach Initial Operational Capability in 2028.

The NWS will be maintained at least until new capabilities are in place. To achieve this, in 2022 the Government of Canada awarded a contract for the operation and maintenance of the NWS to Nasittuq Corporation, which is an Inuit-owned company. This contract is for an initial period of seven years and is valued at \$592 million (\$527 million before taxes). The contract also includes four two-year optional extension periods for a total estimated value of \$1.3 billion (\$1.1 billion before taxes).

## FINANCE

### CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE BENEFIT

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Brian Francis on May 12, 2022)*

Of the 3.6 million Employment Insurance-Emergency Response Benefit (EI-ERB) claims established in 2020, 58,947 (1.63%) were issued to Indigenous people residing on reservations\*. Of these, 35,447 resided in the Western Territories Region (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut); 13,559 resided in Ontario; 3,796 resided in Quebec; and 6,145 resided in the Atlantic Region (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland).

Of the 1.7 million overpayments related to the advance payment, 23,566 were established on claims where the clients resided on Indigenous reservations. In the Western Territories Region, there were 13,761 overpayments; 6,412 in Ontario; 1,346 in Quebec; and 2,047 in the Atlantic Region.

Payment arrangement parameters have been expanded to provide more flexibility based on ability to pay. If individuals cannot pay in full now, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) will work with them on a payment arrangement. The CRA will work with individuals to determine the payment amount and the length of the payment arrangement based on their ability to pay.

There are no interest or penalties on the COVID emergency benefits.

\* Postal codes linked with Indigenous reservations were used to obtain the EI-ERB claim volumes. The results are not representative of all Indigenous populations.

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Brian Francis on May 12, 2022)*

### CANADA REVENUE AGENCY (CRA)

The aim of the education letter issued by the CRA to Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) recipients was to explain what qualified as earned income rather than a determination of eligibility. The letters advised recipients that the CRA did not have the required information to confirm eligibility and to encourage recipients who were likely ineligible to repay benefit payments by December 31, 2020 to minimize potential impacts to their 2020 income tax and benefit returns.

The CRA recognized and continues to recognize that that for some Canadians, repaying their individual COVID-19 benefit debt could and still can result in financial hardship. For this reason, payment arrangement parameters have been expanded to give Canadians flexibility to repay based on their financial situation. The CRA works with impacted individuals on a case-by-case basis. In general, there are no penalties and interest imposed on individual benefit

overpayment debts. In cases where a person does not cooperate or communicate with the CRA but can clearly repay their debt, the CRA may take enforcement action to recover the amounts owed.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

### CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Marilou McPhedran on October 4, 2022)*

#### Department of Finance Canada

Canada has repeatedly expressed its grave concern with the ongoing gross and systemic human rights violations occurring in Xinjiang affecting Uyghurs and other Muslim ethnic minorities.

In Canada, most pension funds are provincially regulated. Federal private pension legislation applies to approximately 7% of private pensions in Canada.

Federal private pension standards legislation requires pension administrators to invest assets consistent with their fiduciary duty to the plan members and in a reasonable and prudent manner. As part of the requirement, it is understood that plan administrators must consider all relevant factors, including environmental, social and governance factors (ESG) when making investment decisions. Plan administrators are also required to follow laws related to investments, including their obligations linked to international sanctions, and comply with their plan's governing documents and statements of investment policies and procedures, which can contain further guidance on how a plan's assets are to be invested.

The Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) was a founding signatory and abides by the United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment, which provide guidance for incorporating ESG factors, including human rights, into investment practices. CPPIB regularly discloses its investments in Canadian and foreign public equities, private equity relationships, and real estate holdings.

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

### RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT OF MEMBERS

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Yonah Martin on October 6, 2022)*

National Defence is committed to evolving our culture, growing our Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and ensuring that they reflect Canada's diversity.

We are improving the recruiting experience by digitizing, streamlining, and redesigning the process to ensure that applications are processed efficiently. We have also implemented screening measures during the pre- and post-recruitment phases, such as new and refined screening and interview questions.

To attract eligible candidates, we are recognizing past experience during the recruiting process, which will accelerate military career paths. Permanent residents are also welcome to apply to the CAF as they represent an important, skilled, and diverse workforce in Canada.

Additionally, last fall, we launched a new retention strategy to better support our members by responding to their emerging and changing needs. We also continue to advance meaningful culture evolution and deliver substantive changes across the institution, including the improvement of character-based leadership assessments and the development of talent spotting plans for women and other equity seeking groups.

Through these efforts, the CAF will become a first-rate career choice that will attract talented Canadians for years to come, ensuring that the Forces is optimized to meet security needs at home and abroad.

### ARCTIC SOVEREIGNTY

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Yonah Martin on October 20, 2022)*

Joint and combined exercises are a key aspect of meeting and maintaining the Canadian Armed Forces' (CAF) operational readiness. Arctic exercises are of particular importance as they strengthen the CAF's situational awareness, information sharing, and operational capabilities in a key and unique strategic region.

Every year, the CAF must balance training opportunities with departmental priorities, deliberately sequencing activities years in advance in order to meet specific readiness objectives and operational commitments. While the CAF did not participate in the 2022 iteration of North Atlantic Treaty Association's (NATO) nuclear deterrence exercise, STEADFAST NOON, Canada engaged in a number of joint exercises across North America and the Arctic last winter, to enhance the ability of the CAF to operate effectively alongside Allied forces. This includes Exercise COLD RESPONSE, a Norwegian-led series of cold weather training drills, and Exercise ARCTIC EDGE, a joint exercise designed to improve the Arctic warfighting capabilities of the US and Canadian militaries.

