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The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, April 16, 2024

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

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):

Honourable senators, I rise today to unequivocally condemn the brazen and unprecedented attacks launched against Israel by the Iranian regime over the weekend.

Approximately 300 missiles, drones and ballistic missiles were launched by Iran and its proxies to target Israel, but Israel, with the help of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, successfully opposed the attack and minimal damage occurred. As a matter of fact, most of the attacks were intercepted outside of Israel's borders.

I welcome the statement made over the weekend by the leaders of the Group of Seven advanced democracies that expressed full solidarity with and support for Israel and its people and reaffirmed our commitment toward its security, in addition to unequivocally condemning, in the strongest terms, Iran's direct and unprecedented attack against Israel.

I strongly believe that the Government of Canada needs to do more. It needs to designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization immediately. We need to act now to protect our people and block the Iranian regime from using our country, Canada, as a location to plan, coordinate and raise funds. There are over 700 agents of the IRGC in Canada who intimidate and attack our fellow citizens.

Colleagues, this is the same regime that supported Hamas's heinous terrorist attacks and the unthinkable atrocities against men, women and children of Israel on October 7, 2023. I, and many of my colleagues here in this chamber, have asked the Government of Canada to ban these terrorists by listing them as a terrorist organization. The Government of Canada needs to demonstrate leadership. It is astonishing that they have not done so yet, even more so in the aftermath of 55 Canadians losing their lives in the attack on Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752.

Regrettably, over the last months and years, there have been many inconsistencies where words and actions don't match up. The House of Commons adopted a motion for the IRGC to be designated a terrorist organization six years ago, colleagues. Nothing was done. A few weeks ago, Prime Minister Trudeau turned his back on Israel by supporting a motion in the House of Commons, cooked up at the last minute by his NDP coalition partners. Furthermore, Minister Joly recently indicated that Canada would stop all arms exports to Israel, weakening Israel's ability to defend itself.

The Trudeau government does not demonstrate the leadership that Canadians want and deserve. The Conservatives believe Israel has a right to defend itself. We believe that you cannot achieve lasting peace in the Middle East by appeasing mullahs in Tehran and their terrorist proxies, including Hamas.

I stand with Israel, colleagues. Conservatives stand with Israel, and I hope every member in this Senate stands with Israel.

[*Translation*]

THE HONOURABLE RÉJEAN AUCOIN, K.C.

CONGRATULATIONS ON RECEIVING THE ORDRE DE LA PLÉIADE

Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais: Honourable senators, I'm very pleased to rise today to draw your attention to an important event in the promotion and preservation of the French language. Having served as a member of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie for many years, I am pleased to congratulate the recipients of the Ordre de la Pléiade, awarded by the Nova Scotia Legislature.

These outstanding individuals were honoured for their significant contributions and commitment to the French language and for their dedication to promoting the values of linguistic and cultural diversity.

The individuals who were awarded this honour at the March 22 ceremony are Chris d'Entremont, Geoff Regan, Denise Comeau-Desautels, Lisette Aucoin-Bourgeois, Lisette Sieberath, Robert Thibault, Lena Metlege Diab, Norbert LeBlanc, Rohini Bannerjee, and, last but not least, our colleague Senator Réjean Aucoin.

Senator Aucoin has been involved in promoting and developing the French language and culture in his Acadian community in Nova Scotia since he was a teenager. As a high school student, he was already working as an advocate on the youth committee and he also served as a youth representative on the board of directors of the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse. He continued to defend and promote the ability to receive services in French in dealing with government departments and especially the justice system at the local, provincial and federal levels.

The achievements of these 10 recipients attest to their unwavering commitment to the francophonie and their determination to make the voice of the francophonie heard within our diverse and multicultural society.

I want to congratulate all of the Ordre de la Pléiade recipients, especially our colleague and friend, Senator Aucoin. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[English]

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

WAYNE QUINN, M.M.M., M.S.M., C.D.

Hon. John M. McNair: Honourable senators, on March 21, 64 individuals received the Governor General's distinguished Meritorious Service Decorations for their exceptional contributions to Canada. The decorations were created by the late Queen Elizabeth II to recognize Canadians for exceptional services rendered to their country, and it is one of the highest honours that a Canadian can receive.

The awards recognize innovation and leadership in a variety of fields, from advocacy initiatives and health care services to research and humanitarian efforts.

One of those 64 recipients is from my province, New Brunswick: Mr. Wayne Quinn was awarded a Meritorious Service Medal for outstanding service in the Canadian Armed Forces. He adds this achievement to an already impressive resumé, which includes the Order of Military Merit and the Canadian Forces' Decoration. Wayne hails from Miramichi and has served with the Canadian Armed Forces as an operations officer since 2007.

As part of his commitment to facilitating easier access to and delivery of services and programs, Mr. Quinn has significantly contributed to the launch of the Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group. He continues to lead, train and mentor service delivery staff across the country in support of Canadian Armed Forces members.

The mission of the transition group is to deliver personalized, professional and standardized services to Canadian Armed Forces members and their families, hopefully to enable a seamless transition to post-military life, with special attention provided to ill and injured individuals and their families, and the families of deceased members.

The transition group is based in Ottawa, with 9 regional transition units and 27 transition centres located across the country. These are intended to be integrated one-stop centres where CAF members and their families are aided with transition, release and various Veterans Affairs services, as well as provided support for mental and physical health for the ill and injured service members and their families as they transition to civilian life after military service.

The transition group employs a humanistic approach in supporting members and families. A key dimension of this approach is to ensure wellness along seven domains of well-being during the transition. Those seven domains of well-being are purpose, finances, health, social integration, life skills, housing and physical environment, and cultural and social environment.

• (1410)

Honourable senators, please join me in congratulating Mr. Quinn on receiving the Meritorious Service Medal for his outstanding achievements in providing service to military members and their families. Thank you.

Hon. Leo Housakos: Honourable senators, while October is Autism Awareness Month in Canada, April is World Autism Acceptance Month. The emphasis on acceptance is an important distinction, especially as we move forward with a national autism framework and strategy in Canada.

Acceptance starts with awareness but goes much deeper. It is not just about knowing or understanding that an individual is neurodivergent but also ensuring these individuals have access to resources to reach their full potential in various aspects of their lives, from childhood to adulthood.

A great example of this is taking place at Giant Steps School in Montreal, where staff work hard to ensure that services provided to youth and adult students are inclusive and respond to their individual needs, while also integrating research and broader support for the community.

Support will look different for every person on the autism spectrum, but improving the quality of life for each and every autistic person in this country will not only benefit the individual and those closest to them but also society as a whole.

I am hopeful that we will soon see something from the government in accordance with the requirements of the law. I can't stress enough the importance of not just kicking the can down the road. It has been more than 15 years since the Senate released its report on the need for a federal framework and strategy entitled *Pay Now or Pay Later: Autism Families in Crisis*.

It has been eight years since the current government promised a strategy on autism and five years since doing so was included in the Minister of Health's mandate letter. It has been two years since the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences published its autism assessment report, commissioned by the Public Health Agency of Canada and providing a comprehensive picture of the needs and realities of autistic people in Canada.

With that, I hope as many of you as possible will join us this afternoon for a round table with the Autism Alliance of Canada, whom some of you know as CASDA. They'll be providing an update on the measures within the Federal Framework on Autism Spectrum Disorder Act. I would also like to invite all of you, colleagues, to a reception at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building this Wednesday at 6 p.m., where you can meet the Autism Alliance of Canada and stakeholders from across the country who would be more than happy to have the sympathetic ear of a parliamentarian on this issue.

I want to thank them all for their great work and wish them a wonderful conference this week in Ottawa, and I thank you, colleagues, for your ongoing support on this very important issue.

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 members of the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Oh.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

THE LATE BENOÎT PELLETIER, C.M.

Hon. Diane Bellemare: Benoît Pelletier was a remarkable man, an outstanding politician and a great educator. He passed away far too young, on March 30, at the age of 64. He had so much to give to enlighten our society and our governments.

He leaves behind a multifaceted legacy as a lawyer, academic, politician and man of principle. In the 1980s, Benoît Pelletier practised law at the federal Department of Justice. He later taught at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law, both before and after his involvement in Quebec politics.

Beyond his academic contributions, Benoît Pelletier was a committed person, concerned with striking a proper balance between individual and collective rights, particularly when it came to protecting the French language and minority rights. His advocacy for legislation on state secularism and on the official and common language are proof of his commitment to Quebec values. He was also a staunch supporter of asymmetrical federalism.

As a member of the Quebec National Assembly from 1998 to 2008, Benoît Pelletier served as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Aboriginal Affairs and the Francophonie as well as Minister Responsible for the Reform of Democratic Institutions. In carrying out his duties, he always exemplified dignity and respect. That ability to be a respectful adversary while demonstrating a capacity for dialogue and consensus is a rare and valuable quality in politics. He was an inspiring example of leadership. That's why his views were important to me.

For all these reasons, it was with great pride and humility that I recognized his contributions when the Senate marked the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the Confederation and awarded medals to outstanding Canadians.

I've had the privilege of speaking with Benoît Pelletier a number of times. For example, last summer, when I was working on the rising interest rates that some provinces were deeply concerned about, I asked him for his opinion on the constitutionality of the Bank of Canada's monetary policy. He was very attentive and intrigued by the question. His gave a thoughtful answer, as did Professor Daniel Turp when I asked the same question. Professor Turp paid tribute to Benoît Pelletier in *Le Devoir*.

With his characteristic intelligence, charm and flair, Benoît Pelletier was a symbol of what the vast majority of Quebecers deeply desire and what humorist Yvon Deschamps summed up as "a strong Quebec within a united Canada."

I caught a glimpse of him at the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney's lying-in-state. I thought I'd have a chance to talk to him one of these days, but now he's gone. It was too soon, and I didn't have time to talk to him or say goodbye. I would like to extend my sincere condolences to his family, his loved ones and his friends.

Thank you.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of participants in the Parliamentary Officers' Study Program.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

THE HONOURABLE PERCY MOCKLER

Hon. Éric Forest: Honourable senators, I was unfortunately away last week when we were marking the retirement of the Honourable Senator Percy Mockler. I wanted to take a moment today to recognize the contribution made by this gentleman of Canadian and New Brunswick politics.

I had the good fortune to work closely with him as soon as I arrived in the Senate, specifically as a member of the National Finance Committee, where I quickly came to appreciate his deep human values, his kindness and his desire to work collegially.

His exemplary leadership has been an inspiration to me and to all of us. In particular, I recall his willingness to listen to different points of view, and to get all stakeholders moving in the same direction to find solutions to the complex challenges facing our country.

Senator Mockler's sensitivity towards Canadians from all walks of life was patently obvious in everything he did to improve their quality of life and defend their fundamental rights. This included, first and foremost, the right to live and thrive in both official languages.

First through his involvement in provincial politics and later as a senator, he has always embodied these moral values of public commitment and service to others.

I took particular note of his persistence in speaking out on behalf of the marginalized and most disadvantaged members of our society, his passion in defending linguistic minorities and his commitment to ensuring that all regions of Canada are able to have every opportunity to grow and prosper.

Senator Mockler's time in this chamber should inspire us all to work collegially to serve the best interests of the country.

It is possible to make progress on the issues that are important to us, while remaining respectful and non-partisan and staying focused on what matters most, and that is the fact that we're all here to build a more respectful, more united and more prosperous Canada.

As Senator Mockler reminded us in his final speech last week, although we belong to different caucuses, the logo on all of our jerseys is the maple leaf.

[We must] work together, because every politician and every parliamentarian must have the same goal: to improve the quality of life of Canadians across the country.

Senator Mockler, it was a privilege to work alongside you, especially on the National Finance Committee, where we will continue to call for transparency, accountability and predictability in our budget appropriations, as you so often reminded us to do.

Senator Mockler, I wish you a healthy, active, well-deserved retirement.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

• (1420)

[English]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Jim Quinn: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 14-1(4), I ask leave of the Senate to table a letter from the Speaker of the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia to the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister, and the Honourable Sean Fraser, P.C., M.P., Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, regarding the resolution adopted by the assembly urging the Parliament of Canada to pass Bill S-273, An Act to declare the Chignecto Isthmus Dykeland System and related works to be for the general advantage of Canada.

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

An Hon. Senator: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: I hear a “no.” Leave is not granted.

Senator Quinn: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 14-1(4), I ask for leave of the Senate to table, in both official languages, an extract from the Journal of the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick regarding a notice of motion urging the Parliament of Canada to pass Bill S-273, An Act to declare the Chignecto Isthmus Dykeland System and related works to be for the general advantage of Canada.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted?

An Hon. Senator: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: I hear a “no.” Leave is not granted.

[Translation]

RULES, PROCEDURES AND THE RIGHTS OF PARLIAMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AMEND THE *RULES OF THE SENATE*

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence, I will move:

That the *Rules of the Senate* be amended:

1. by replacing the words “Leader of the Government” by the words “Leader or Representative of the Government” in rules 2-4(2), 3-6(2), 4-3(1), 4-8(1)(a), 5-7(m), 6-5(1)(b), 12-5(a), 12-23(2) and (3), and 14-1(2);
2. in rules 3-3(1) and (2), 4-2(8)(b), and 7-4(2), by replacing the words “6 p.m.” by the words “7 p.m.” in the marginal notes, as appropriate, and the text of the rules;
3. in rule 4-2(2), by replacing the number 15 by the number 18 in the marginal note and the text of the rule;
4. in rule 4-2(8)(a), by replacing the words “At the request of a whip or the designated representative of a recognized parliamentary group” by the words “At the request of a whip, liaison, or the designated representative of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group”;
5. by:
 - (a) replacing rules 4-9 and 4-10 by the following:

“*Delayed Answers and Written Questions*”

Delayed answers to oral questions

4-9. (1) When responding to an oral question during Question Period, a Senator may indicate that a delayed answer will be provided in writing pursuant to the terms of this rule.

