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THE HONOURABLE DAN HAYS
SPEAKER

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 26, 2003

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

[*Translation*]

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

ISSUANCE OF STAMPS HONOURING EMINENT SENATORS

Hon. Jean Lapointe: Honourable senators, today, I believe, I have some good news to announce.

Some time ago, Senator Sparrow whom I admire greatly for his valuable contributions to the Senate and for his personal brand of humour, made a rather original but also somewhat negative comment concerning my motion on time allocation for tributes. At that time, he described my suggestion on issuing Canadian postage stamps honouring some of our eminent past senators as "tongue in cheek." He thought it was all a joke.

Honourable senators, the joke is now on Senator Sparrow. I have had the privilege to sit on the Canada Post advisory committee for several years now, and at a meeting last week in Toronto, I humbly recommended to the committee that a booklet of stamps be issued honouring five or six eminent senators who have contributed, over the years, to making our country the great place to live in that it is today. This number could, I might add, be raised to twelve, if the committee decided to issue what is termed a double booklet.

I would like honourable senators to know that my suggestion was very well received by the President, the Honourable André Ouellet, and committee members. The names suggested were compiled with the assistance of the Honourable Serge Joyal. I thank him for his suggestions.

They are: the Honourable Cairine Reay Wilson of Ontario, the first woman appointed to the Senate; the Honourable Raoul Dandurand of Quebec, who is ineligible because there has already been a stamp honouring him; the Honourable James Gladstone of Alberta, the first aboriginal senator; and the Honourable Arnold David Croll of Ontario.

Today, I am asking for your cooperation. If you have any other eminent senators to suggest, I would appreciate your sending their names to my office along with a brief curriculum vitae, so that I may pass them on at the next Canada Post advisory committee meeting.

People selected as subjects of stamps are always chosen for good reason. Those senators selected will finally be gaining recognition for the true value of their contributions.

I will soon be done. If you do not allow me to finish, I shall never submit the name of the Speaker of the Senate for a stamp.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable Senator Lapointe, your time is up.

[*English*]

Senator Lapointe: Honourable senators, I need seven seconds.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Senator Lapointe: I believe that a series of postage stamps honouring eminent senators would allow Canadians to learn about and better understand all the work that is done here; it would have a very positive effect on the Senate's image, both here and abroad.

[*English*]

BRITISH COLUMBIA

BID FOR WINTER OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES 2010

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, last weekend a clear majority of Vancouver residents expressed their support for British Columbia's bid to host the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Vancouver and Whistler.

In addition to the many sports and community legacies the games will provide, the Olympics are expected to generate huge economic benefits. Factoring in the expansion of the Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre, the games will generate up to \$10 billion in net economic activity, create up to 228,000 jobs and raise more than \$2 billion in provincial, federal and local taxes.

The games will show the world that British Columbia is open for business at a new level. We will raise Canada's international profile and contribute to increased foreign tourism and investment to boost the economy and create jobs.

The province and the Government of Canada have each invested \$9.1 million in the bid phase of the project. A further contribution of \$10 million has been announced for the training of high-performance athletes.

I hope all honourable senators will join together in calling upon the federal government to financially assist B.C. in a manner no less substantial than it has done in the past when the Olympic Games were held in Montreal and Calgary.

• (1340)

The B.C. Olympic committee needs the support of all Canadians and their respective governments. I believe the Prime Minister said in Vancouver last evening, when addressing the visiting IOC members and the bid committee, that Canadians and British Columbians have a whole lot to offer, and we are confident that this will be one of the best Olympics ever. In 1986, British Columbia held one of the world's best Expo gatherings. We look forward to setting a new benchmark of success for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Hon. Vivienne Poy: Honourable senators, on Saturday, March 8, millions of women around the world will gather to celebrate International Women's Day. They will mark this day with rallies, marches, panel discussions and receptions.

While women everywhere come together to celebrate our achievements, this is also an opportunity to reflect on what still needs to be done to meet our goals.

We can all agree that the status of women has improved in Canada and around the world. In the labour market, in the home, and in politics, women are faring better than in the past. Nevertheless, we fail to wield the influence to which we are entitled.

Our numbers are stagnant in politics, making up only about 20 per cent of provincial and federal legislatures, and 35 per cent of the Senate. Internationally, many other nations are reforming their system successfully so as to include more women in public office.

Despite the fact that women fare very well in small business and show aptitude as entrepreneurs and managers, MBA programs are still dominated by men, and, according to a recent board membership survey, women account for only 10.5 per cent of all directors of companies in Canada.