National Defence remains committed to working with our Allies and ensuring that the CAF is prepared to defend Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic.

## RESERVE TROOPS

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu on October 25, 2022)*

Protecting the health and safety of all Canadian Armed Forces personnel is paramount. National Defence accepted all the Ombudsman's recommendations to improve the well-being and fair treatment of Canadian Rangers and the Reserve Force, and implementation is ongoing.

We are continuously exploring ways to improve Reservists' and Canadian Rangers' understanding of the various compensation options available to them through regular outreach, training, and digital resources.

National Defence is in the process of updating its various policies to address the discrepancy between the supports and benefits available to Reserve Force members (including the Primary Reserve and Canadian Rangers) and those available to the Regular Force where the demands of service are similar. This effort also includes clarifying Reservists and Canadian Rangers' access to healthcare by eliminating ambiguity and inconsistent language in the policy.

National Defence recognizes more work needs to be done, and we will continue to regularly meet with the Office of the Ombudsman to provide updates on the full implementation of their recommendations.

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

## ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Donald Neil Plett on February 7, 2023)*

**Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)**

Since its implementation in 2004, the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) has been an important tool for Canada and the United States in working together to ensure the proper processing of asylum claims.

The STCA was signed in recognition that both countries share a mutual responsibility to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. As per the STCA, individuals should seek asylum in the first safe country they enter, unless they qualify for an exemption or exception.

Modernizing the Agreement continues to be a priority for the government and we are working with our U.S. partners on this and other issues of border cooperation.

Effective March 25, 2023, as part of the government's efforts to address increased levels of irregular migration, the STCA was expanded to include the entire Canada-U.S. land border, including internal waterways. It is illegal to enter between Ports of Entry and all asylum seekers should cross the border at designated Ports of Entry.

We continue to work closely with Canadian and U.S. partners to ensure the lawful, safe and humane treatment of asylum seekers while maintaining the security of our borders.

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Donald Neil Plett on February 7, 2023)*

**Insofar as Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is concerned:**

On February 6, 2023, IRCC officials became aware of the media reports that asylum seekers arriving in New York City from the Southern United States (U.S.) were being provided bus tickets, allegedly by government officials or National Guard members, to locations close to the Canadian border.

As of February 7, 2023, the date of this question, IRCC officials had not made any direct contact with U.S. officials on the matter but are working through officials at the Canadian Embassy in Washington to follow up including obtaining clarity on facts. At a press conference that same day, the New York City Mayor publicly clarified they are not seeking to send individuals to Canada.

IRCC officials continue to work with U.S. federal officials at the Department of Homeland Security to address irregular migration within the North American perimeter, as well as across the hemisphere more broadly.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

## ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Paula Simons on February 14, 2023)*

**Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)**

The RCMP respects and protects the right to peaceful demonstrations as guaranteed under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Moreover, journalists play a role that is essential and fundamental to democracy in informing the public, challenging the status quo and fostering dialogue on matters of public interest. The RCMP employs a measured approach that involves proactive engagement, communication, and facilitation measures by police to support lawful and peaceful protest in an environment safe for protesters, members of the public, and stakeholders, while seeking to protect the fundamental freedoms of peaceful assembly and expression.

The RCMP remains committed to ensuring that the media has access to observe and report on peaceful, lawful and safe demonstrations. The RCMP will continue to prioritize the preservation of community and officer safety, as well as maintaining peace and order.

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP****BORDER CROSSINGS AT ROXHAM ROAD**

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Donald Neil Plett on February 14, 2023)*

**Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)**

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We continue to work closely with Canadian and U.S. partners to ensure the lawful, safe and humane treatment of asylum seekers while maintaining the security of our borders.

**PUBLIC SAFETY****DRUG-IMPAIRED DRIVING**

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Yonah Martin on February 14, 2023)*

**Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)**

In March 2022, the RCMP resumed Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training for all police forces across Canada. In 2022 there were 317 police officers certified to become Drug Recognition Experts in Canada. This includes officers from the RCMP, Ontario Provincial Police, *Surete du Quebec* and many Municipal policing agencies. In addition to this the RCMP along with policing partners from across Canada trained the first class of Military Police Officers to become Drug Recognition Experts later that year in September of 2022. There are currently 128 policing agencies in Canada with at least one certified DRE.

In fiscal year 2023-2024 the RCMP has 26 DRE certification events planned. Each class can train approximately 16-20 students.

**NATIONAL DEFENCE****MILITARY PROCUREMENT**

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Elizabeth Marshall on March 21, 2023)*

Defence procurement is a whole-of-government effort. That is why National Defence is working with key partners at Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), Defence Construction Canada (DCC), and Shared Services Canada (SSC) to improve the speed at which it delivers capabilities and to consider more innovative approaches to procurement.

For example, the PSPC-led Risk-based Approach to Contract Approval for low-risk defence projects has removed several check points throughout the procurement process, improving timeliness for the delivery of these types of projects and capabilities. National Defence has applied this approach to some procurement projects already, such as the Heavy Weight Torpedo Upgrade, Naval Engineering Test Establishment, and Minor Warships and Auxiliary Vessels.