Written questions

4-9. (2) Subject to subsection (5), a Senator may submit a written question to the Government relating to public affairs by sending it in writing to the Clerk if either:

- (a) a written answer is requested; or
- (b) the question seeks statistical information or other information not readily available.

Publication of written questions

4-9. (3) Upon receipt of a written question, the Clerk shall have it published in the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* on the day following receipt and subsequently on the first sitting day of each week until the earlier of the following:

- (a) an answer is tabled;
- (b) a written explanation why an answer has not been provided is tabled;
- (c) the question is withdrawn; or
- (d) the expiration of the 60-day period provided for in this rule for an answer or explanation.

Withdrawal of a written question

4-9. (4) The Senator who submitted a written question may subsequently withdraw it by writing to the Clerk, who shall have a note to that effect included in the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* the next time the question would have been published there.

Limit on number of written questions

4-9. (5) A Senator shall not submit a written question if they already have four such questions that are to be published in the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* under the provisions of subsection (3).

Answer within 60 days

4-9. (6) Within 60 calendar days of the Leader or Representative of the Government, or a Senator who is a minister, indicating that a delayed answer will be provided to an oral question pursuant to the terms of this rule, or of a written question first appearing in the *Order Paper and Notice Paper*, the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government, shall table either the Government's answer to the question or a written explanation why an answer has not been provided.

Tabling

4-9. (7) An answer or explanation to be provided under this rule may be tabled either during Delayed Answers, which shall be called at the end of Question Period, or by being deposited with the Clerk. A copy of any such tabled document shall be provided to the Senator who asked the question, and the delayed answer to an oral question shall be printed in the *Debates of the Senate* of the date the tabling is recorded in the *Journals of the Senate*.

Failure to respond or provide explanation

4-9. (8) If the Government has tabled neither an answer nor an explanation of why an answer has not been provided within the 60-day period provided for under this rule, the absence of an answer shall be deemed referred to the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament for

consideration and report, with this referral being recorded in the *Journals of the Senate* as soon as possible thereafter.”; and

- (b) renumbering current rules 4-11 to 4-16 as rules 4-10 to 4-15;
- 6. in current rule 4-13(3), by replacing the words “such sequence as the Leader or the Deputy Leader of the Government shall determine” by the words “such sequence as the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government shall determine”;
- 7. by replacing rule 6-3(1) by the following:

“Time limits for speakers

6-3. (1) Except as otherwise provided:

Certain Leaders and Facilitators

(a) the Leader or Representative of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of the recognized party or recognized parliamentary group with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs, shall be allowed unlimited time for debate;

Other Leaders and Facilitators

(b) leaders and facilitators, other than those provided for in paragraph (a), shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate;

Sponsor of bill

(c) the sponsor of a bill, if not one of the Senators provided for in paragraph (a), shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading;

Critic of bill

(d) the critic of a bill, if not one of the Senators provided for in paragraph (a), shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading;

Designated Senators

(e) one other Senator designated separately by the leader or facilitator of each recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, except for the recognized party or recognized parliamentary group of the sponsor and critic, shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading; and

Others

(f) other Senators shall speak for no more than 15 minutes in debate.”;

- 8. by replacing rules 7-1(1) and (2) by the following:

“Agreement to allocate time

7-1. (1) At any time during a sitting, the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government may state that they have reached an agreement with the representatives of the recognized parties and the recognized parliamentary groups to allocate a specified number of days or hours either:

(a) for one or more stages of consideration of a government bill, including the committee stage; or

(b) for consideration of another item of Government Business by the Senate or a committee.

Motion on agreement to allocate time

7-1. (2) The Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government may then, without notice, propose a motion based on the agreement.”;

9. by replacing rules 7-2(1) and (2) by the following:

“No agreement to allocate time

7-2. (1) At any time during a sitting, the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government may state that they have failed to reach an agreement with the representatives of the recognized parties and the recognized parliamentary groups to allocate time to conclude an adjourned debate on either:

(a) any stage of consideration of a government bill, including the committee stage; or

(b) another item of Government Business.

Notice of motion to allocate time

7-2. (2) After stating that there is no agreement on time allocation, the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government may give notice of a motion to allocate time for the adjourned debate, including the committee stage of a bill. The motion shall specify the number of days or hours to be allocated.”;

10. by replacing rule 7-3(1)(f) by the following:

“(f) Senators may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes each, provided that the Leader or Representative of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of any other recognized party or recognized parliamentary group may each speak for up to 20 minutes.”;

11. in rule 7-3(2), by deleting the words “at 6 p.m.” and the words “at 8 p.m.”;

12. in rule 7-4(5)(d), by replacing the words “the Government Whip” by the words “the Government Whip or Liaison”;

13. by replacing rules 9-5(1) to (3) by the following:

“(1) The Speaker shall ask the Government Whip or Liaison, the Opposition Whip, and the whips or liaisons of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Government Whip or Liaison, or the Opposition Whip belongs, if there is an agreement on the length of time the bells shall ring. If a whip or liaison is absent, that whip or liaison’s leader or facilitator may designate a Senator to act for this purpose.

(2) The time agreed to shall not be more than 60 minutes.

(3) With leave of the Senate, this agreement on the length of the bells shall constitute an order to sound the bells for that length of time.”;

14. by replacing rule 9-10(1) by the following:

“Deferral of standing vote

9-10. (1) Except as provided in subsection (5) and elsewhere in these Rules, when a standing vote has been requested on a question that is debatable, the Government Whip or Liaison, the Opposition Whip, or the whip or liaison of any of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Government Whip or Liaison, or the Opposition Whip belongs, may defer the vote.”;

15. by replacing rule 9-10(4) by the following:

“Vote deferred to Friday

9-10. (4) Except as otherwise provided, if a vote has been deferred to a Friday:

(a) the Government Whip or Liaison may, at any time during a sitting, further defer the vote to 5:30 p.m. on the next sitting day if it is on an item of Government Business; and

(b) the Government Whip or Liaison, the Opposition Whip, or the whip or liaison of any of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Government Whip or Liaison, or the Opposition Whip belongs, may, at any time during a sitting, further defer the vote to 5:30 p.m. on the next sitting day if it is on an item of Other Business.”;

16. by replacing rule 10-11(2)(a) by the following:

“(a) by the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government, at any time during a sitting; or”;

17. by:

- (a) replacing rule 12-3(3) by the following:

“Ex officio members

12-3. (3) In addition to the membership provided for in subsections (1) and (2), and subject to the provisions of subsection (4), the Leader or Representative of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leaders or facilitators of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs, are ex officio members of all committees except the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, the Standing Committee on Audit and Oversight, and the joint committees. For the purposes of this provision, in case of absence, the Leader or Representative of the Government is replaced by the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition is replaced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of any other recognized party or recognized parliamentary group is replaced by that Senator’s deputy leader or deputy facilitator.

Ex officio members voting

12-3. (4) Of the ex officio members of committees provided for in subsection (3), only the Leader or Representative of the Government, and the Leader of the Opposition, or, in their absence, their respective deputies, shall have the right to vote.”; and

- (b) renumbering current rule 12-3(4) as rule 12-3(5);

18. by replacing rule 12-8(2) by the following:

“Service fee proposal

12-8. (2) When the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government tables a service fee proposal, it is deemed referred to the standing or special committee designated by them following consultations with the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of any other recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, or the designate of such a leader or facilitator.”;

19. by replacing rule 12-18(2) by the following:

“Meetings on days the Senate is adjourned

12-18. (2) Except as provided in subsection (3) and elsewhere in these Rules, a Senate committee may meet:

(a) when the Senate is adjourned for more than a day but less than a week, provided that notice was given to the members of the committee one day before the Senate adjourned;

(b) on a Monday the Senate does not sit that precedes a Tuesday on which the Senate is scheduled to sit; or

(c) during other periods the Senate is adjourned and that are not covered by the above provisions, provided that the meeting was either:

(i) by order of the Senate, or

(ii) with the agreement, in response to a request from the chair and deputy chair, of a majority of the following Senators, or their designates: the Leader or Representative of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leaders or facilitators of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs.”;

20. by replacing rule 12-26(1) by the following:

“Appointment of committee

12-26. (1) As soon as practicable at the beginning of each session, the Leader or Representative of the Government shall move a motion, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of the recognized party or recognized parliamentary group with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs, on the membership of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators. This motion shall be deemed adopted without debate or vote, and a similar motion shall be moved for any substitutions in the membership of the committee.”;

21. in rule 14-1(1), by replacing the words “Leader or Deputy Leader of the Government” by the words “Leader or Representative of the Government, or Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government”;

22. in rule 16-1(8), by replacing the words “Leader or Deputy Leader of the Government” by the words “Leader or Representative of the Government, or Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government”, both times they appear; and

23. in Appendix I:

- (a) in the definition of “Critic of a bill”, by replacing the words “Leader or Deputy Leader of the Government” by the words “Leader or Representative of the Government, or Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government”;
- (b) by replacing the definition of “Deputy Leader of the Government” by the following:

“Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government

The Senator who acts as the second to the Leader or Representative of the Government and who is normally responsible for the management of Government business on the floor of the Senate. The Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy is also generally responsible for negotiating the daily agenda of business with the Opposition and other recognized parties and recognized parliamentary groups. In the absence of the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy, the Government Leader or Government Representative may designate another Senator to perform the role. The full title is “Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate” or “Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate”. (*Leader adjoint ou coordonnateur législatif du gouvernement*);

- (c) in the definition of “Evening suspension”, by replacing the words “between 6 and 8 p.m.” by the words “between 7 and 8 p.m.”;
- (d) in the definition of “Government Business”, by replacing the words “Leader of the Government or the Deputy Leader” by the words “Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government”;
- (e) by replacing the definition of “Government Leader” by the following:

“Government Leader

See “Leader or Representative of the Government”. (*Leader du gouvernement*);

- (f) by replacing the definition of “Government Whip” by the following:

“Government Whip or Liaison

The Senator responsible for ensuring the presence of an adequate number of Senators of the Government party in the Senate for purposes such as quorum and the taking of votes, and to whom the Leader or Representative of the Government normally delegates responsibility for managing the substitution of Government members on committees as appropriate. The Government Whip or Liaison may be responsible for outreach on Government Business in the Senate. (*Whip ou agent de liaison du gouvernement*);

- (g) by replacing the definition of “Leader of the Government, or Government Leader” by the following:

“Leader or Representative of the Government

The Senator who acts as the head of the Senators belonging to the Government party, or who is appointed by the Government to represent the Government in the Senate without affiliation to a Government party. In modern practice, the Leader or Representative of the Government is normally sworn in as a member of the King’s Privy Council for Canada and can be a member of Cabinet. The full title is “Leader of the Government in the Senate” or “Government Representative in the Senate”. (*Leader ou représentant du gouvernement*);

- (h) by replacing the definition of “Ordinary procedure for determining the duration of bells” by the following:

“Ordinary procedure for determining duration of bells

The Speaker asks the Government Whip or Liaison, the Opposition Whip, and the whips or liaisons of the three largest recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Government Whip or Liaison, or the Opposition Whip belongs, if there is an agreement on the length of time, not to exceed 60 minutes, the bells shall ring. With leave of the Senate, this agreement constitutes an order to sound the bells for the agreed length of time, but in the absence of either agreement or leave, the bells ring for 60 minutes. In some cases provided for in the Rules, this procedure is not followed, with the bells ringing for shorter periods of time. (*Procédure ordinaire pour déterminer la durée de la sonnerie*);

- (i) in the definition of “Public bill”, under “Bill”, by replacing the words “(introduced by a Cabinet Minister or in a Minister’s name) or a non-Government bill (one introduced by a Senator who is not a Cabinet Minister)” by the words “(introduced by a Cabinet Minister, in a Minister’s name, or by or on behalf of the Leader or Representative of the Government if that Senator is not a minister) or a non-Government bill (one that is not a Government bill)”;
- (j) by replacing the definition of “Senator who is a minister” by the following:

“Senator who is a minister

A Senator who is a member of the Cabinet. The Leader or Representative of the Government is generally sworn in as a member of the King’s Privy Council for Canada and may be a member of Cabinet. (*Sénateur-ministre*);

- (k) in the definition of “Sponsor of a bill”, by replacing the words “the sponsor will typically be a government member” by the words “the sponsor is designated by the Leader or Representative of the Government”;
- (l) by adding the following new definitions in alphabetical order:
- (i) **“Deputy Leader or Deputy Facilitator**
The Senator who acts as the second to the leader or facilitator of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs. (*Leader adjoint ou facilitateur adjoint*);
- (ii) **“Government Liaison**
See “Government Whip or Liaison”. (*Agent de liaison du gouvernement*);
- (iii) **“Government Representative**
See “Leader or Representative of the Government”. (*Représentant du gouvernement*);
- (iv) **“Leader of the Government**
See “Leader or Representative of the Government”. (*Leader du gouvernement*);
- (v) **“Legislative Deputy of the Government**
See “Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government”. (*Coordonateur législatif du gouvernement*); and
- (vi) **“Representative of the Government**
See “Leader or Representative of the Government”. (*Représentant du gouvernement*);

That all cross references and lists of exceptions in the Rules be updated as required by these changes, but otherwise remain unchanged;

That, in relation to the amendments to current rules 4-9 and 4-10, provided for in point 5 above:

1. new rule 4-9(5) not apply to any written question submitted before the adoption of this motion, so that only written questions submitted after the adoption of this motion are counted as if subject to that provision;
2. the provisions of the new rules have effect from the time of the adoption of this motion in relation to questions arising from that time forward, subject to point 3 below; and
3. the provisions of the new rules relating to the 60-day period for answering written questions, tabling, and a failure to respond or provide an explanation take effect, in relation to written questions submitted before the adoption of this motion, on the date that is six months after the adoption of this motion as if that were the date on which these questions were submitted, provided that

if the current session ends before the expiration of this six month period, these elements of the new rules take effect on the last day of the current session; and

That, within 30 days that the Senate sits after the adoption of this motion, the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators present a report to the Senate proposing changes to the *Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators* to take account of the amendments to rule 12-26(1) provided for in point 20 above.