Outside of our institutions, many women in Canada still face inequalities that make their lives a daily struggle for survival. Poverty and violence against women are among the most pressing problems. Single mothers are particularly at risk.

Internationally, women in less developed countries labour under inhumane conditions while trying to educate, feed and clothe their children. As was so starkly illustrated in Afghanistan, there are still women around the world who suffer under intolerable conditions. I am proud to say that Canada continues to play an active role in alleviating the suffering of these women by advocating for access to adequate education and health care. In 1993, Canada also became the first country to issue guidelines on refugee women claimants fleeing gender-related persecution. In the 10 years since then, many fortunate women have found a new home in Canada.

[Senator St. Germain]

Honourable senators, March 8 is a time to reflect on the lives of the women who have made great contributions to Canada, some of whom are in the chamber with us today. It is also a time to remember all of those women who continue to be denied the right to the dignity we all deserve, as well as to remember that we still have a long way to go to achieve equality in Canadian society.

As men and women in leadership positions, we all have a role to play in bringing about change in Canada and around the world.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Hon. Edward M. Lawson: Honourable senators, since it is still black history month, I want to share a story with fellow senators.

If we turn the clock back to June of 1966, James Meredith was attending an African American college. He had applied to the all-white University of Mississippi, and had been rejected. With the help of the NAACP and the Supreme Court, he was admitted in 1961. The Governor of Mississippi, however, barred his attendance. Riots erupted, and James Meredith finally registered only after the National Guard had been called in. He graduated in 1963, and earned a law degree from Columbia University Law School in 1968.

While he was a student, on June 5, 1966, James Meredith and a number of his companions decided to walk from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi, 220 miles, to urge their fellow African Americans to register to vote. About 450,000 were unregistered.

Unfortunately, on the second day of the march, some racist redneck shot him with a shotgun. He was actually shot three times. He survived the shooting. Other civil rights leaders, such as Martin Luther King, picked up the march. Over a 21-day period, they marched on to Jackson, Mississippi, stopping at each small town urging African Americans to register and vote.

At this time, my international union was holding its convention in Miami, Florida. The Teamsters International Union expressed the desire to send an international committee to meet the marchers when they arrived and to present Martin Luther King with a cheque for \$25,000, to help with the registration.

We flew from Miami to Jackson, Mississippi, and reported to the policing authorities there. They told us, "If you wear glasses, keep them in a hard case. If you are wearing a tie, make sure it is a clip-on. I asked, "Why would we do that?" He grabbed me by the tie, and he gave it a pull. He said, "Son, have you ever been in a riot? You want to wear a clip-on tie or put that tie in your pocket."

The marchers were expected to arrive in Jackson, Mississippi, at about 4:30 p.m. Our international committee consisted of one of our international vice-presidents, Harold Gibbons; a civil rights supporter from St. Louis, Florion Bortosila, lawyer from Michigan who was on our international staff; and they included a Canadian, me, so that we would constitute an international committee which would present this cheque.

Our leader, Harold Gibbons, decided that we would not wait for them to arrive, that we would march out to meet them. At 8:00 in the morning, we started to march out of Jackson, Mississippi. Many people, certainly many African Americans, were waiting for the arrival of the march. Before we hit the outskirts of the town, about 2,000 to 3,000 joined our walk to meet the main body of marchers.

If my three minutes are up, I will continue my story tomorrow.

The Hon. the Speaker: I regret, Senator Lawson, we will have to hear from you tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

MONTFORT HOSPITAL— INSTALLATION OF MILITARY HOSPITAL ON CAMPUS

Hon. Jean-Robert Gauthier: Honourable senators, I have good news to announce today. According to a front-page article in *Le Droit*, the Department of National Defence is interested in Montfort Hospital.

The well-researched article said that negotiations between the federal government and Montfort Hospital, on installing the military hospital on the Montfort campus, are well underway and will be confirmed shortly.

Currently, members of the Canadian Forces use the National Defence Medical Centre on Alta Vista Drive in Ottawa. The facilities and the equipment are obsolete. Built in the late 1950s, the Centre has outlived its initial life expectancy, so much so that unless considerable renovations are carried out in the very near future, it will soon cease to be viable as a health care centre.

I have taken an interest in these negotiations for several years now, particularly since the provincial government of Ontario wanted to close Montfort Hospital. In January 1999, the Department of Canadian Heritage announced funding of \$10 million over five years for the University of Ottawa, to establish a National French-Language Health Training Centre. This centre is to train health professionals from across the country, except Ontario and Quebec. This initiative allowed Montfort Hospital to bolster its academic status for training these professionals. This agreement between the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Medicine and Montfort Hospital has helped the community. The hospital's survival was confirmed, as you know, by the courts, several years ago.