National Defence must also work collaboratively with industry partners to ensure alignment, find realistic solutions and deliver on schedule. Through the Defence Capability Blueprint National Defence is ensuring transparency of upcoming procurements, offering industry the opportunity to properly plan and compete for defence procurement opportunities.

**PUBLIC SAFETY****ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE**

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Claude Carignan on March 28, 2023)*

**Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC):**

PSPC awarded contracts to Neptune in good faith, based on supplier information signed by an authorized official. Neither of the two individuals named in "Enquête" appeared on any of the contracts awarded by PSPC to Neptune.

After reviewing Neptune's file, PSPC suspended its security clearance effective March 24, 2023, as a precautionary measure to avoid awarding new contracts with security requirements to the organization while PSPC conducted a comprehensive assessment of its security file. Suspending an organization's security clearance does not preclude the award of new contracts that have no security requirements, though such contracts are highly unlikely.



PSPC informed all departments of the suspension and advised against new Neptune contracts. However, the authority to terminate or continue with existing contracts rests with government departments who awarded them.

PSPC allowed Neptune to respond before issuing a final decision. After assessing Neptune's response, received in April 2023, PSPC's Contract Security Program revoked Neptune's security clearance effective August 16, 2023, for a period of three years, starting on the date of the suspension, March 24, 2023.

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Claude Carignan on March 28, 2023)*

### **Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)**

The RCMP did not award a contract to Neptune Security Inc. There was an administrative error in the proactive disclosure of a call-up issued to Neptune Security Inc. through a Regional Master Standing Offer established by Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC). The call-up was never awarded to this vendor, no work was done, nor was any payment made. The RCMP is providing a correction to Radio-Canada to confirm that the RCMP has had no contracts with Neptune Security Inc.

## **FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

### **MONEY LAUNDERING**

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Leo Housakos on March 30, 2023)*

### **Department of Finance**

The government continually reviews Canada's Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorist Financing (AML/ATF) Regime to ensure that it is responsive to new and evolving risks.

Since 2019, the government has made investments of over \$319.9 million and a number of legislative and regulatory changes to enhance the effectiveness of the Regime.

Budget 2023 proposes legislative amendments to strengthen the investigative, enforcement, and information sharing tools of Canada's AML/ATF Regime. These amendments will complement the government's Budget 2022 commitment to establish a new Canada Financial Crimes Agency to become the lead enforcement agency against financial crime.

Budget 2023 also proposes a number of legislative changes that would provide additional tools to address national security risks in the financial system, including risks from foreign interference.

Through the Russia Elites, Oligarchs and Proxies Task Force, Canada is working with its allies to crack down on sanctions evasion, including through the use of third-party enablers.

To support corporate transparency, the government has introduced legislative amendments to implement a public beneficial ownership registry of federal corporations through Bill C-42.

Finally, in June 2023 the government launched a public consultation on potential AML/ATF policy measures, some of which may be considered for future legislative and regulatory amendments.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **REPORT OF THE MASS CASUALTY COMMISSION**

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Mary Coyle on April 18, 2023)*

### **Public Safety Canada**

With respect to recommendations V13 and V14 in the final report of the Mass Casualty Commission, which focus on gender-based violence, it is important to note that in November 2022 the federal government launched the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (GBV NAP). This builds on the 2017 federal GBV strategy and seeks to create a Canada free of GBV and to support victims, survivors and their families.

The GBV NAP recognizes that GBV is one of the most pervasive, deadly and deeply rooted human rights violations and that ending GBV is everyone's responsibility. It is a complex issue that requires cross-sectoral approaches, with responses from education, health, justice, and social service sectors. Working across orders of government, with victims and survivors, Indigenous partners, direct service providers, experts, researchers, advocates, and the private sector is essential.

Ensuring the accessibility of GBV supports and services through sustainable operational/core funding is a key element of the GBV NAP under Pillar 1: Support for victims, survivors and their families.

In support of the GBV NAP, the Public Health Agency of Canada funds programming that delivers and rigorously evaluates health promotion interventions aimed at preventing gender-based violence, and supporting the health of survivors.

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Wanda Thomas Bernard on April 19, 2023)*

### **Public Safety Canada (PS)**

Responding to recommendation C.13 in the Mass Casualty Commission final report, that the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia jointly fund a program to address the public health emergency in Colchester, Cumberland, and Hants counties, on April 28, 2023, the Government of

Canada committed an initial investment of \$9 million over two years, alongside Nova Scotia's investment of the same amount, to address unmet mental health needs in these communities. This combined investment of \$18 million will bolster mental health, grief and bereavement supports for those affected in Colchester, Cumberland and Hants counties.

Canada's contribution will support Nova Scotia's grief and bereavement model, in addition to working with community partners to ensure that appropriate mental health supports are available in the community. It will also support training and resources to help service providers recognize and respond safely to grief and trauma.

#### PORTAPIQUE SHOOTING—SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS' FAMILIES

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu on April 19, 2023)*

##### **Public Safety Canada (PS)**

As recommended in the Mass Casualty Commission's final report, the Government of Canada is taking action to support the mental health needs of communities most affected by the mass casualty event. On April 28, 2023, the Government of Canada committed an initial investment of \$9 million over two years, alongside Nova Scotia's investment of the same amount, to address unmet mental health needs in the communities. This combined investment of \$18 million will bolster mental health, grief and bereavement supports for those affected in Colchester, Cumberland and Hants counties.