• (1440)

[English]

CANADIAN SUSTAINABLE JOBS BILL

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-50, An Act respecting accountability, transparency and engagement to support the creation of sustainable jobs for workers and economic growth in a net-zero economy.

(Bill read first time.)

[Translation]

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

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

[English]

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY ROLE OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR IN FOOD SECURITY

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

That the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry be authorized to examine and report on the role of the agriculture and agri-food sector in food security in Canada;

That in particular, the committee examine:

- (a) the current status of food security in relation to the Food Policy for Canada created by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada;
- (b) how the agriculture and agri-food sector could improve food security, in particular in Indigenous and Black communities, and in other rural and urban communities facing challenges with access to food;

- (c) the factors that influence food security including agricultural production systems, climate change, corporate concentration in the agri-food sector, among other factors related to agriculture;
- (d) the federal measures that are currently in place to address food security issues, especially related to farmers, local food production and food sovereignty; and
- (e) the potential areas of improvement of these federal measures to enhance food security;

That the committee report to the Senate no later than December 31, 2025, and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings for 180 days after the tabling of the final report; and

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

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO RECOGNIZE OCTOBER AS KOREAN HERITAGE MONTH

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Senate recognize the month of October, each and every year, as Korean Heritage Month, given the contributions that Korean Canadians have made to Canadian society, the deep-rooted friendship and bilateral ties between Canada and Korea, and the importance of Korean heritage and culture within the fabric of Canadian society.

[Translation]

NATIONAL FINANCE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO EXTEND DATE OF FINAL REPORT ON STUDY OF THE PRACTICE OF INCLUDING NON-FINANCIAL MATTERS IN BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION

Hon. Claude Carignan: 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, February 6, 2024, the date for the final report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance in relation to its study on the practice of including non-financial matters in bills implementing provisions of budgets and economic statements be extended from April 30, 2024, to December 31, 2024.

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Senator Gold, I'm surprised that I didn't hear in your omnibus motion that you wanted to take Question Period away from the opposition.

Senator Gold, in 2019, as part of its omnibus budget bill, the Trudeau government included a new authority for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to impose monetary penalties against fraudulent immigration consultants. A recent answer to one of my written questions on the Senate's Order Paper stated:

The compliance regime for immigration and citizenship consultants is not yet in force. As such, IRCC has not imposed any administrative monetary penalties against consultants as the regulatory authorities to do so do not yet exist.

Senator Gold, this legislation was passed in 2019. How can this government defend five years of complete inaction?

• (1450)

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. I don't know what action has been taken, but clearly it has not been completed, and I will certainly raise this matter with the minister at my first opportunity.

Senator Plett: Something that we were told was important enough to be in the 2019 budget bill still isn't in place five years later, Senator Gold. If that doesn't sum up this NDP-Trudeau government's incompetence, then I don't know what does.

Leader, what lesson should honourable senators draw from this experience when we'll soon be asked to pass another omnibus bill from the Trudeau government — the 2024 budget bill?

Senator Gold: I have every confidence that when we do receive that bill and send it for pre-study to the appropriate committees, honourable senators will do the fine work for which they are justly known.

FINANCE

BUDGET 2024

Hon. Leo Housakos: Senator Gold, we already know everything in the budget, including what your government is calling "higher taxes for the wealthy." Former governor of the Bank of Canada David Dodge has said that's exactly the wrong

thing to do. He says that the upcoming budget will be the most misdirected budget since 1982. Incidentally, another Trudeau was in office at that time.

We've confirmed by this Prime Minister that he doesn't read memos. Somehow, I doubt that he and the Minister of Finance are actually capable of counting, but something we do know is the following: What are the definitions of "wealthy" and "middle class" vis-à-vis this government? Have they told you what that is? Can you tell us what it is? Can you give us a clear definition, giving us a precise range of numbers for what Trudeau considers to be middle class, and what he considers to be wealthy? Just give us a range of numbers, if you can, government leader.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. I think when the budget is announced — and it will be later today — then the very precise and specific answers to your questions will be made public.

INTEREST COSTS ON FEDERAL DEBT

Hon. Leo Housakos: Senator Gold, it's been years that we've been trying to obtain a range and a definition — from this government — of what "middle class" is. You haven't been able to do it. What is wealthy? You haven't been able to do it. We're on the eve of a budget that's supposed to tax the wealthy — that has already been announced — and you can't even tell us what wealthy is, or who it is.

Senator Gold, defining "wealthy" should be easy enough to do, but let's try something even simpler. Maybe your government can answer this: How much will it cost Canadians to service the current debt being added to today's budget? How much are you paying this year to service the debt, Senator Gold?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): When the budget is made public, all of those questions will be answered properly, and for the questions that you may still have — as I'm sure you will — you will ultimately have ample opportunity to discuss them, both in this chamber and at committee.

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Hon. Iris G. Petten: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, my province of Newfoundland and Labrador receives an allotment of \$16.8 million through the federal government's Community Workforce Development Program. The program provides training and workplace supports to a range of people, including those on the autism spectrum.

Senator Gold, as it is currently World Autism Month, can you please confirm that my province will not be negatively impacted by a transition of the allocation of specific amounts to each province into national programming?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, and for underlining the importance of the financing that the provinces — and your province, in particular — receive, and also the important programs that they support. Indeed, the government has invested considerable funds through — amongst other things — labour market transfer agreements. This includes almost \$1 billion to Newfoundland and Labrador since 2018, and, indeed, this upcoming year, Newfoundland and Labrador can expect to receive roughly \$142 million in transfers to continue to run various programs, training and employment.

It's up to the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills, and its minister, the Honourable Gerry Byrne, to decide how the money is allocated within the province.

The core funding within our labour transfers, including the \$142 million to Newfoundland and Labrador, will not cease. This funding will continue next year and beyond, and that is the position — as I've been advised — that the government has taken on this matter.

Senator Petten: Senator Gold, thank you for that response. The Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills — as you've indicated — in Newfoundland and Labrador said that the transition of the funding to national programming will be to the detriment of the province. He said, "... when the federal government does that, the money goes to Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia."

What is your response to Minister Byrne?

Senator Gold: The government will continue to work with your minister, and all other ministers, to make sure that the funds are distributed equitably across the country, and then once they're received by the provinces, their jurisdictions will distribute them appropriately.

PUBLIC SAFETY

NEXUS PROGRAM

Hon. Paula Simons: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Each week that I fly to Ottawa, I look with envy at the people who are in the Verified Traveller line. I am not in the Verified Traveller line. It has been a year since I applied for my NEXUS card, and it's now taking 16 to 18 months for those applications to be processed. I can't help but wonder how much sense it makes for Canada's verified travellers to have to be approved first and only by the United States. I'm wondering if you can ask the government if they'd ever be interested in setting up a process whereby Canada would verify its own trusted travellers?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, senator, and, of course, I will raise this with the minister. But, as colleagues undoubtedly know, there are multiple ways in which one can schedule an interview to obtain, for example, a NEXUS card. That would include a joint interview at a land enrolment centre in the U.S.; a split interview at Canadian and U.S. land enrolment centres, which do get scheduled on the same day; and, finally, through

participating Canadian airports, in which the U.S. interview will occur before the individual's next scheduled flight to the U.S., at a U.S. pre-clearance location within a Canadian airport.

Senator Simons: Thank you very much, but that's after you wait 18 months. You have to apply first, then there's an 18-month wait, and, even then, it used to be that you could make one trip to the airport, and if it was a pre-clearance airport, you could have that done. Now you actually have to purchase a ticket to fly to the United States, just to process your application to be a verified Canadian traveller. I understand that there's a breakdown in relations between the two border service agencies, but can you tell us at what point we will return to a time when you don't have to buy a ticket to the United States to be verified?

Senator Gold: I will certainly add that to the questions I raise with the minister.

[Translation]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

ONLINE NEWS ACT

Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais: Leader, as you know, I like to talk about how people fall for the government's big promises. That's what I'll be talking about again today.

Back when he was the Minister of Canadian Heritage and a more optimistic guy, Steven Guilbeault promised that the Trudeau government would recover \$8 billion in taxes from web giants to help Canadian media and journalists. An act was passed about 10 months ago, the Online News Act. Meta retaliated by blocking Canadian news. In spite of all that, Meta continues to dominate, thanks in part to Liberal Party of Canada ads. Since the Online News Act was passed, the country's media outlets have been laying people off or closing their doors. How much longer will the Trudeau government watch the media suffer before it recognizes that its Online News Act was a huge mistake? Where is the money the media were promised?

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

It is the Government of Canada's position that the Online News Act is a responsible response to the challenges facing our media. Drastic changes are taking place in the journalism and news ecosystem, not only here in Canada, but around the world. The Government of Canada will continue to work not only with the major platforms, but also with Canadian media and journalists to ensure that we can continue to support them.

Senator Dagenais: With the Online News Act, the Liberal government has really hurt the Canadian media, even causing many to shut down. These are not my words, leader, but the words of René J. Roy, the co-founder of Wreckhouse Press in the Maritimes, who also said that the media lost 60% of their penetration when Facebook decided to stop posting news. No country has won the taxation battle against Facebook. Am I to understand that your Prime Minister is willing to sacrifice more of our media, probably thinking that his time is up and someone else will have to fix what he broke?

Senator Gold: It's unfortunate that a company as big as Facebook isn't respecting its obligation as a corporate citizen to do its part to help journalism in Canada, especially considering the profits it reaps from Canadians.

• (1500)

[English]

HEALTH

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Hon. Marty Klyne: Senator Gold, Canadians are facing a health care crisis with a shortage of health care workers, overcrowding of emergency departments, critical lack of family doctors, an aging population and surgical and imaging backlogs.

The rapid advancement of virtual care technologies presents an opportunity to redesign Canada's health care system to better serve Canadians while saving taxpayers millions of dollars by eliminating unnecessary travel through effective virtual diagnosis.

One example of this — funded by the federal government and the Province of Saskatchewan — is Saskatchewan's virtual health hub, led by Whitecap Development Corporation. It aims to serve Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians who live in rural and remote locations.

Given the proven effectiveness and potential of this initiative to improve access, wait times, procedure times and other health care challenges, what is the federal government doing to raise awareness of this innovative solution and to encourage other provinces and territories in their adoption and development of similar programs?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. Indeed, in order to transform Canada's public health system so that it meets the needs of Canadians in the 21st century, all levels of government and all health providers and partners must work together to do what is needed.

The federal government is doing its part by stepping up with close to \$200 billion in direct health care funding to transform our health care system, together in partnership with the provinces and territories.

The agreements that the federal government has entered into with the provinces and territories target what matters most to Canadians — more doctors and nurses, shorter wait times, better health care and innovative institutions and initiatives like the health hub, to which you properly referred. I have every confidence that the federal government will continue to work in partnership with the provinces and territories to deliver more innovative programs such as the health hub.

Senator Klyne: With respect to the jurisdiction of provinces and territories, Canada, as a whole, suffers when we do not have solid health care and education systems, and particularly health care. It is difficult to recruit investors to bring employees here and it is difficult to retain the employers we already have. Thank you.

Senator Gold: Thank you for your comment.

[Translation]

HEALTH CARE TRANSFERS

Hon. Rose-May Poirier: My question is for the Government Representative.

Senator Gold, the federal government recently signed two bilateral health care agreements with New Brunswick for a total of \$430 million. Did the Liberal government ensure that language clauses were included so that francophone communities would receive their fair share? If so, how much is their share?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): I don't know the details of the agreements you mentioned. Considering the constitutional obligations incumbent on the province of New Brunswick and the Canadian government's commitment to supporting minority communities across Canada, I hope that francophone residents of New Brunswick will receive the services they need in their own language.

Senator Poirier: I'm concerned, senator, that your government is overlooking francophone communities. A press release mentioned that certain francophone communities would be included in the financial incentive for recruitment. Access to health care by minority language communities is unequal in New Brunswick and across the country. Why hasn't your government acknowledged this in its agreement with New Brunswick and made it a priority?

Senator Gold: The Government of Canada is working closely with the provinces, which have jurisdiction over health under the Constitution. With that in mind, the government has been working to ensure that citizens receive adequate service in their language, and it will continue to do so.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

Hon. Claude Carignan: Leader, I've observed once again that many documents on the Hogue commission website, including federal government documents, are not available in both official languages. When the Rouleau commission made the same mistake, you agreed at the outset, right here during Question Period on May 30, 2023, that the situation was unacceptable. The then Minister of Official Languages, Ms. Petitpas Taylor, also said the situation was unacceptable.

How is it possible that you didn't provide support to the very next commission after that unacceptable situation occurred? Why is this new commission now violating the Official Languages Act?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. First, it is important to point out that the commission is independent. It works completely independently of the government.

Second, there is indeed a process to be followed when one wants to submit such questions to the commission. I would add that, as the media indicated, in some cases, the documents that the commission distributed in English are also available in French on government websites. The government is responsible for its websites but not for the websites of the commission, which operates independently of the government.

Senator Carignan: The last time, you told me that the situation was unacceptable and that you were committed to doing better. Now, you are washing your hands of the situation and saying that it's not your responsibility. The Privy Council Office admitted that it was responsible for supporting the commission, but it didn't do so.

Senator Gold: I made a commitment. What I said in the past is true. Once again, the commission failed to publish several documents in both official languages, even though they were available on government websites. Once again, it's the commission that made that decision, not the Government of Canada.

[English]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

Hon. Pat Duncan: My question is for Senator Gold.

Senator Gold, on December 5 last year, I asked about Canada's financial obligations to the International Pacific Halibut Commission and whether we had fulfilled those obligations — in short, whether or not we had paid our bill.

I have not yet received notification of any inquiries to the minister nor have I been advised that this overdue bill has been paid. May I respectfully request that you offer a gentle reminder to the minister that this bill is long past due to the International Pacific Halibut Commission and advise this chamber accordingly?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, senator. I understand that my office has indeed inquired with the minister's office and I will share directly with your office any updates that I receive. I'll certainly raise the issue when I can.