The Department of National Defence, together with Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, has asked that hospitals in the region make proposals regarding installing the military hospital in another hospital in Ottawa.

The proposal by Montfort Hospital met the criteria set out by the Department of National Defence in terms of the range of services it could provide. Montfort Hospital proposed installing a Canadian Forces health care centre in the new building, and the administration plans to build right beside the current campus.

Honourable senators, I am very pleased to announce that this project is currently underway. This new hospital complex will provide services in both official languages. It will also be

conducive to providing better quality health services to military personnel and will create a critical mass of professional skills. I am one of those who believe that the new hospital complex will continue to provide the quality services that Montfort Hospital is known for. As we all know, Montfort is one of the best hospitals in the world and more effective in Ontario than any other.

• (1350)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

CANADA PENSION PLAN CANADA PENSION PLAN INVESTMENT BOARD ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-3, to amend the Canada Pension Plan and the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board Act.

Bill read first time.

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

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

[*English*]

QUESTION PERIOD

THE ENVIRONMENT

IMPLEMENTATION OF KYOTO PROTOCOL

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate in regard to the Kyoto Protocol. When can we expect legislation to clarify how the government will allocate the budget funds and where the responsibilities will lie for implementing the Kyoto plan?

Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators know that the Kyoto Protocol must not only be a national plan on behalf of the federal government; it must also be a national plan that is coordinated with the provinces. Those discussions have been ongoing for some three and a half years. However, they have taken on a greater urgency since the Kyoto Protocol was passed by both chambers just before Christmas. Plans are ongoing. When plans are confirmed, which require legislation — and one assumes that legislation will be required in some areas — then we will proceed with that legislation.

Senator Andreychuk: Will consultations be broader than provincial government consultations? The implementation of Kyoto has implications for producers and other Canadians. While there have been some discussions, the majority of those discussions have involved the bureaucracies within provincial governments. Very few discussions have involved others who will be affected. Is that situation likely to change?

Senator Carstairs: I reassure the honourable senator that a great many discussions took place with producers through September to December. Oil and gas producers were involved; the steel producers were involved; the automobile sector was involved — all the parties for whom targets have been set.

However, there are also budgetary amounts with which the federal government can proceed, in and of its own authority. I expect much of that work will go forward rather quickly, particularly in terms of our commitment to such things as bringing more ethanol on stream.

Senator Andreychuk: Honourable senators, can the Leader of the Government in the Senate provide me with more information as to what consultations have taken place and will take place, particularly with farm organizations and farmers themselves? There is some consternation within the farming community about tradeable carbon credits for changing farming methodology pursuant to the Kyoto plan. Those credits will be kept by the government until 2008; thereafter, the farmers will receive the benefit.

In other words, although the government is again asking the farming community to adapt their farming methods — to produce carbon credits — it intends to take the benefit of those changes until 2008. This has caused concern, particularly with the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities. That association states that it is hardly an incentive for farmers to create more credits for the government at a time when farmers cannot even meet the costs of producing grain and other foodstuff.

Second, there has been very little consultation on how to earn credits after 2008.

Finally, some scientists are indicating that one can create these sinks but, at some point, there will be some further release of carbons. If that is the case, will there then be a penalty assessed? How will one quantify carbon to get a credit? If there is further expelling of carbons at a later date in the usual practices of farming or otherwise, will it be detrimental?

This is just one more problem for farmers in Western Canada among so many others. This issue should be treated as urgent by the government. There should be immediate consultations to alleviate these concerns.

Senator Carstairs: Perhaps the honourable senator is not aware, but there has been the ongoing development of an agricultural policy framework between the very farmers whom she mentions this afternoon and the Government of Canada. There will be \$5.25 billion invested from now until 2008 to ensure that this agricultural policy framework takes into consideration the needs of farmers, including the obligations that they may well have to assume under the Kyoto accord. The discussions have resulted in a number of meetings in January around this policy framework. I

will certainly bring the specific concerns of the honourable senator to the Minister of Agriculture.

Senator Andreychuk: There may have been some consultations with some farm groups and particularly with provincial governments. There will be some money released. Western Canada continues to be plagued by such factors as transportation costs, production costs, and global changes, all influences outside their control. If the federal government can do anything to alleviate farmers' concerns, it should do so. Farmers need to make long-term assessments on whether to continue farming. There are some 50,000 farmers in Saskatchewan. However, we have lost 11 per cent of the farm population in recent years and that trend is continuing. One of the issues that is very hard on farm families is uncertainty, and 2008 is not that far away. They need to know what their inputs are and what their costs will be, so anything we can do to alleviate the anxiety and uncertainty in this area, in addition to the funding, would be appreciated.