Canada's contribution will support Nova Scotia's grief and bereavement model, in addition to working with community partners to ensure that appropriate mental health supports are available in the community. It will also support training and resources to help service providers recognize and respond safely to grief and trauma.

#### ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Yuen Pau Woo on May 2, 2023)*

##### **Public Safety Canada (PS)**

The security of Canadians is of utmost importance to the Government of Canada, and we remain committed to protecting all communities, including Asian Canadian communities, from discrimination and racism. As you are aware, the challenges of eliminating all forms of hate and bias is complex, however, the Government of Canada is taking the necessary steps to address Anti-Asian discrimination and racism through various initiatives, including measures to renew Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy, as well as the development of a National Action Plan on Combatting Hate.

The Government is mindful of the disturbing rise of anti-Chinese and anti-Asian sentiment in Canada. This has been carefully considered and informs our national security activities conducted to keep Canadians safe. The Government has and will continue to consult with various Asian, and specifically Chinese, communities across the country on national security issues.

As it pertains to the allegations of overseas police stations, the RCMP took decisive and concrete action to respond to reports of illegal activity. As the RCMP is currently investigating this matter, no further information will be provided at this time.

The Government of Canada will continue to protect our democratic institutions and our citizens.

#### DIGITAL PRIVACY

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Paula Simons on May 10, 2023)*

##### **Public Safety Canada (PS)**

End-to-end encryption strengthens protections against communications being intercepted, credentials being stolen, as well as unauthorized access to networks, accounts and systems. At the same time, it has created challenges for law enforcement and national security agencies in carrying out lawful investigations to protect public safety. In addressing these challenges, however, the Government of Canada has no interest in or intention to weaken encryption. The Government of Canada believes that it is important that encryption remains robust, as it is critical to safeguarding cybersecurity, the digital economy, human rights, privacy and data, including health information of Canadians.

#### HEALTH

##### EQUALITY IN HEALTH RESEARCH

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Renée Dupuis on June 8, 2023)*

##### **Canadian Institutes of Health Research**

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) expects that all research applicants integrate sex and gender into their research design and practices when appropriate, to make health research more rigorous, more reproducible and more applicable to everyone.

In 2010, CIHR introduced mandatory sex and gender-based analysis (SGBA) questions into all grant applications. At the time, fewer than 20% of basic scientists, 25% of health systems researchers, and only one-third of clinical and population health researchers in Canada accounted for sex in their studies. Today, the integration of sex in health

research proposals in Canada exceeds 90% and CIHR is ranked first in the world for appropriate integration of sex, gender and intersectionality in funding policies.

CIHR is unable to table disaggregated data on research funds given that this type of data is not systematically collected in applications for funding. Researchers are responsible for meeting all mandatory conditions for funding, and taking into account sex and gender when appropriate to ensure their results are statistically valid for publication.

## TRANSPORT

### RENAMING CONFEDERATION BRIDGE

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Brian Francis on June 8, 2023)*

#### Transport Canada

The Government of Canada continues to review the motion passed in the Prince Edward Island legislature. At this time there is not a specific timetable for decision.

The Policy on Naming Government of Canada Structures is the applicable policy when considering a change of name to a federal structure. Changes are considered only in exceptional circumstances, and no decision on this front is unilaterally made by any minister alone.

A consultative due diligence process, which includes consultations with local communities, is required to determine whether a name change is supported by Canadians prior to renaming a federal structure.

### AVIATION SERVICE STANDARDS

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Dennis Glen Patterson on June 13, 2023)*

#### Transport Canada

The regulations on flight crew fatigue management, based on the latest science related to fatigue and put in place to ensure Canada's air transportation sector, continue to reflect the highest level of aviation safety. These regulations dealt with important safety concerns identified by the Transportation Safety Board. Influenced by input from industry groups and pilot unions, they were implemented in stages, starting in December 2020 for airlines and December 2022 for air taxi and commuter operations.

Suspending or reverting these regulations will have a negative impact upon aviation safety. Air operators can establish fatigue risk management systems to enhance safety while adhering to fatigue science principles. However, any attempts to revert to previous rules won't be supported, and exemptions risking aviation safety won't be considered. These regulations were put in place to ensure the safety of

Canada's air transportation system, its workers, and its passengers, and rolling them back would not be an acceptable path forward. The Government of Canada is committed to always prioritizing the safety of transportation in Canada and the safety of its workers.

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

### CANADIAN ARMED FORCES—RETENTION OF MEMBERS

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Percy E. Downe on June 14, 2023)*

National Defence recognizes that military service places unique demands on our members and their families, and we are grateful for their sacrifice. Canada's Defence Policy *Strong, Secure, Engaged* calls for enhanced dialogue with federal and provincial partners to improve the coordination of services across Canada to ease the burden of frequent relocation on military families.