Senator Duncan: Thank you.

HEALTH

CANNABIS REGULATIONS

Hon. Sharon Burey: Honourable colleagues, my question is for the Government Representative.

Canada made history in 2018 by becoming the first major developed country to legalize and regulate cannabis through the Cannabis Act, aimed at safeguarding Canadians' health and safety while thwarting organized crime's involvement.

Recently, the legislative review of the Cannabis Act was reported. It outlined many recommendations and observations to fortify this legislation. However, there have been some disturbing trends, especially related to children and youth.

Senator Gold, how does the Government of Canada plan to allocate sufficient funding and resources to ensure the effective implementation of the cannabis framework including addressing emerging public health and public safety concerns, especially related to children and youth?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, senator. It is my understanding that Health Canada is currently reviewing the findings and recommendations of the expert panel, and they will be providing to the minister recommendations on the next steps.

• (1510)

Senator Burey: Thank you for that response, Senator Gold.

As we've seen with smoking, perceived harm influences substance use. Senator Gold, are there plans to enhance packaging to better communicate risks and to increase funding for targeted educational programs for parents and youth?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. As the expert report points out, significant progress has already been made on some key objectives of the legislation, which include adherence to rules on promotion, packaging and labelling, including prohibitions against making claims about health or lifestyle benefits. Indeed, the government has also launched several public health campaigns focused on education and will continue to build on this important work.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, earlier this month, the *Ottawa Citizen* reported Canadian Forces personnel who were sent to Ottawa for specialized cyber operations training had to rely on food donations to feed themselves. Staff members of the college where they received this training took it upon themselves to set up a food cupboard so that these military members would not go hungry. These soldiers also went months without being reimbursed for expenses, creating further hardship.

Leader, how does the Trudeau cabinet justify spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to feed themselves during so-called affordability summits when Canadian soldiers must rely on food donations?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you. It is a good question because there is no good answer to a situation where Canadians serving the country are put in a position where they are not properly taken care of under those circumstances. I'll certainly raise this very preoccupying issue with the minister.

Senator Martin: The Trudeau government has failed our Canadian Armed Forces and the men and women who serve. In addition to cost-of-living and housing concerns, the soldiers who complete their initial cyber training are waiting between 18 months to 2 years to move on to the next phase of training due to delays in processing security screenings.

Leader, what is being done to fix this issue?

Senator Gold: I'm not in a position to comment on the details of that, only to underline the importance of security screening for all those who are in sensitive positions, but, again, I will certainly add that to my inquiries.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Leader, Canadians remember that when reports of Beijing's interference in our democracy were raised last year, Prime Minister Trudeau's first instinct was to condemn the whistleblowers at CSIS, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, and not the interference.

Through the Hogue inquiry, Canadian have learned that top Liberal Party officials were briefed by CSIS on Beijing's alleged interference in the party's nomination race in Don Valley North. *The Globe and Mail* reports that shortly after this briefing, the member of Parliament in question was tipped off that CSIS was watching him.

Leader, did a senior Liberal Party official leak this classified information? Yes or no? Has the Prime Minister referred this matter to the RCMP for investigation? Yes or no? If not, why not?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. We're learning, through the Hogue inquiry, that there is much work that still needs to be done to ensure information is properly analyzed and understood at various levels of the system. There are certainly lessons we expect to continue to learn so that our system can work better for the protection of Canadians.

With regard to any investigations that may be under way, it is not appropriate for me to comment.

Senator Plett: In his testimony last week, Prime Minister Trudeau used his incompetence as a shield by indicating that he doesn't read his memos. He is not worth the cost to our democracy. He and his staff questioned the reliability of CSIS intelligence. They said they weren't given information in certain memos. The CSIS director testified on Friday that they were warned repeatedly.

Leader, how are Canadians supposed to square this conflicting testimony? They can't both be correct. Who should Canadians believe?

Senator Gold: I believe I have answered this question before. There is no contradiction. Canadians should have confidence in our security systems, but also in the capacity of expertise within the government and its advisers to analyze the information that is brought forward. It is simply a part of the normal and healthy exercise of interaction between security services and —

The Hon. the Speaker: Thank you, Senator Gold.

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PAY EQUITY

Hon. Marilou McPhedran: Senator Gold, more than four decades ago, on April 17, 1982, Queen Elizabeth II signed into law the Constitution Act, 1982, with its entrenched Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including equality rights set out in sections 15 and 28.

A new report from the World Bank found that while 98 countries enacted equal pay laws, there were measures in place to meaningfully reduce the pay gap in only 35 of those countries. Less than 40% of the measures necessary to implement equal pay laws have actually been put in place. As a result, globally, women continue to earn, on average, 77 cents to the male dollar.

In Canada, a pay gap persists between men and women, fluctuating from 9% for Canadian-born, non-Indigenous women; over 10% for immigrant women; and more than 20% for Indigenous women. Studies indicate that —

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry. That's the time, Senator McPhedran.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Regrettably, I don't have the ability to act in response to the question except to underline the importance of not only narrowing the gap, such as you described, but eliminating the gap. We are now in a position in our country — I think and I hope — where there is no question that inequality and inequity with regard to employment remuneration for men and women and those others who may identify themselves differently have no place in our society.

Senator McPhedran: Thank you very much. That was an excellent anticipatory response. I appreciate it.

The other thing that the World Bank report found was that there was an absence of child care safety policies. Even with the very welcome announcements for affordable child care in this country, I ask what the government is doing now to put in place child care safety policies to make those affordable child care situations more reliable for working women in Canada.

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question and for underlining the importance of that. I'm not in a position to comment on what arrangements may have been made in the first round of agreements with the provinces, but I do appreciate the question that you have asked and the importance of the issue.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

CARBON TAX

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): My next question concerns a report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer about the Prime Minister's useless and hurtful carbon tax.

This fiscal year, the Trudeau government will collect \$595 million just in GST on this carbon tax. By the 2030-31 fiscal year, this amount will rise to over \$1 billion — just the tax on the tax. Again, these are not my figures. These are from the non-partisan Parliamentary Budget Officer who works for all parliamentarians.

Leader, why does the Trudeau government believe Canadians can afford this tax on a tax?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for citing the Parliamentary Budget Officer, an independent analyst. The federal government believes having a credible plan to combat climate change includes putting a price on pollution in whatever form that price takes, whether it is the carbon tax, which applies to those provinces that have chosen not to put a program in place, or cap-and-trade such as in my province or in B.C., which led the way. All of these measures are necessary for the well-being of this country, its citizens and this planet.

Equally importantly — not more importantly — it has been well established by third-party neutral experts that the impact of the price on pollution, given the rebates to Canadians, et cetera, is marginal, as compared to the cost of doing nothing, which is extraordinarily damaging.

Senator Plett: Well, this very credible tax will cause 1 million more Canadians to turn to food banks in 2024. That's on top of the record number who needed help from food banks last year. Clearly, the Prime Minister's carbon tax — and the tax on the tax — are not worth the cost, leader.

• (1520)

Leader, will the Trudeau government at least be transparent with Canadians? Will you say in today's budget what you'll do with the almost \$600 million collected this year alone from the tax on carbon?

Senator Gold: There is no language fit for this chamber for me to comment on your assertion. I will simply say it is not true — period.

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

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

That the following Address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary May Simon, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Military Merit, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Merit of the Police Forces, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, Her Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the Senate of Canada in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

Hon. Andrew Cardozo: Honourable senators, this item stands adjourned in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett. After today's interventions, I ask for leave that it remain adjourned in his name for the balance of his time.

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: So ordered.

Senator Cardozo: Honourable senators, I rise today to respond to the Speech from the Throne, in the spirit of the long-held tradition of this inaugural speech. I will speak about immigration in Canada and provide a personal perspective.

[English]

I have chosen this time because yesterday, April 15, marked 50 years since my family and I arrived in Canada. I stand here as a senator in the august Senate Chamber of Canada. There is much to reflect on.

I want to talk briefly about our family history but, more importantly, relate it to the journey of immigration that is common to many of you and, indeed, millions of Canadians.

A few years before our arrival here, my parents, Len and Melba Cardozo, travelled to the U.S., the U.K. and Canada, where they visited family and friends before making the decision to apply to come to this country. It has remained a family consensus that this was the best decision they could have made.

We arrived in Toronto, Canada, on April 15, 1974, and stayed with family for the first few weeks. Those initial days in Canada were both wondrous and scary. This was the society I'd dreamed of once my parents told us we would be moving.

Having been a teenager, my memories are clear, albeit of mundane things: the incredibly clean and shiny look of a drug store, faded bell-bottom jeans, ice cream sundaes at Howard Johnson's, "Bennie and the Jets" and, yes, "(You're) Having My Baby" by Paul Anka — my introduction to CanCon, or Canadian content, which I would regulate many years later as a commissioner at the CRTC, or Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

It was scary because it was a new society. Although English was my first language, my accent was often not understood and, yes, I got called names, which was debilitating. However, the abiding message from my new society, teachers, neighbours and many extended family members was to work hard and get involved.

As I turned 18, the message was that life would be tough but could be good. My first guidance counsellor suggested I not go to university but to college. Streaming was the thing to do with all new immigrants. Streaming is almost a metaphor for what most immigrants experience through their lives. Assumptions are made about our abilities.

Like for most of you, my family history goes back a long way and to another part of the world, and has had various twists and turns. Originating in Goa, India, a former Portuguese colony, my ancestors were likely converted from Hinduism to Catholicism in the early 1500s.

In the 1800s and 1900s, my mother's and father's families settled in Karachi, which, after British rule and partition, was the main commercial city in Pakistan.

Sadly, by the early 1970s, my parents were concluding that, with the rise in fundamentalism, life was becoming difficult for us as Christians. They looked to move to a more hospitable country.

Like in many immigrant families, my father — who had earlier been a senior executive — worked extremely hard at the job he'd attained and, through his example, taught us that hard work was a thing to be proud of.

My mother returned to work after many years and essentially helped put us through university, and that somehow included typing our essays well into the night back in the days of typewriters and Wite-Out. In her later years, I am proud to say that she became the poster lady for retirement residences as she

came into her own and was, in effect, a leader. As a piano player, she entertained many fellow residents several times a week, whether at afternoon tea or weekend religious services, and took those responsibilities very seriously, often telling us not to show up at certain times because she would be otherwise occupied.

[*Translation*]

In the early years, our family didn't have a lot of money. We rarely saw the inside of a restaurant or stayed in a hotel, but my parents found ways to entertain many family and friends in our home with food, delicious treats and music to suit the occasion. This chapter of my life is entirely typical of immigrant families. I'm convinced that some scenes from the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* were shot right in our home.

[*English*]

I received my Canadian citizenship in 1978. I recall being asked in my citizenship test about what the Governor General did. Back then, being a smart-aleck third-year political science student and not much of a monarchist, my answer was less than politic. I probably almost lost my chance at the brass ring, but I must have aced the rest of the test; on January 17, 1978, I became a proud and delighted Canadian citizen.

Colleagues, I often feel that Canadian-born folks miss out on the citizenship ceremony. Words cannot describe the depth of joy and pride of becoming a Canadian citizen through a citizenship ceremony. Perhaps it is a ceremony that all students should go through at the age of 18. I disagree with the current proposal to do away with the ceremony and replace it with a click on a keyboard.

After university, I came to Ottawa for my first job. Soon, Ottawa became home. I got married, went back to university and, soon after, we had kids. While I have been terribly blessed with a fulfilling career, my favourite job was surely the four years I stayed home with our two kids, Alice and Anthony, when they were little. I was one of the few dads who stayed home back then. Sadly, 30 years later, things have not changed much.

My career, while not by design, has been largely in and around government, always focused on some key areas of public policy, which have included the Canadian Constitution, diversity, skills development and, more generally, how public policy is made. I have also enjoyed teaching communications and political science at Carleton University, where I learned as much as I taught.

• (1530)

Colleagues, I'm pleased to tell you that I am one of the leading Canadian experts on the 1908 general election; that was the last one that Wilfrid Laurier won. The fact that it was one of the most inconsequential elections in Canadian history may explain why only one other person has studied this election and has ever written a thesis, like me. But I digress.

Let me say a few words about belonging. In any society this is an interesting issue, but in a country with a high immigrant population, it is always a dynamic question.

[Senator Cardozo]

I am sometimes asked how I identify myself, and I have learned that the purpose of the question depends on the context. Let me share a few examples.

I recall desperately not wanting to be identified as a newcomer when my teachers introduced me to a classroom when I first arrived in the spring of 1974. As a new immigrant, I just wanted to fit in and be one of the regular students. And indeed there was one student who would call me names in the corridor to make sure I was not regular.

One time many years ago, my physiotherapist, a man of very few words whom I would visit from time to time, was suddenly one day curious about my origin. I thought it was a bit odd at first, but then he told me he was reading the novel *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry, which blew him away, and he wanted to talk to someone about all things Indian.

I remember one time in Havana, Cuba, being asked where I was from, and I said I was from Canada. The woman responded in delight, "Oh, you are a Canadian," she said. "I learned English so I could sing Céline Dion songs." I became an instant Céline Dion fan from there on. Of course, now when I am asked where I am from, the answer people are looking for is, "I'm a senator from Ontario."

So identity and belonging depend on the context.

Let me say a few words about Canadian society and values. We are one of the most sophisticated countries when it comes to rational and progressive public policy through a process of democratic elections, citizen engagement, a free press and good policy development. And while this may be more the ideal, I do think the success stories far outweigh the failures.

Our successes include a strong, thriving mixed economy, with G7 standing; the Charter of Rights; policies that promote bilingualism and multiculturalism; the robust role we play on the international stage, including our relationship with our neighbour to the south, the United States.

Our most glaring failure has been a history of discrimination toward the original inhabitants of this land, the First Nations, Inuit and Métis. A robust ongoing process of reconciliation is essential and, sadly, not near completion.

As I wind up, let me say that our challenges for today and tomorrow are to navigate one of the most difficult and complicated periods in human history. A couple of years ago, the word "polycrisis" was invented to describe the many crises we faced at one time. Today that word is insufficient, as we have something more like a "hyperpolycrisis."

My fear is that as the world becomes incomprehensibly complex, too many people the world over are looking for simple and simplistic answers. Sadly, there are politicians who are prepared to offer that, knowing full well that complex, multi-faceted problems require complex, multi-faceted solutions.

From the end of World War II to the end of the last century, the world was becoming a more peaceful place, dedicated to human rights, democracy, fairness and equity. Something

changed around Y2K, and since then we have seen the growth of polarization, backlash to equity and human rights and a yearning for authoritarian leaders.

The growth of polarization and the threat to new media are issues that I keep a close eye on and, as a senator, I am convening Canadians when I can in various ways so we may identify solutions.

[*Translation*]

As we prepare for an interesting year in Canadian politics, in these uncertain and complicated times, it is with great humility that I can tell you that I'm extremely proud to serve in the Senate of Canada.

[*English*]

I am deeply proud to serve in the Senate of Canada with you as colleagues. It is way beyond anything I could have dreamed about the day I arrived in Canada 50 years ago. Thank you.

(Debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Ringuette, seconded by the Honourable Senator Ravalia, for the second reading of Bill S-239, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (criminal interest rate).

Hon. Chantal Petitclerc: Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15. 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.)

[*English*]

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON ADVERTISING FOR SPORTS BETTING BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Deacon (*Ontario*), seconded by the Honourable Senator Busson, for the second reading of Bill S-269, An Act respecting a national framework on advertising for sports betting.

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I note that this is at day 15, so I adjourn for the balance of my time.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

• (1540)

NATIONAL THANADELTHUR DAY BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator White, for the second reading of Bill S-274, An Act to establish National Thanadelthur Day.

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

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Debate adjourned.)

CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

On Other Business, Senate Public Bills, Second Reading, Order No. 35:

Second reading of Bill S-281, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (parole review).

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I note this item is at day 15. Therefore, with leave of the Senate, I ask that consideration of this item be postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Debate postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.)

ARAB HERITAGE MONTH BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Gold, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Gagné, for the second reading of Bill C-232, An Act respecting Arab Heritage Month.

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I note that this item is also on day 15, and with leave of the Senate, I'd like to take adjournment for the balance of my time.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(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. Rosemary Moodie: Honourable senators, I am always honoured to rise to speak about the health and well-being of our children. Bill C-252, the child health protection act, represents an important step toward healthier and happier childhoods for our children. I want to thank MP Lattanzio for her leadership in this iteration of the bill and our colleague Senator Dasko for her work so far in shepherding the bill through the Senate.

As you have heard, colleagues, this bill aims to prohibit the marketing of certain unhealthy foods and beverages to children 13 years or younger. Specifically, the bill targets foods and drinks high in sugar, saturated fats or sodium.

Central to this bill is the protection of the immediate and long-term health of our children. It is about positively impacting, wherever feasible, their health today and the habits that they will carry with them into adulthood.

It is about our children. There are a lot of voices that would try to distract us from them, but their health and well-being ought to be of paramount concern here.

Colleagues, there's compelling evidence to argue that escalating consumption of unhealthy foods is a cause for concern. A 2019 study citing Statistics Canada's data reveals that a quarter of the calories consumed by Canadians aged 4 to 18 were from foods that, according to Canada's food guide, should be avoided. These include chips, soft drinks, chocolate and other products that contain excessive sugars or salts. Children are not only eating too many unhealthy foods; they're not eating enough healthy foods to counter that. Over 50% of children consume less than the recommended five servings of vegetables and fruit per day.

In preparing to give this speech today, I went back to the medical literature. I spoke to researchers, and I consulted specialists in the area of children's health, including a particular pediatric cardiologist and lipidologist, my son Dr. Jonathan Wong.

Unhealthy eating does have a direct impact on the current and long-term health of children. Studies show that atherosclerosis, that is the build-up of plaque and cholesterol in arteries that leads to heart attacks and strokes, starts in childhood, colleagues. The studies tell us that the cardiovascular risk factors like obesity and diabetes are the underlying cause of this build-up. Pediatric preventative and cholesterol specialists advocate for a heart-healthy lifestyle, with a diet rich in dietary fibre, low in added sugars, low in saturated and trans fats, in addition to regular moderate to vigorous physical activities. Evidence has linked such measures to lower risks of cardiovascular disease and Type 2 diabetes.

In 2022, self-reported data collected by Statistics Canada showed that 30% of youth aged 12 to 17 are overweight or obese by definition. This problem is not the number on the scale but the associated health issues that accompany it — issues such as Type 2 diabetes, bone and joint problems, high blood pressure or issues with sleeping or breathing. Obesity can also negatively impact a young person's mental health due to depression, low self-esteem or issues with their peers, who may bully or malign them.

If children begin life with poor eating habits and the associated physical and mental health challenges that come with those habits, they are very likely to carry these habits along with them into adulthood. That's a reality. They're also likely to miss out on the benefits of a healthier lifestyle. In that sense, this bill is not just about keeping kids away from bad foods but about helping them along towards a happier and healthier life in general.

Indeed, there is strong evidence, including a recent Canadian study, to suggest that we carry our eating habits from childhood into our adult lives. Today, 75% of Canadians

surpass recommended salt intake levels. Over 50% exceed the recommended thresholds for sugar and saturated fat consumption, and this would be due to habits many Canadians built in their childhoods.

These significant trends in unhealthy eating lead to disastrous consequences for our health and for our economy in later years. A 2019 study commissioned by the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Diabetes Association, the then Childhood Obesity Foundation, the Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada and the Heart and Stroke Foundation on the economic impacts of diseases associated with drinking sugary drinks concluded that these drinks could cause an average of 2,500 additional deaths per year for the next 25 years. This is in addition to a loss of 2 million healthy life years and a cost of \$50 billion to our health care system during that same time frame.

Another study found that based on the eating patterns identified in the Canadian Community Health Survey from 2015, the economic burden of Canadians' failing to meet our healthy eating recommendations amounted to \$26 billion annually.

Colleagues, to sum up all of these really difficult facts and figures and to put it simply, our children are eating too much salt, fat and sugar. They're eating too many unhealthy foods in general. It lays a foundation for an unhealthy adulthood, with habits that carry on from their childhood, and the cost of these unhealthy practices are poorer physical and mental health, pressures on our health care systems, diseases and illnesses, and lost lives.

Now, no one can reasonably claim that all of these trends are due to marketing unhealthy foods to children. There are, in fact, many other factors at play. Not every family can afford the healthy foods or can put their children into sports or healthy activities. This is especially true for families in communities in the Far North, where the cost of food is extremely high. There are many other underlying factors that should and must be addressed to ensure that children live healthy, balanced lives. Nevertheless, we know that marketing of unhealthy foods to children is a detriment to their health and well-being.

• (1550)

First, let's be clear — children are flooded with targeted marketing that encourages them to consume unhealthy food. As Senator Petitclerc noted in her speech, Health Canada reported that youth aged 2 to 17 saw nearly five food ads per day, with a staggering 92% of these ads promoting products that undermine healthy eating.

The prevalence of this marketing, particularly on social media, adds another layer to the challenge. A 2022 study found that the top 40 food brands that sell unhealthy foods here in Canada were mentioned more than 16 billion times throughout social media. This marketing is having direct impacts on the health of our children.

According to the American Psychological Association, there is a direct link between the amount of time television is consumed in a day and the intake of sugar-sweetened beverages and fast foods. They note that children who watch more than three hours of television per day are 50% more likely to be obese than

children who watch fewer than two hours. This is because the entire purpose of marketing foods toward children is to make a concerted effort to influence their choices, and it's working.

Colleagues, you'll hear from stakeholders — as I have — that there exist voluntary measures that industry are already complying with, and I congratulate them for complying with those measures and banning advertising for children under the age of 13. Although this measure may be used to tell us that this bill is not needed, in fact, I believe the opposite is true. I think it's correct that Parliament reinforces the action of industry through legislation. Although we take industry at their word, the health of our children cannot be subject to voluntary actions. This bill, along with the expected regulations from Health Canada, would bring a permanency that is required for an issue of such important magnitude.

Colleagues, this brings us to the important questions: Are there any good reasons to allow the marketing of unhealthy foods to children? Is there any benefit to their health and long-term development? Is there any purpose, except to put money in the pockets of industry and in the pockets of advertisers?

To all of these questions, I believe the answer is clearly "no." As senators, the voices of the vulnerable and the voiceless must be our priority. With the evidence already before us and the support from the other place, I believe that this bill should proceed to committee quickly for further careful examination and be brought to third reading as soon as possible. We have the privilege in our role to make a positive impact. Adopting this bill is something we can feel good about. Thank you.

Hon. Robert Black: Will the senator take a question?

Senator Moodie: I will.

Senator Black: Thank you. Honourable colleague, I think it's crucial to emphasize that adherence to this code — which you said is voluntary — is, in fact, mandatory. It is not voluntary. I find it perplexing that some of our colleagues persist in labelling it as voluntary, but any breaches are subject to review by Ad Standards, highlighting the seriousness of the compliance.

The code was launched in June 2021 and came into force in June 2023. Since then, there have been no infractions. It's important to recognize that industry stakeholders collaborated extensively in developing this mandatory code, and their collective efforts ensured that the code not only meet but exceed standards set by legislation, demonstrating a proactive approach to self-regulation.

Does my honourable colleague understand that the code, as currently in place, is mandatory? Are you aware that industry collaborated on it? Will you help me to ensure that industry is heard at the committee stage? Because the record shows that in the other place, they did not hear from industry during committee stage. In fact, I'm told they were shut out.

Senator Moodie: Thank you, Senator Black, and thank you for your ongoing commitment toward advocating on behalf of important groups within our country — farmers and the suppliers of food.

I would say to you that the status of what is a mandatory process overlooked by a voluntary organization — Ad Standards is not compelled to look at ads with any determined frequency and with any specific regularity. Of their own activity, they approach the industry in the way they see fit. This is not a regulated group, and what I said and stand by is that this is perfectly good. It's a great idea for them to continue this activity, but the specific regulation of this area needs to be Health Canada and it needs to be regulated with serious consequences and oversight.

Senator Black: Thank you, colleague. Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 14-1(4), I ask for leave of the Senate to table, in both official languages, the *Code for the Responsible Advertising of Food and Beverage Products to Children*.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted?

An Hon. Senator: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: I hear a “no.” Leave is not granted.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS

SECOND REPORT OF COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the second report of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators (*Budget—consideration of matters relating to the Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators—power to hire staff and to travel*), presented in the Senate on April 11, 2024.

Hon. Judith G. Seidman moved the adoption of the report.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

• (1600)

NET-ZERO EMISSIONS FUTURE

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Coyle, calling the attention of the Senate to the importance of finding solutions to transition Canada's society, economy and resource use in pursuit of a fair, prosperous, sustainable and peaceful net-zero emissions future for our country and the planet.

Hon. Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler: Honourable senators, this item is adjourned in the name of Senator Clement, and I ask for leave of the Senate that, following my intervention, the balance of her time to speak to this item be reserved.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: So ordered.

[*Translation*]

Senator Osler: Colleagues, I rise today to speak to the subject of a net-zero emissions future.

[*English*]

I want to thank Senator Coyle for her ongoing leadership on the climate crisis. In my preparations, I read the speech she made in this chamber in February 2022 on the subject of Senator Galvez's motion to recognize that climate change is an urgent crisis.

In her speech, Senator Coyle questioned if the motion could motivate senators to come together to better understand climate change and to seek solutions. Her answer was “yes.” And so, colleagues, today I will use a health lens and speak in favour of Inquiry No. 4.

“Why use a health lens?” you may ask. In 2009, a joint commission between *The Lancet*, an internationally renowned medical journal, and the University College London called climate change, “. . . the biggest global health threat of the 21st century.”

The Lancet continues to release an annual report called *The Lancet Countdown*, and in their 2023 report, they called out the imperative for a health-centred response in a world facing irreversible harms.

They noted that the health risks of climate change are increasing across all dimensions monitored yet adaptation efforts have been insufficient to protect people from the growing hazards. They stressed the need for urgent efforts to ensure climate health hazards do not exceed the capacity of our health care systems to care for us.

Colleagues, you have heard me speak about the multiple capacity challenges currently facing our health care system. Today, my remarks will focus on three points: First, the relationship between climate change and human health with an emphasis on Canadian data; second, the relationship between climate change and the health care sector in Canada; and, finally, some of the enablers for our health care system to transition to net-zero emissions.

So let's begin with the relationship between climate change and human health. Globally, health care professionals are witnessing not only how climate change is affecting health, but also how climate change is impacting health systems. Climate change is already harming the health of Canadians due to the increased frequency of extreme weather events and natural disasters.

Think back to the 2021 heat dome in British Columbia. It was the deadliest weather event in Canadian history with an estimated 619 heat-related deaths. Health care professionals are also seeing more respiratory issues from air pollution. Globally, fossil fuel-related air pollution is associated with 6.7 million premature deaths annually, and Health Canada estimates that air pollution contributes to more than 15,000 deaths per year in Canada.

In 2016, it was calculated that the total economic cost to Canada for all health impacts attributable to air pollution was \$120 billion or the equivalent of 6% of Canada's gross domestic product.

Colleagues, you will also recall that Canada had its worst year on record for forest fires in 2023. Now, in April 2024, there are concerns for an even worse upcoming forest fire season.

Dr. Courtney Howard is an emergency room physician and international expert on the impacts of climate change on human health. In 2021, Dr. Howard and her colleagues published an article that examined the health impacts of a severe and prolonged wildfire season in Canada's high subarctic. The article focused on the Northwest Territories where, in 2014, moderate-to-severe drought conditions led to a severe fire season with 385 fires burning down 3.4 million hectares of forest. The wildfires caused two-and-a-half months of consistent smoke exposure for the residents of Yellowknife and adjacent Indigenous communities. In fact, some Northwest Territories residents refer to this season as "the lost summer" or "the summer of smoke."