We are working closely with our provincial and territorial partners to improve coordination of services across Canada. For example, we launched the Seamless Canada initiative in 2018 to reduce challenges experienced by military families during relocation. This initiative has resulted in improved healthcare access for members' families, including by waiving the 90-day wait period to obtain a health card. In parallel, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, operating under the Non-Public Property framework, launched the Calian Military Family Doctor Network to improve access to quality health care for Canadian Armed Forces families. Since 2015, the program has helped connect over 4,000 military family members (or over 1,800 regular force families) with family physicians. National Defence will continue to work with provinces and territories to ensure military families receive fair and equitable access to public programs and services.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### NATIONAL IMMIGRATION DETENTION FRAMEWORK

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Kim Pate on June 14, 2023)*

#### Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)

Immigration detention is governed by the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. Canada's immigration detention program is based on the principle that detention shall be used only as a measure of last resort, in limited circumstances, where an individual is: a danger to the public; unable to satisfy the officer of their identity or; unlikely to appear for an immigration proceeding.

Since 2016, the CBSA has implemented a detention framework that has changed the way in which the program is managed. As of June 22, 2023, the cumulative effect is that over 97% (12,604) of individuals are enrolled in alternatives to detention, 1.6% (221) are housed in a CBSA-run immigration holding center, and less than 1% (70 in total) are housed in a provincial correctional facility.

Despite CBSA efforts to maximize the ATD program, there are limits to its application in managing individuals who have demonstrated criminal recidivism or violence, making them a safety risk. CBSA will keep working closely with all stakeholders to guarantee that detainees are treated humanely and with dignity while also ensuring public safety. In the interest of maintaining public safety, the CBSA is exploring all practical options to find a long-term, permanent solution for high risk detainees.

#### ANSWERS TO ORDER PAPER QUESTIONS TABLED

##### FINANCE—ADVISORY COUNCIL ON ECONOMIC GROWTH

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 4, dated November 23, 2021, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Advisory Council on Economic Growth.

##### PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE—PRIME MINISTER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 82, dated November 23, 2021, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Prime Minister's autobiography — Privy Council Office.

##### FOREIGN AFFAIRS—PRIME MINISTER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 82, dated November 23, 2021, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Prime Minister's autobiography — Global Affairs Canada.

##### FINANCE—FROZEN BANK ACCOUNTS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 153, dated April 26, 2022, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding frozen bank accounts.

##### LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS— PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 180, dated December 13, 2022, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Privy Council Office.

##### NATIONAL REVENUE—FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CANADIAN MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 193, dated January 31, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding federal funding for Canadian media organizations — Canada Revenue Agency.

##### CANADIAN HERITAGE—FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CANADIAN MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 193, dated January 31, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding federal funding for Canadian media organizations — Canadian Heritage.

##### PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS— IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 203, dated February 2, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding immigration consultants — Canada Border Services Agency.

##### IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP— IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 203, dated February 2, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding immigration consultants — Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

##### CANADIAN HERITAGE—LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 206, dated February 2, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Library and Archives Canada.

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP—ROXHAM ROAD

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 209, dated February 2, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Roxham Road — Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—  
ROXHAM ROAD

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 209, dated February 2, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Roxham Road — Public Safety Canada and Canada Border Services Agency.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—  
ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 211, dated February 16, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—FOREIGN  
INTERFERENCE OR INFLUENCE

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 215, dated March 8, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding foreign interference or influence.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—CANADIAN  
FINANCIAL CRIMES AGENCY

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 224, dated March 30, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Canada Financial Crimes Agency.

## CITIZENS' SERVICES—FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 241, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Firearms Buyback Program — Employment and Social Development Canada.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—  
FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 241, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Firearms Buyback Program — Public Safety Canada.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT—  
FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 241, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Firearms Buyback Program — Public Services and Procurement Canada.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—  
CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 244, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Canada Border Services Agency — Public Safety Canada.

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP—CANADA BORDER  
SERVICES AGENCY

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 244, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Canada Border Services Agency — Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

EMPLOYMENT, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND  
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES—EMPLOYMENT AND  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 245, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Employment and Social Development Canada.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—  
PRIVATE HANDGUN OWNERSHIP

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 256, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding private handgun ownership.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—  
ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 263, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—  
REMEDIATION AGREEMENTS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 264, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding remediation agreements.

PUBLIC SAFETY, DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS—  
CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 268, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Canada Border Services Agency.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—CANADIAN DAIRY COMMISSION

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 282, dated November 2, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Canadian Dairy Commission.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT—  
DEFENCE CONSTRUCTION

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 286, dated February 6, 2024, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Defence Construction Canada.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT—DOWNSVIEW PARK

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 288, dated February 6, 2024, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Downsview Park.

EXPORT PROMOTION, INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT—EXPORT DEVELOPMENT

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 289, dated February 6, 2024, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Export Development Canada.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT—  
NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 301, dated February 6, 2024, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the National Capital Commission.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT—OLD PORT OF  
MONTREAL CORPORATION INC.

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 302, dated February 6, 2024, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Old Port of Montreal Corporation Inc.

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY—STANDARDS COUNCIL

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 305, dated February 6, 2024, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Standards Council of Canada.

• (1510)

POINT OF ORDER

**Hon. Marilou McPhedran:** Your Honour, I wish to rise on a point of order.

As per the definition section within the *Rules of the Senate*, a “point of order” is defined as:

A complaint or question raised by a Senator who believes that the rules, practices or procedures of the Senate have been incorrectly applied or overlooked during the proceedings, either in the chamber or in committee.