To assess the burden of wildfire smoke on health resources, the study compared 2014 to previous non-extreme fire years. They examined dispensations of salbutamol — that's the blue puffer, which is a medication used to relieve symptoms of coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath — as well as clinic visits, emergency room visits and hospital admissions for respiratory causes.

The severe wildfires and extended poor air quality were found to be associated with increases in health resource utilization. The study found that, in 2014, salbutamol dispensations increased by 48%; clinic visits for asthma, pneumonia and cough increased; emergency room visits for asthma doubled; emergency room visits for pneumonia increased by 57%; and hospitalizations for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease also increased. Some of the impacts were disproportionately seen among specific populations, such as children and Indigenous individuals.

The Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry will be studying wildfires in Canada and their impact on forestry and agriculture industries. I look forward to reading their report and recommendations because climate solutions to reduce wildfires will reduce air pollution and will not only increase health and well-being but can also reduce health resource utilization for any climate change-related respiratory issues.

For my second point, let's briefly touch on the health care sector's impact on climate change. The health care sector is estimated to be responsible for 4.6% of Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, globally, Canada has the second-highest per capita greenhouse gas emissions from the health care sector.

Now, we all recognize that Canada's health care facilities are critical community assets that need to remain open and provide care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, regardless of what crises the country may be facing. Yet many of our health care facilities are among Canada's oldest public infrastructures in use today, with almost 50% of facilities having been built over 50 years ago.

Health care facilities are significant contributors to Canada's health care sector greenhouse gas emissions because of their age, physical needs and lower energy efficiency. And when you combine aging infrastructure, deferred maintenance and some facilities having been built in high-risk zones such as flood plains, it is easier to understand how climate health hazards could exceed the capacity of the health care system to look after Canadians.

For my third and last point, I want to highlight some of the enablers for the Canadian health care system to transition to a net-zero future. In the Canadian Medical Association's policy on environmentally sustainable health systems in Canada, they outline the need to maximize our health care systems' resilience to the increasing health needs and other impacts of the escalating climate crisis and to minimize the negative impacts that our health care systems have on the environment and climate change.

In 2021, at the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, or COP 26, Canada made a commitment to deliver a low-carbon, sustainable health system, but did not identify a net-zero target. In contrast, Britain's National Health Service, or NHS, is a global health leader that has been tracking and reporting on its carbon footprint for the last 14 years.

• (1610)

In 2020, the NHS declared its commitment to net zero with two clear and ambitious targets: first, to reach net zero by 2040 with an 80% reduction in emissions under direct NHS control; and second, to reach net zero by 2045 with an 80% reduction in the emissions that the NHS can influence. Their early projections estimate that by 2040, 5,770 lives will be saved in the United Kingdom per year due to reductions in air pollution.

That said, the Canadian health care system does acknowledge its responsibility to reduce its carbon footprint and to minimize the widespread harms to human health. HealthCareCAN is the national voice of health care organizations and hospitals across Canada. It supports its members' net-zero initiatives to "green" their operations, ranging from easy-to-implement projects to more extensive and expensive building retrofits.

One example of an easy-to-implement enabler is to change the anaesthetic gases used during operative procedures. Certain anaesthetic gases, like desflurane, have high carbon footprints, with desflurane estimated to be 2,450 times more potent as a greenhouse gas emission compared to carbon dioxide. Eliminating the use of desflurane is one of a hospital's most impactful interventions to lower carbon emissions, and so dozens of hospitals across Canada have removed desflurane from their operating rooms and switched to less carbon-intensive anaesthetic gases. Health care facilities also produce significant amounts of waste, with the worst offenders being single-use, disposable items. Thankfully, there are initiatives in Canada to reduce health care facilities' reliance on disposables and divert waste from landfills.

Finally, another enabler is to invest in health infrastructure and retrofit health care facilities. You have just heard how many of Canada's health care facilities are amongst our oldest and most energy-intensive instances of public infrastructure in use today. Investments in health facility infrastructure can reduce its vulnerability to the impacts of extreme climate events and reduce the health care sector's greenhouse gas emissions through the building of more energy-efficient facilities that use cleaner and more sustainable energy sources.

In closing, I was pleased to see the leadership of Canadian health care professionals, associations and organizations lighting the way toward net-zero, environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient health care systems. A path forward for a net-zero health care system in Canada is possible. I am also honoured to add my voice to those of Senators Coyle, Galvez, Yussuff, Klyne, Quinn, Black, Omidvar, Kutcher and Loffreda. Colleagues, thank you and *meegwetch* for your attention.

(Debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Yan Chantrel. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Cormier.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[Senator Osler]

[*English*]

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE GOVERNMENT TO DIRECT THE SPECIAL ENVOY ON PRESERVING HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE AND COMBATTING ANTISEMITISM TO CONVENE A SECOND NATIONAL SUMMIT TO COMBAT ANTISEMITISM—
DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Leo Housakos, pursuant to notice of February 29, 2024, moved:

That the Senate take note:

- (a) of the data from Statistics Canada and Jewish organizations such as the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre and B'nai Brith indicating a shocking rise in antisemitic incidents across Canada over the past years;
- (b) of a global surge in antisemitism, to which Canada has not been immune, since the October 7 terrorist attack by Hamas and Israel's duty to respond to it;
- (c) that since October 2023, Canada's Jewish community has witnessed shots fired at its schools, arson attempts at its communal buildings, boycott efforts and vandalism targeting private businesses, simply because their owners are Jewish, and the intimidation of its students at universities;
- (d) that police departments across the country all report major and unprecedented increases in hate crimes since October 2023, with the Jewish community being by far the most targeted;
- (e) that the Government of Canada has appointed Deborah Lyons, Canada's former Ambassador to Israel, as the new Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism;
- (f) that the authority vested in the Special Envoy's office permits her to be uniquely placed to convene and chair a second national summit to combat antisemitism; and
- (g) that a second national summit to combat antisemitism would provide a valuable forum for stakeholders representing all levels of government, civil servants, law enforcement agencies, educators and community leaders to share information and agree on effective strategies to blunt the unprecedented wave of hate aimed at Jews; and

That the Senate urge the Government of Canada to direct the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism to convene a second national summit to combat antisemitism.

He said: Honourable senators, it has been more than six months since we witnessed the atrocities of Hamas's attack on innocent Israelis on October 7, and the atrocities continue as more than 100 innocent Israeli men and women, young and old, remain held hostage by Hamas.

Here in Canada, over the last six months, we have seen shocking headlines and social media posts reporting on an unprecedented surge in anti-Semitic incidents. There have been several incidents of shots being fired at Jewish schools and homes; arson attempts at Jewish community centres and businesses; hateful rallies, including on the doorsteps of synagogues, that have called for the destruction of Israel and death to Jews; and actual physical assaults on Jews, including in our universities.

There have been relatively few arrests despite the fact that these rallies have crossed the line from free speech to hate speech in what most Canadians see as open violations of our hate laws. Protesters are emboldened by this lack of repercussions but also by the cavalier attitude of many politicians.

This past Saturday, I was disgusted to see pro-Hamas protesters in Toronto celebrating Iran's drone and missile attack on Israel — imagine celebrating the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC, in our streets — and then yesterday, in my own town of Montreal, protesters actually pledging allegiance to the leader of Hamas by name and saying they are his soldiers. They are pledging allegiance to a recognized terrorist organization, whose stated goal is to destroy Israel, in the streets of Canada.

Why aren't we ripping our collective shirts in indignation like we were at the sight of a lone swastika during the convoy? On Sunday, we saw someone on the streets of a Canadian city proudly throwing up the Nazi salute while holding a picture of the Ayatollah. Where is the outrage? Why isn't the Prime Minister holding daily press conferences to denounce this? We have seen him convene with the media for far less.

Then there is the Trudeau government's continued refusal to list the IRGC as a terrorist organization. This not only sends a signal to the Islamic regime in Iran but also its supporters right here in Canada that they have nothing to fear from their actions. Meanwhile, we heard empty words from the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the immediate aftermath of Saturday's attack, stating that they support Israel's right to defend itself but conveniently leaving out that — as a concession to the NDP — their government banned military exports to Israel.

Then, yesterday, Minister Joly went so far as to call what happened on Saturday a win for Israel. She actually said yesterday that Israel should “. . . take the win . . .” What type of logic is required for one to consider it a win to have hundreds of missiles exploding in the sky over one's head?

The fact that there were no Israeli casualties isn't for lack of trying. The narrative that Ms. Joly is pushing, that Iran designed it to be that way, is laughable. What does it say about Canada that Saudi Arabia is doing more to help Israel's defence than we are?

It is any wonder that in the past several months we have seen anti-Israeli protesters become bolder and bolder? They have blocked the entrances of synagogues and Jewish community centres, trapping worshippers inside for hours without police response. At McGill University, protesters blocked all the entrances of the Bronfman Building simply because it's named after a prominent Jewish philanthropist who helped build that building.

Several months ago, at a demonstration in Montreal, a local imam called for the death of Jews, citing his interpretation of the Quran. It took months for police to finally act on this. Thankfully, yesterday, we saw some arrests of protesters in Montreal and even some in Toronto.

But overall, the chants of “kill the Jews” continue to ring out unimpeded. As a Canadian, I'm outraged. The full force of the law needs to be used against those who foment this kind of hate, and more of us here in Parliament need to speak out against it.

No region of the country has been immune to the wave of hate toward Jews. Vancouver police have announced a 62% jump in anti-Semitic incidents in 2023. Toronto police reported a 53% increase in hate crimes in 2023, with early indications that 2024 will easily exceed those numbers. In recent documentation, Montreal police reported a whopping 39 hate crimes against Jews, 36 hate crimes against Jewish property and 56 hate incidents between October 7 and January 24 alone. These are police figures.

• (1620)

A quick internet search reveals many incidents targeting Jews over the past six months right across Canada. Media reports say that anti-Semitic incidents increased more than twofold in Halifax — to 18 in 2023 from 7 in 2022 — with most occurring after the October 7 attacks. Calgary police reported 27 anti-Semitic incidents in 2023 — up from 15 — while Edmonton saw the number rise from 10 in 2022 to 18 in 2023, with 15 of those occurring, again, after October 7.

Colleagues, we cannot allow anti-Semitism to become normalized, and we cannot allow the haters to believe they can act with impunity. It is totally unacceptable that the Jewish community, whose history dates back to the foundation of our country and who have contributed so much to Canada's well-being and success, should feel unsafe on their own streets and in their own communities.

How far we have fallen since the July 2021 National Summit on Antisemitism when it was held under the auspices of Canada's then-Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism. That summit led to substantial new funding for the special envoy's office, new money for the Security Infrastructure Program, a commitment to better train civil servants and law enforcement to recognize and react to

anti-Semitism, and a strong statement by Canada at the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism in October 2021.

The situation now is clearly worse. Convening decision makers, including electoral officials at all levels, civil servants, law enforcement, educators, community and spiritual leaders, can only be beneficial, particularly as we face record levels of anti-Semitic incidents. We need to get everyone together to figure this out.

But that can only do so much if the change doesn't come from the top. It has to start with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs ending their practices of divisive diaspora politics and vote banking on identity politics. The motion that my colleague Senator Dalphond and I presented supports a growing movement across Canada that is already calling for such a second summit to be convened under the authority of Deborah Lyons who is Canada's current Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism.

Although, if I'm being honest, I don't know what leaves me more discouraged: the belief that this government will not honour such a motion, or the fact that they would but only to be able to say, "Hey, look, we're doing something."

Regardless, I do hope you'll join me in supporting this motion to send a message to not only the government to take seriously the rise in anti-Semitism and their contribution, but also to Jewish Canadians to show there are those of us still in this Parliament who believe that anti-Semitism is evil, ugly and unacceptable. A growing number of municipalities have recently adopted motions urging the rapid convening of a second national summit, as have 200 Canadians in a recently released open letter, with signatories including politicians from municipal and provincial governments, community leaders and organizations representing many different racial minorities, as well as rabbis and all religious faith leaders across our country.

I want to thank Marvin Rotrand for being the driving force behind those initiatives. It's heartening to see Christians, Muslims and Hindus rallying to stand with the Jewish community at this difficult time.

Colleagues, what we have seen over the past months is reminiscent of the dark days of the 1930s. It is overt anti-Semitism, it is often violent and it must stop.

In closing, I would like to mention that Rabbi Saul Emanuel, the Chair of the Jewish Community Council of Montreal, is among the signatories of that open letter and a friend of mine. Several months ago, there were serious attempts to burn down the council's building. Thankfully, the damage was limited and no one was hurt, but Rabbi Emanuel rightly pointed out that the local Jewish community was — and remains — traumatized.

It is for people like Rabbi Emanuel that I call upon the Senate today to take action. Colleagues, we need to stand up for the Jewish community. We need to stand up for Canadians who believe that we can live in peace, freedom, democracy and respect for the rule of law. I know each and every one of you hold those values close to your heart.

Colleagues, I call upon you all to endorse and support this motion, and send a clear message that we all stand with the Jewish community in Canada.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

(On motion of Senator Dalphond, debate adjourned.)

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY GROWING ISSUE OF WILDFIRES—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Robert Black, pursuant to notice of April 10, 2024, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry be authorized to examine and report on the growing issue of wildfires in Canada and the consequential effects that wildfires have on forestry and agriculture industries, as well as rural and Indigenous communities, throughout the country;

That in particular, the committee should examine:

- (a) the current status of wildfires in Canada;
- (b) the impact of wildfires on forestry, agriculture, water systems, air quality, food security, and biosecurity;
- (c) the possible federal measures that are in place, or should be in place, to adequately monitor and organize a response to wildfires;
- (d) the potential areas of improvement of these federal measures for addressing wildfires; and
- (e) international best practices as they relate to responding to wildfires;

That the committee report to the Senate no later than December 31, 2025, and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings for 180 days after the tabling of the final report; and

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

He said: Honourable senators, I'm honoured to request the study, on behalf of the Agriculture and Forestry Committee, to examine and report on the growing issue of wildfires in Canada and the consequential effects that they have on forestry and agriculture industries, as well as rural and Indigenous communities, throughout this country.

Colleagues, this is a great opportunity that we should seize. As we know, wildfires have become more and more prominent across this country. According to the Canadian Interagency

Forest Fire Centre National Fire Summary, 6,623 fires were recorded nationally in 2023, burning a total of 18,401,197 hectares across the country. These wildfires not only threaten natural resources but also pose significant challenges for our health — as was previously noted earlier today — for rural communities, for Indigenous peoples and for wildlife habitats.

This study is not one that is controversial. In fact, we have already been contacted by the Forest Products Association of Canada, among other industry members who look forward to being a part of this study.

I look forward to your support and collaboration in addressing these critical issues facing our nation through a study with the Agriculture and Forestry Committee.

Thank you.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Your Honour, I stood up just before you declared the motion carried. Perhaps Senator Black—

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Dalphond, I will ask for leave.

Honourable senators, is leave granted to allow Senator Dalphond to ask a question?

Some Hon. Senators: Yes.

Some Hon. Senators: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: I heard a no. Leave is not granted.

[*English*]

COURAGE, BRAVERY AND SACRIFICE OF ALEXEI NAVALNY

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Ratna Omidvar rose pursuant to notice of February 27, 2024:

That she will call the attention of the Senate to the courage, bravery and sacrifice of Alexei Navalny and other political prisoners persecuted by Putin's Russia.

She said: Honourable senators, I rise today to bring to your attention the extraordinary contributions of an extraordinary man in extraordinary times. Alexei Navalny is — and was — such a man.

His death is a blow to all freedom lovers in the world, but it is a body blow to Russians who aspire to the freedoms that we take so much for granted here: freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom to have fair elections and freedom to enjoy peace and security in our lives and those of future generations.

Navalny's strength was his courage. He did not know fear. Even if he did, he did not give in to it. His life's work speaks to this. He ferreted out and documented corruption in the state and state actors in Russia. He uncovered corruption within the Russian political sphere, and revealed embezzlement of public funds and questionable dealings at the highest levels of government. He founded the Anti-Corruption Foundation and started to document the deep-rooted systemic misdealings of influential government leaders in Russia. He had the courage to name names and, with his sharp commentary, gained widespread attention and established himself as a voice that could not be ignored. He called out the "crooks and thieves" in the ruling party. He disclosed to the Russian people the existence of Putin's palace, with its own impregnable fences, its own port, its own security, its own church, its own permit system, a no-fly zone and even its own border checkpoint. He told the Russians that, "It is absolutely a separate state within Russia." For this, Navalny was relentlessly pursued by the Russian state and imprisoned time and time again.

• (1630)

In a sense, the system's relentless pursuit of Navalny elevated his persona from that of an online leader to a real and present leader. Despite numerous arrests and sham trials during his quest for transparency and accountability, Navalny persisted in his opposition to the regime. He became even more of a target and was the subject of a completely bizarre poisoning in August 2020. Russian secret agents infected his underwear with the Novichok nerve agent.

When you read about it, that sounds like something straight out of a James Bond 007 movie, but no, it was a real and serious attack on his life.

The poisoning incident emphasized the personal risks Navalny endured in his pursuit of change and sparked calls for an independent investigation. His survival of the attack further solidified his image as a resilient figure standing up against powerful adversaries. Despite this attempt on his life, Navalny decided to go back to Russia, knowing very clearly that he would be arrested on arrival.

It's hard to understand this decision and his state of mind, but he said:

I don't want to give up either my country or my beliefs. I cannot betray either the first or the second. If your beliefs are worth something, you must be willing to stand up to them. And if necessary, make sacrifices.

Alexei spent the next years in the harshest detention, solitary confinement and unbearable prison conditions. Despite this, he never wavered in expressing his hopes and aspirations for a free and democratic Russia. His tenacity in the face of adversity served as an inspiration to numerous individuals aspiring to

foster a more just and accountable Russia, both inside and outside Russia. He had a vision for Russia — a vision that I think all of us, all humankind, can align themselves with. He said:

I want Russia to be as wealthy as it has the potential to be. I want this wealth to be distributed fairly. I want us to have normal health care. I want to see men —

— I'm sure he meant women as well —

— live long enough to retire: these days, half don't make it. I want us to have a normal education system, and I want all people to get an education.

For all of this, we know he lost his life.

His wife, Yulia Navalnaya, and his many followers have vowed to continue in his footsteps and keep his vision for Russia alive. She has said:

I will continue the work of Alexei Navalny. . . . I urge you to stand next to me. . . . We need to make use of every opportunity. To fight against the war, against corruption, against injustice. To fight for fair elections and free speech. To fight to get our country back.

Sadly, colleagues, Alexei Navalny is not alone. There are thousands of others who rot in these unbearable, harsh Siberian prisons. Honorary Canadian citizen Vladimir Kara-Murza is one of them. You will remember that last year this chamber, along with the other place, conferred honorary Canadian citizenship to him. I believe honorary Canadian citizenship has only previously been granted to seven other individuals.

Why did we do this? First, because he deserved it, but second, because we wanted to provide him with protection, and honorary citizenship provides that protection.

We can go one step further. We can actually confer the citizenship on him in the House of Commons, as we have done with Malala Yousafzai and others. Although we know that Russia would never allow him to come and accept the citizenship, his wife, Evgenia Kara-Murza, who has been in this chamber and who has been recognized in this chamber, would be a proxy for his life and would underline the fact, once again, that Canada believes in his freedom and in his protection by doing so.

We have other tools to hold Russia accountable too. We can hold them accountable where it hurts — in their pocketbooks. Russia has close to \$400 billion in assets squirreled away in Western financial systems. It is time to coordinate and work with our G7 partners, seize those assets and use them to compensate for the crimes Russia is committing against the Ukrainian people. Our government should act urgently on this front and, as a stroke of irony, name this action the Navalny act.

In closing, I go back to Navalny's signature quality: his fearlessness. He did not fear Putin, and neither should we. Like Navalny, we need to show courage and fearlessness when faced with a dictator who acts with impunity, who declares war on a sovereign nation, and who gets to make, keep and hide money while thousands suffer.

[Senator Omidvar]

Honourable senators, giving into fear would dishonour Navalny's legacy. I urge this chamber to stand up and have both the courage and the fearlessness that he demonstrated.

Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Colleagues, on February 16, the death of Russian lawyer and political activist Alexei Navalny at the age of 47 in a penal colony in the Russian Arctic sent shockwaves around the world.

After the very public assassinations of journalist and human rights activist Anna Politkovskaya in the elevator of her building in the heart of Moscow, and former deputy prime minister of Russia Boris Nemstov in the middle of the street near the Red Square, President Putin's dictatorial regime has now chosen to eliminate an adversary who became too famous in the secrecy of a prison far from Moscow.

Whatever the means chosen — assassination, unfortunate fall from the top of a building, plan crash, poisoning or death in prison — the Putin regime's message is always the same to those who would challenge it: "Play ball or die."

A quote attributed to Stalin seems increasingly well suited to President Putin: "Death solves all problems. No man, no problem."

Navalny's fight for democracy began with protests in the winter of 2011-12, when he set up the Anti-Corruption Foundation, which earned him his first prison sentences.

In July 2013, the Russian justice system sentenced him to five years in a camp for allegedly embezzling funds. He was granted a reprieve on appeal despite the judges' inclination to do what the regime demanded.

In 2018, when he tried to run as a candidate in the presidential election, the electoral commission declared him ineligible based on his prior criminal convictions. As far as the Russian system was concerned, he was a tried and convicted criminal.

In 2020, he became a victim of poisoning and fell into a coma that required months of treatment and rehabilitation in Germany.

He knew, when he returned to Russia on January 17, 2021, after a long convalescence, that he risked prison once again, and that's what happened. He was arrested as soon as he stepped off the plane. On February 2, 2021, the Russian judicial system converted his suspended sentence to hard time in prison. Then he was sent to a penal colony for two and a half years. His foundation was shut down for extremism, and the regime put Navalny's name on its list of terrorists and extremists. The system has no mercy for dissidents.

• (1640)

In March 2022, he was sentenced to nine years in prison for fraud and contempt of court.

Finally, in August 2023, he was found guilty of extremism again, and this time he was sentenced to 19 years in prison. He was then transferred from his prison in east Moscow to a penal colony in Siberia. In other words, he was consigned to oblivion. Nevertheless, in Russia and around the world, he was seen as a crusader for democracy who was still standing up to President Putin.

On February 16, 2024, just a few weeks before the Russian presidential election, prison authorities announced that he was dead. Although two months have passed since he died, the circumstances surrounding his death remain unclear. His widow, Yulia Navalnaya, believes that it was an assassination ordered by Putin to eliminate his greatest opponent and critic. On February 28, she told the European Parliament, and I quote:

[English]

Putin killed my husband. On his orders, Alexei was tortured for three years. He was starved in a tiny stone cell, cut off from the outside world . . .

She continued, saying, “And then they killed him. Even after that, they abused his body and abused his mother.”

His wife, who is now a widow, was threatened through Russian official media with imprisonment upon arrival.

Navalny’s funeral had to be organized by his mother, Lyudmila Navalnaya. Russian officials attempted to coerce her into having a private, secret funeral, even threatening to allow Navalny’s body to decay if she refused. His body was finally returned to his mother on February 24, eight days after his death. For his mother and others assisting her, it was hard to find a location for the funeral; due to fear of reprisals from the authorities, there were no funeral homes or churches available, not even for a private funeral.

On February 27, Vasily Dubkov, a lawyer for Navalny, was briefly detained in Moscow for “violating public order,” as part of the ongoing crackdowns on Navalny’s legal team and the Anti-Corruption Foundation by the Russian authorities.

Finally, Navalny’s farewell ceremony was held in his home district of Maryino, a suburb of Moscow, on March 1.

Thousands attended despite heavy police presence and fears of the reprisal that many are likely to be exposed to now.

As we all know, the latest presidential elections were held in Russia from March 15 to 17. It is important to note that voting is compulsory and largely done by electronic ballot. Commenting on the Russian election, our own Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mélanie Joly, said:

[Translation]

The presidential election in Russia was a non-democratic process that does not conform to international standards. Flaws include a biased and exclusionary nomination procedure, abuse of public resources in favour of Vladimir

Putin’s candidacy, extremely unbalanced media coverage, lack of public discussion of policy issues, and lack of guarantees of secrecy in electronic voting. The system was stacked to benefit the favoured candidate and deny voters a meaningful choice long before balloting began.

[English]

United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken said:

Russia’s recent presidential election occurred in an environment of intense repression of independent voices and the imprisonment, death, or exile of virtually all genuine political opposition. The Kremlin has systematically marginalized groups advocating for democratic processes and rule of law, including election monitors. Russian authorities also denied anti-war candidates’ registration for the presidential election on spurious technical pretenses and did not invite the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, or any credible international organizations, to observe polling. These steps illustrate the extent to which the Kremlin has denied its citizens a transparent, meaningful democratic process. Against this backdrop, this election can only be described as undemocratic.

Despite all of that, Vladimir Putin officially won only 88% of the vote. In other words, despite the fear that the regime has put in place over the years, the lack of real opponents to run and the electronic voting — which cannot be trusted — at least 12% of Russians dared to vote against him.

What should we do here in Canada?

Let me again quote Navalny’s widow. In a speech before the European Parliament, she said:

You cannot hurt Putin with another resolution or another set of sanctions that is no different from the previous ones. You cannot defeat him by thinking he’s a man of principle who has morals and rules. He’s not like that, and Alexei realized that a long time ago. You are not dealing with a politician but with a bloody mobster. . . .

She continued, saying:

You, and all of us, must fight this criminal gang. And the political innovation here is to apply the methods of fighting organised crime, not political competition. Not diplomatic notes, but investigations into the financial machinations. Not statements of concern, but a search for mafia associates in your countries, for the discreet lawyers and financiers who are helping Putin and his friends to hide money.

This is a message similar to that of our colleague Senator Omidvar, who has advocated for strengthening the Magnitsky Act to authorize the confiscation of seized assets of Putin and his allies in Canada. We should act on this.

The Honourable Irwin Cotler; Bill Browder, the man behind Magnitsky-type acts around the world; and their colleague Brandon Silver, who is working with the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights in Montreal, said this in a piece jointly published on March 13:

Canada should encourage allies to confiscate Russia's frozen central bank reserves, and implement sanctions against the architects of Putin's political imprisonments. Proceeds of such sanctions should be disbursed to organizations supporting dissidents and their families, like Kara-Murza's 30 October Foundation as well as victims of Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine.

[*Translation*]

In closing, I would like to pay tribute to Navalny, as well as to all the other opponents, whether they are well known or anonymous, who continue to resist tyranny in Russia.

• (1650)

I am of course thinking of Vladimir Kara-Murza, who, as Senator Omidvar also mentioned, has been granted honorary Canadian citizenship by our Parliament and who is serving a 25-year prison sentence. I'm also thinking of the other political prisoners, who number around a thousand, according to the NGO OVD-Info, a Russian human rights monitoring organization. To all those who are defying the Putin regime and risking death and detention, I say this: We will be watching closely. We're here. We see what you're doing. Don't give up. We won't forget you. You are not forgotten. You are fighting for democracy.

Colleagues, thank you for your attention.

[*English*]

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, pity the people of Russia, where, as Alexei Navalny called out, they are governed by crooks and thieves. We also now know they are governed by killers. I add my voice to those condemning the killing of Alexei Navalny.

Sadly, the sudden death of someone speaking for fairness and justice has long ceased to be shocking and instead has become common in Putin's Russia.