I believe this matter certainly falls within that definition. Yesterday, at 6 p.m., our proceedings were interrupted — as is the usual practice — because you, Your Honour, had seen the clock for the evening suspension. The question was put to the chamber as to whether there was agreement to not see the clock. As noted by Senator Moncion when she subsequently rose to address the situation, I said no twice, and yet it was ruled that leave was granted.

This inconsistency was reflected when Senator Dasko, who had the floor at the time, hesitated to continue in her remarks as she certainly appeared to be among those senators who had heard me say, “No.” Your Honour then granted leave and put the question to the chamber for a second time on whether there was agreement not to see the clock. For a second time, I said, “No.” Yet, for a second time, leave was granted and debate continued at that point.

Your Honour, the *Rules of the Senate* are quite clear on this matter. The definition section defines “evening suspension” as:

The interruption of the sitting that normally occurs between 6 and 8 p.m. In some situations provided for in the Rules the suspension does not take place. In other cases, the Senate may decide, with leave, not to suspend over this period, which is often referred to as “not seeing the clock”.

I stress the words “with leave” because they are the crucial point in question. Furthermore, within the definitions section of the *Rules of the Senate*, “leave of the Senate” is defined as:

An agreement of the Senate, without dissent expressed, to take an action involving the suspension of a rule or usual practice without notice.

Your Honour, based on these definitions, our rules are quite clear that any dissent regarding leave, whether singular or collective, results in leave not being granted. As such, leave was not granted at 6 p.m. last night and the Senate should have been recognized as seeing the clock, thus suspending proceedings for the evening suspension time.

Your Honour, I currently share my physical location in the Senate Chamber with more than 20 senators, and while I do not presume to speak for any of my honourable colleagues, it is incontrovertible that several of us on several occasions have raised concerns about not being seen and not being heard when we try to claim our right to speak. It is evident that it can be difficult to hear and see senators who are further from the Speaker’s chair and the table.

Your Honour, I rise today to appeal to your wisdom and authority to provide direction and clarity so that last night’s unfortunate situation can be avoided in the future and so that there can be equal opportunities for all senators to be seen and heard in this chamber. Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

#### SPEAKER’S RULING

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I wish to thank Senator McPhedran for raising this matter. Unfortunately, the chair did not hear any denial of leave to not see the clock both times that guidance was sought from colleagues yesterday. I very much regret that.

In such cases, it would be entirely appropriate for the senator who denied leave, or a colleague who heard the denial, to raise a point of order to draw the chair’s attention to the issue. All senators have a collective responsibility to assist the Speaker in ensuring the proper functioning of the Senate. Such points of order must be raised while the issue is still relevant. In particular, a point of order relating to a procedural matter should be raised promptly and before the matter is decided, which would render any objection to it out of place. In the case at issue, that would have been when the issue of not seeing the clock was before the Senate.

I am sure that, working together, we can avoid such misunderstandings in the future.

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## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 4-13(3), I would like to inform the Senate that as we proceed with Government Business, the Senate will address the items in the following order: Motion No. 162, followed by all remaining items in the order that they appear on the Order Paper.

### THE SENATE

MOTION TO AFFECT SITTINGS ON MARCH 21 AND 22, 2024 ADOPTED

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate),** pursuant to notice of March 19, 2024, moved:

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

3. during the sitting of March 22, 2024:

- (a) if such a bill is read a second time, it be taken into consideration at third reading forthwith;
- (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;
- (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:
  - (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
  - (ii) the Government Representative or the Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative indicates that the receipt of such a message is no longer expected;
- (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
- (e) the Senate only deal with Government Business on that day.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

### CANADA-UKRAINE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION BILL, 2023

NOTICE OF MOTION TO PLACE BILL ON ORDERS OF THE DAY FOR  
THIRD READING ON FEBRUARY 29, 2024, SHOULD IT BE  
REPORTED ON THAT DAY WITHOUT AMENDMENT WITHDRAWN

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable  
Senator Gold, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator  
LaBoucane-Benson:

That, notwithstanding rule 5-5(b), if the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade reports on Bill C-57, An Act to implement the 2023 Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine, without amendment on Thursday, February 29, 2024, the bill be placed on Orders of the Day for third reading later that day, provided that if the committee reports the bill without amendment on that day after the point where the Senate would normally have dealt with the bill at third reading, it either be taken into consideration at third reading forthwith or, if the report is presented while another item is under consideration, it be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading after the end of proceedings for the day on the item under consideration at the time of presentation; and

That the committee's report on the bill may be presented after the end of Routine Proceedings that day without leave being required.

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, pursuant to the rule 5-10(1), I ask for leave of the Senate to withdraw government motion number 157.

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

**Hon Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion withdrawn.)

### THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AFFECT SITTING OF WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 28, 2024, AND AUTHORIZE FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMITTEE TO MEET  
DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE WITHDRAWN

On Motion No. 158 by the Honourable Marc Gold:

That, notwithstanding the order adopted by the Senate on September 21, 2022, the sitting of Wednesday, February 28, 2024, continue beyond 4 p.m., if Government Business is not completed, and adjourn at the earlier of the completion of Government Business or midnight; and



That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to meet after 4 p.m. on that day for the purpose of considering Bill C-57, An Act to implement the 2023 Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine, even though the Senate may then be sitting, with rule 12-18(1) being suspended in relation thereto.