Whatever is written on Alexei Navalny's death certificate, the world knows the true cause was a killing, and it was due to his attempt to bring accountability and transparency to the Russian government. On top of this, there was his very effective opposition to the crooks in the Kremlin who were stealing the people's money to buy superyachts and mansions in Western countries, while many Russian citizens have no running water in their homes.

For Alexei Navalny was no voice in the wilderness, not even after he had been imprisoned there. His was a voice that was widely heard, one that called out the official lies and delusions of the Russian government. Russians heard him and knew there was an opposition, an alternative, however repressed and endangered by those in power.

[Senator Dalphond]

Why are we rising to speak today? What impact can a few speeches in the Canadian Senate have on Russia? The reason for speaking is to never forget the efforts of those many brave Russians who stood up to Putin and his cronies, who have been described as a criminal organization masquerading as a government.

Senators will recall the Sergei Magnitsky Law. Much as we're doing today, back then we remembered Sergei Magnitsky, a martyr for the stand he took, and the price he paid for that stand. Sergei Magnitsky was a tax lawyer investigating the theft of corporate seals and related documents from the company he was working for. This theft involved officials from the Russian Interior Ministry and led to the discovery of a \$230-million tax fraud. As the investigation proceeded, Magnitsky determined that, far from being the source of the fraud, the company was the victim of misconduct by corrupt officials. Unfortunately for Mr. Magnitsky, those officials then charged him with the crime and sent him to prison, where his health deteriorated due to abuse and denial of vital medical care.

He died in prison only for the Russian government to charge and convict him of tax fraud five years later.

Like Alexei Navalny, Sergei Magnitsky paid with his life, but it should be remembered that if these officials thought they were solving their problems by letting Magnitsky die in prison, they were mistaken. Since then, countries around the world, including Canada, have enacted so-called Magnitsky legislation, which imposes sanctions on individuals who have committed human rights abuses or been involved in corruption.

As with Sergei Magnitsky, the death of Alexei Navalny does not end the problems he represents to those in power in Russia. After all, if his criticism of the current regime had not gained traction among ordinary Russians, he could have been safely ignored, rather than harassed, imprisoned and finally killed. Those criticisms will not go away. The desire for accountability is still there. His dream will live on in the hearts of those hoping for a free Russia.

This murder, just like the killing of Sergei Magnitsky, will not be forgotten. Those responsible will pay a price, and that is why Western countries have to stand together. We need to speak up, not shut up.

Colleagues, I will close with a common Russian saying, attributed to many people, about their government: We know they are lying; they know they are lying; they know that we know that they are lying; we know that they know that we know that they know they are lying; and still, they continue to lie.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne: To begin, I, too, want to thank Senator Omidvar for initiating this inquiry following the death of political prisoner Alexei Navalny, who dedicated his life to the fight against corruption and the fight for democracy in Russia. I want to highlight the courage of Alexei Navalny, the victim of a repressive regime, because it should serve as a lesson to everyone who lives in a democracy.

Last December, Alexei Navalny was transferred to a penal colony in Siberia that is known to be one of the harshest in the country. Given the extremely difficult living conditions, his supporters were very vocal about the fact that they were afraid that he would die there. Their fears were realized on February 16. Russian authorities claim that Navalny died from sudden death syndrome while on a walk, even though Navalny appeared to be in good health when he appeared in court the day before his death. Many Western countries, including the European Union, the United States and France, have accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of being responsible for Navalny's death, calling in vain for an independent, transparent international inquiry into this suspicious death.

Alexei Navalny often spoke about his deep conviction that, in order to fight a regime like Russia, people have to be prepared to die, and he demonstrated that by returning to Russia in 2021, despite his recent, highly publicized poisoning with Novichok, a poison widespread in the former U.S.S.R. and now in Russia. In one of his YouTube videos, he even managed to trick one of the people who poisoned him into talking by posing as one of the man's superiors and demanding a report. This was also Navalny's strength: his utter derision for the corruption among Russia's elite, which he exposed to the light of day for all to see.

According to an iPolitics article, and I quote:

Without [Navalny], Putin's transition to total political invulnerability seems complete. . . . The death of this larger-than-life figure marks the end of an era in post-Soviet history and draws a definitive line under Russia's short-lived experiment with democracy.

Even in prison, Navalny remained an emblematic figure of the new anti-Putin Russia. He was the best-known and most vocal opponent of the regime, both in Russia and abroad; he was direct and scathing. Even as far back as 2011, he was saying, and I quote, "Corruption is the foundation of contemporary Russia, it is the foundation of Mr. Putin's political power."

Upon hearing of his death, his wife, Yulia Navalnaya, vowed to continue the fight and called for Russia's diplomatic isolation for one main reason:

. . . that no one in the world recognizes Putin as the legitimate president. That no one sits down with him at the negotiating table.

The more popular Navalny became, the more the government resorted to authoritarian means of silencing him. For example, he was banned from state media, he was repeatedly imprisoned, and he survived attempts to poison him. Despite it all, Navalny's capacity for resistance was unshakable.

Alexei Navalny started fighting corruption in Russia on his blog, and later on his YouTube channel, in the mid-2000s. One of his most popular videos was about the construction of Vladimir Putin's US\$1-billion palace on the Black Sea coast. At the same time, he focused his anti-corruption activism on calling out prominent members of the elite, attracting attention from numerous foreign countries through his foundation's efforts. However, the courts deemed his organization extremist and shut it down.

• (1700)

Since he couldn't run in the 2024 election from prison, he and his team continued to influence politics to thwart the campaigns of pro-Kremlin candidates. Widespread protests against Navalny's detention followed in Moscow and in more than 100 other cities. They were met with a police crackdown leading to more than 5,000 arrests.

The death of Alexei Navalny has once again highlighted the conditions faced by political prisoners in Russia. In fact, the United Nations special rapporteur on human rights wrote in 2023 about "the current State policy of criminalising any actual or perceived dissent."

She also said:

Russian authorities have caused the effective closure of the civic space, silencing of public dissent and independent media

That too is Alexei Navalny's legacy: an ongoing battle for democracy and against the corruption of the elite. There are still so many opponents who are fighting for a democratic Russia without Putin and who are suffering serious consequences for their struggle.

As recently as March 12, Leonid Volkov, exiled Russian opposition figure and Navalny's former right-hand man, was attacked with tear gas and a hammer just outside his home in Lithuania.

The Senate granted honorary citizenship to another brave dissident, Vladimir Kara-Murza, imprisoned for speaking out against the war in Ukraine. In fact, to speak out against the government in Russia is to risk being silenced, either by imprisonment or murder.

What should we do? I leave you with these powerful words from Alexei Navalny, who said, "If they decide to kill me, you're not allowed to give up."

Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[English]

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to the inquiry brought forward by our colleague Senator Omidvar regarding the life and sacrifices of Alexei Navalny. I want to thank Senator Omidvar for initiating this inquiry and for allowing colleagues to add their remarks in remembrance of an anti-corruption activist, a symbol of democratic rights and a proponent of free speech.

Mr. Navalny's upbringing and education were in many ways unremarkable. He was the son of a Red Army officer, and his parents ran a basket factory. He obtained a law degree, went on to study finance and securities and was awarded a scholarship through the World Fellows Program at Yale. He worked as a real estate lawyer who authored a financial blog for investors, but it was through this blog that Mr. Navalny came to expose theft and abuse inside state-owned companies.

Beyond his blog and political activism, Mr. Navalny became very adept at using social media to promote and highlight the concerns and perspectives of many Russians and to ensure their voices were heard. His financial blog had been critical of President Putin for, if not condoning, certainly tolerating the financial abuse in state-owned companies.

As a result of the protests and Russians now having the courage to make their voices heard, Mr. Navalny became a leading voice in ensuring that a healthy and robust opposition existed. Colleagues, we all know what happened from this point forward.

For the rest of his life, he would be in and out of prison. There were years of arrests, court cases and trumped-up charges of embezzlement — leading to a suspended sentence — all the way up to charges of terrorism and extremism that could have resulted in a 30-year prison term.

[*Translation*]

Alexei Navalny was left nearly blind in 2017 when acid mixed with green dye was thrown in his face. He was subsequently banned from running in any democratic elections.

He survived several poisoning attempts, the first of which took place when he spent time in prison for encouraging unauthorized protests. The second happened while he was on a plane over Siberia. He was eventually airlifted to Germany, where it was confirmed that he had been poisoned with a toxic nerve agent used in chemical warfare.

[*English*]

As you've heard already and as we all know, against the advice of many, after his recovery in January 2021, he returned to Russia where he was immediately detained and jailed. He would never be free again. Supporters staged mass protests across Russia and thousands were rounded up and detained for participating in unauthorized rallies.

Honourable senators, Alexei Navalny's influence and inspiration cannot be discounted. Many consider him a hero for exposing corruption and giving Russians the courage to express their displeasure with the regime. Indeed, within hours of the news breaking of his death, a wave of tributes poured in from around the world while in his home country more than 400 Russians were arrested for placing red flowers at makeshift memorials.

During one of his many court appearances, Navalny pressed a handwritten note against the glass of the dock, which read, "I am not afraid, and you should not be afraid."

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I extend heartfelt condolences to his mother, Lyudmila; his wife, Yulia; his daughter, Dasha; his son, Zakhar; and to all his friends and family as well as his extended family numbering in the millions for whom he fought and tragically died. May he rest in peace.

Hon. Leo Housakos: On February 16 at an Arctic penal colony in Russia, one of Putin's most dreaded opponents died at age 47. Alexei Navalny — a politician willing to risk it all to

expose the corruption inside Putin's regime — was assassinated by the Russian government the day before being involved in a prisoner swap.

Alexei Navalny was more than just a politician. He was a symbol of hope for millions of Russians yearning for a better future, free from the shackles of corruption and oppression. His relentless pursuit of truth and accountability made him a thorn in the side of the Kremlin, threatening to expose the rot at the core of Putin's regime. For this, he paid the ultimate price.

It is important to recognize that Navalny's early political career was marked by positions and statements that align with extremist views, including anti-Semitism. His past association and comments have raised valid concerns and criticisms, and it is crucial to confront and address them honestly. However, it is also important to recognize that individuals can evolve, learn and change their perspectives over time.

In recent years, Navalny publicly renounced his previous extreme views and ideologies. He demonstrated a commitment to democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law. He courageously fought against corruption and authoritarianism in Russia, risking his life to expose the systemic injustices plaguing his country. This change of heart meant that he made powerful enemies in Putin's Russia, and it eventually cost him his life.

Dear colleagues, we cannot allow Navalny's sacrifice to be in vain. As senators committed to upholding human rights and to promoting democracy around the world, we have a moral obligation to stand up for those who cannot speak for themselves. We must use our voice and influence to hold tyrants and oppressors to account for their crimes. We must work tirelessly to support and empower those who fight for freedom and justice in the face of tyranny.

In this regard, I would be remiss if I did not mention Sergei Magnitsky, whose name has become synonymous with fighting against corruption and impunity. Magnitsky, who was a humble lawyer, uncovered a massive tax fraud scheme perpetrated by corrupt officials only to be arrested, tortured and killed in custody. His legacy lives on in our Sergei Magnitsky Law thanks to our esteemed former colleague here in the Senate, Raynell Andreychuk.

Moreover, we cannot ignore the role that Russia plays in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. The invasion of Crimea and the ongoing aggression in eastern Ukraine represents blatant violations of international law and the sovereignty of neighbouring states. The Russian government's support for separatist militias and its continued military presence in the region have resulted in untold suffering for the people of Ukraine and has destabilized the entire region.

As members of the international community, we have a responsibility to hold Russia accountable for its actions and to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We must continue to support diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict peacefully and to provide assistance to those who have been displaced or affected by the violence.

Furthermore, we must recognize that the murder of Navalny is not an isolated incident but rather part of a broader pattern of human rights abuses and repression in Russia and other like-minded regimes such as those in Iran, Turkey and China.

• (1710)

Journalists, activists and political opponents are routinely harassed, intimidated and even killed for speaking out against these regimes. I'm thinking right now of Jimmy Lai in Hong Kong.

This culture of fear and impunity must end if Russia, or any of these other nations, is ever to fulfill its potential as a democratic and free society.

In conclusion, let us honour the memory of Alexei Navalny by redoubling our efforts to support the cause of democracy and human rights in Russia and around the world.

Let us stand with the people of Ukraine in their struggle for peace and freedom, and let us send a clear and unequivocal message to the Russian government: The world is watching, and we will not tolerate the suppression of dissent and the violation of international law.

Thank you, colleagues.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Yves Perron, Member of Parliament, and a delegation from the Quebec and Ontario farming communities. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Dalphond.

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

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Pursuant to rule 9-10(7), the sitting is suspended.

The bells will start ringing at 5:15 p.m. to call in the senators for the vote at 5:30 p.m.

(The sitting of the Senate was suspended.)

(The sitting of the Senate was resumed.)

• (1730)

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Gerba, seconded by the Honourable Senator Klyne, for the second reading of Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management).

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

That Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management), be read the second time.

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

YEAS THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Al Zaibak	MacDonald
Aucoin	Marshall
Bellemare	Martin
Black	McBean
Brazeau	McNair
Burey	McPhedran
Cardozo	Mégie
Carignan	Miville-Dechéne
Clement	Moncion
Cormier	Moodie
Coyle	Omidvar
Cuzner	Osler
Dagenais	Oudar
Dalphond	Pate
Dasko	Petitclerc
Deacon (<i>Nova Scotia</i>)	Petten
Deacon (<i>Ontario</i>)	Plett
Dean	Poirier
Downe	Ravalia
Forest	Ringuette
Gerba	Robinson
Gignac	Ross
Gold	Saint-Germain
Hartling	Seidman
Housakos	Smith
Kingston	Sorensen

LaBoucane-Benson
Lankin
MacAdam

Varone
Verner
Yussuff—58

ABSTENTIONS
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Richards

Wallin—2

NAYS
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Arnot
Batters
Boehm
Duncan
Greene
Harder

Klyne
Massicotte
Oh
Quinn
Simons
Woo—12

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

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

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

(At 5:38 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 2 p.m.)

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