**Hon. Marc Gold:** Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 5-10(2), I ask that the government notice of Motion No. 158 be withdrawn.

(Notice of motion withdrawn.)

• (1520)

[*Translation*]

### CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Boisvenu, seconded by the Honourable Senator Seidman, for the second reading of Bill S-255, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (murder of an intimate partner, one's own child or an intimate partner's child).

**Hon. Bernadette Clement:** Honourable senators, I note this item is at day 15. I am not ready to speak at this time. Therefore, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 4-15(3), I move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Debate adjourned.)

[*English*]

### NATIONAL DIFFUSE MIDLINE GLIOMA AWARENESS DAY BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Martin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Housakos, for the second reading of Bill S-260, An Act respecting National Diffuse Midline Glioma Awareness Day.

**Hon. Tony Loffreda:** Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15, and I'm not ready to speak at this time. Therefore, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 4-15(3), I move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Debate adjourned.)

### CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Salma Ataullahjan** moved second reading of Bill S-267, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (aggravating circumstance — evacuation order or emergency).

She said: Honourable senators, I move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

(On motion of Senator Ataullahjan, debate adjourned.)

### FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Dasko, seconded by the Honourable Senator Coyle, for the second reading of Bill C-252, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (prohibition of food and beverage marketing directed at children).

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill C-252, which will support healthy food environments for children across this country. I'm pleased to indicate that the government is fully supportive of Bill C-252's objectives. I would also like to thank Senator Dasko for sponsoring this bill.

We all know that nutrition plays a critical role in promoting health, and we know that developing healthy eating habits early in life is important in supporting children's growth and development. We also know that poor childhood nutrition harms physical and cognitive development, and is a risk factor for obesity and diet-related chronic disease.

National survey data show that Canadian children have diets high in sodium, sugars and saturated fat. Health Canada's latest scientific evidence review found convincing relationships between increased intakes of these nutrients and their impacts on specific health conditions such as high blood pressure, obesity, type 2 diabetes, dental decay and cardiovascular disease.

Maintaining a healthy diet is one of the most important factors in preventing obesity and diet-related chronic disease. Evidence shows that many factors in our food environment influence our ability to make healthy food choices and follow a healthy eating pattern.

[Translation]

The foods that we have at home and that we find in our schools, grocery stores and restaurants can have a major impact on our choices and make healthy eating a challenge for many of us.

Consequently, restricting children's exposure to advertising for foods that contain excessive amounts of sodium, sugar and saturated fats will make it easier to make healthier food choices for children.

[English]

By supporting Bill C-252, we can help improve the food environment and support better eating habits for our children. This would be an important step toward addressing the national child obesity epidemic and creating healthier food environments.

We all understand the power of advertising, especially when it comes to influencing children's food and beverage choices and consumption. Children are uniquely susceptible to advertising, and those under the age of 13 are particularly susceptible to its influence. Children under the age of 8 do not possess the cognitive abilities to recognize advertising and understand its intent. By the age of 12, most children understand the persuasive intent of advertising, but may still lack the cognitive abilities to fully defend themselves against its influence.

Our children live in an environment where hundreds of millions of dollars are spent each year advertising food and beverages. In 2019, based on an analysis of 57 selected food categories, advertisers spent an estimated \$628.6 million on food advertising in Canada. Studies have shown that the vast majority — over 90% — of food and beverage ads on TV and children's favourite websites were for products that undermine healthy eating. Fast-food restaurants are by far the most frequently advertised food category on television.

There is clear evidence that food advertising has a significant impact on children's food attitudes, preferences, purchase requests and consumption patterns. These impacts often continue into adulthood. Bill C-252 aims to prohibit food advertising of certain foods to children under the age of 13. Colleagues, we have a responsibility to ensure that our children grow up to be healthy and are supported in making healthier food choices.

In June 2021, an updated self-regulatory advertising code was developed by four industry associations. Advertisers were asked to comply with this new code as of July 2023. While this represents a positive step, we must recognize that international and Canadian studies have consistently demonstrated that industry self-regulation has not been effective at reducing children's exposure to certain food advertisements. The enforcement approaches of these self-regulatory codes are generally less effective than statutory restrictions as they do not carry the force of law and lack meaningful consequences for those who do not comply.

[ Senator Gold ]

• (1530)

[Translation]

The commitment to introduce regulatory restrictions on the advertising of certain foods to children is in line with recommendations from global health authorities to combat the marketing of foods to children through government-imposed restrictions. Clearly, we need to take further steps to ensure that all advertisers are subject to the same ban on food advertising to children.

[English]

Bill C-252 has similarities to the former Bill S-228, which was considered during the Forty-second Parliament. At that time, both the other place and the Senate had extensive committee deliberations with stakeholders on the former Bill S-228. Both bills — Bill S-228 and Bill C-252 — share the objective of protecting children from the impacts of food advertising on children's food attitudes, preferences, purchase requests and consumption patterns, and — ultimately — supporting healthy food choices.

Bill C-252 proposes that the prohibition cover advertising primarily directed at persons under 13 years of age. This amendment was also put forward by the other place in 2018, lowering the age limit from under 17 to under 13 to address industry concerns related to their freedom to advertise to adults. Bill C-252 also requires a five-year parliamentary review to assess the effectiveness of the prohibition, with a focus on whether there is an increase in advertising to people 17 years of age and under.

Colleagues, the key difference between the former Bill S-228 and Bill C-252 is the way in which food that is subject to the prohibition is characterized. Bill C-252 no longer refers to “unhealthy food,” which was a key issue previously raised by some stakeholders in Bill S-228. Bill C-252 is very clear in that it aims to address advertising of foods that have more than the prescribed levels of sugar, saturated fat or sodium. In addition, several important amendments were adopted by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health to clarify the prohibition and ensure adequate authorities to develop regulations. One of these key amendments is a change to the prohibition language under proposed section 7.1, which now refers to “. . . prescribed foods that contain more than the prescribed level of sugars, saturated fat or sodium . . .”

Health Canada officials provided some clarification on how this could be operationalized, including a robust regulatory process that will take place to prescribe the types of foods and the levels of sugars, saturated fat and sodium. The committee in the other place heard about the science-based approach that Health Canada would need to undertake to develop a nutrient profile model to determine which foods would be subject to the advertising restrictions. This approach would be based on similar evidence underpinning Canada's Food Guide and informed by best practices from other jurisdictions.

Another amendment introduced a new regulation-making authority, limiting the forms of advertising to which the prohibition applies. This provides the flexibility to take an incremental approach in restricting certain food advertising to children. When looking globally at other examples of efforts restricting food advertising for children, we see that it is not uncommon for countries to target advertising restrictions to areas of particular concern. For example, the United Kingdom is focusing its new food advertising restrictions on television and online advertising.

Bill C-252 also includes a coming-into-force provision, on a day to be fixed by order of the Governor-in-Council, that would ensure that supporting regulations are in place at the same time. This will ensure that Bill C-252 is operable and enforceable when it becomes law. The government will utilize this time to hear from stakeholders during regulatory consultations, which is a critical aspect guaranteed by the regulation-making authorities within the bill.

[Translation]

Understanding and learning from the experiences of other jurisdictions in this area is essential. Since the 1980s, the Quebec government has restricted commercial advertising, in all forms and media, of all goods and services intended for children, with a few exceptions. In contrast, the scope of Bill C-252 and the restrictions it contains are focused on the protection of children's health and concern only the advertising of certain foods directed primarily at children, not all goods and services.

[English]

In conclusion, I believe that Bill C-252 represents a focused and comprehensive approach to addressing the national child obesity epidemic and supporting a healthier food environment for our children. As we move forward, I believe that we have a tremendous opportunity to make a positive impact on promoting healthy food environments and eating habits for our children. By supporting Bill C-252, we can send a strong message to Canadians that the health and well-being of our children are a priority for all of us. I urge that we move this bill to committee as quickly as possible.

Thank you.

**Hon. Yuen Pau Woo:** Senator Gold, will you take a question?

**Senator Gold:** Of course.

**Senator Woo:** You made reference to the food and beverage advertising code developed by industry and said that it was insufficient to meet the goals of this bill. Can you clarify if the shortcoming of that voluntary code is that it is voluntary rather than mandatory, or is it that the provisions of the code itself do not address the objectives of Bill C-252?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. Though the code is a positive step, I believe that its central shortcoming is that it is a self-regulatory framework. I don't have it in front of me, so I don't want to speculate on particular content.

As I recall from the debate on the previous bill, there is no question that the industry standards would be consistent with the objective of promoting healthier choices for children, but I don't know whether they are as focused as Bill C-252 is on the particular products and the saturated fat, sodium and sugars in the food. That is something the committee will have ample opportunity to discover.

**Senator Woo:** You said the voluntary code might address adequately all of the objectives of this bill. Would the government be open to incorporating the voluntary standard into law as a mandatory standard through the mechanism we have, known as "incorporation by reference" — that is to say, taking work done by industry, consumers and other stakeholders, achieving the same goal and incorporating that into our law — so that it respects the work of the stakeholder community?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. Again, this is a private member's bill, as you may know, so I'm not entirely aware of what the government may plan to do beyond expressing its support for this bill. However, again, that is something that can be raised and discussed at committee.

**Hon. Robert Black:** Will Senator Gold take another question? Thank you.

You mentioned the July 1, 2023, implementation of the mandatory code of conduct. It is a mandatory one through the third party that is monitoring that code of conduct for advertising to children. Since it's only been in place for eight months, I have a couple of questions.

Are you aware of how many concerns have been raised by the industry or individuals since that July 1 implementation? Do you believe there is value in giving time to the food and beverage sector to see how their mandatory code of conduct for advertising for children works out before trying something different?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your questions. I know of your ongoing interest in this and related matters.

Again, I believe your questions would be best addressed in committee to stakeholders and officials who are better positioned than I am to provide answers to them.

• (1540)

**Senator Black:** Thank you very much.

Given that the industry has put a lot of work over the last number of years into developing this mandatory code of conduct, will your government work with advertisers and utilize the code while writing the regulations that will ultimately be developed?

**Senator Gold:** As I mentioned in my speech, although it has been a while since the sponsor, Senator Dasko, addressed this, the regulatory process is an important component of this bill, as it is in so many bills. The delay of the coming into force is precisely to provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to participate and provide input into those critical regulations as they are developed.

(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.

**Hon. Yuen Pau Woo:** Honourable senators, I exercise my right of final reply.

**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.)

(At 3:47 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 2 p.m.)

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