• (1400)

Senator Carstairs: I thank the honourable senator for her representation, and I want her to know that of the \$5.25 billion package, \$589 million is specifically assigned to helping farmers make the transition. She has, of course, indicated that we have lost farmers. Primarily, that has been a direct result of much larger farms, not that we have significantly less acreage under development at this time. However, she does raise an important issue and that is that consultation must be ongoing with the farmers of this country.

TRANSPORT

THE BUDGET—REDUCTION OF AIR TRAVEL SECURITY TAX

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino: Honourable senators, my question is about the recent budget provision, reducing the air travel security tax by some 40 per cent on all domestic flights. Could the Leader of the Government in the Senate explain why her government chose to apply this reduction only to domestic flights and what the public policy rationale is for not applying the reduction to international flights as well?

Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the decision was made that there would be adequate revenues generated from a reduction in the levy on domestic traffic but that, at this time, because of the added burden of security obligations for flights leaving this country, the higher levy would have to be maintained on international flights.

I am sure the honourable senator was as delighted as I was with the announcement by the Minister of Transport this week, of full disclosure with respect to the costs of tickets, including the statement that individuals would not be able to list one-way fares if, indeed, the person had to purchase a two-way ticket.

Senator Di Nino: The response to my question last week was actually quite clear, and I thank the Minister of Finance for responding in the budget.

Honourable senators, according to figures from the Association of Canadian Travel Agents, Canada's security fee on international flights is the highest in the world, and I will give you some examples: Israel, \$12.42; France, \$10.64; Australia, \$8.02; Italy, \$2.89; and the U.S., \$7.65 — I do not know if that is in U.S. or Canadian dollars. It could be the same as Canada if it is a U.S.-dollar figure.

Would the Leader of the Government in the Senate explain this huge disparity between Canada's air security fee and that of these other countries?

Senator Carstairs: Honourable senators, a great deal of it can be attributed to the fact that this is an extraordinarily large country with an extraordinarily large number of airports per capita. If one looks south of the border, yes, they have a large number of airports, but they also have a far greater number of individuals travelling. One only has to go to the Chicago airport to understand just what airport congestion can be all about. The reality is that the government did their review, as they indicated they would do, and that review resulted in a clear reduction in the tax. However, this review is ongoing. It will be conducted every year and if all of the resources collected are not necessary to pay the security costs that have come about as a result of 9/11, there will be further reductions.

Senator Di Nino: Would the minister undertake to keep us informed as to the money collected, how much is collected and where it is going? It would be useful to know in future, perhaps on an annual basis. I would appreciate that.

Honourable senators, an ongoing complaint of the Air Transport Association of Canada, which represents the airline industry, is the fact that port security and border security are funded out of general revenues. According to ATAC's Vice-President of Policy and Strategic Planning, ATAC does not understand the logic that says aviation should be user pay in all respects and questions whether it is feasible in the long run given the costs of security, which continue to rise.

Why is it that the Liberal government continues to insist on giving port security and border security preferential treatment, thereby giving benefit to truck, rail and ship travel while punishing the air travel industry?

Senator Carstairs: Honourable senators, there is a fundamental difference between commercial traffic that uses roads and ports, and commercial traffic that uses the airline system. The airline system is used primarily for passenger travel, as the honourable senator knows, and passenger travel expectations for security should be and, indeed, are higher. I suspect the day will never come when the kind of security systems that we have at major airports will exist at every port in this country. I do not believe that it would be economically feasible.

Having said that, there are certain specific ports that need to have their security beefed up; but even in the United States, which has become much more concerned about port security than we have in this country, according to the last estimate I saw, only 3 per cent of the container ships are being examined.

Senator Di Nino: On that point, honourable senators, the minister obviously knows that there has been an increase in travel, particularly across the American border, by rail and bus, since the disaster of 9/11, and there is also a certain amount of passenger

travel by boat. I am not sure we can equate the commercial industry but, in effect, if one travels by airplane there is a charge associated with security, whereas if one travels by train there is not. I do not see how the leader can use the argument she just stated to justify the different treatment of these two modes of transportation.

Senator Carstairs: I am sorry the honourable senator does not like the explanation, but the explanation is still the same. We have much more person-to-person traffic by air than we do by other means, and person-to-person traffic requires far more intense security.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

AQUACULTURE—HAZARDOUS EFFECTS ON WILD SPECIES

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, my question is to the Leader of the Government in the Senate and it relates to aquaculture. The situation on the West Coast is that fish farms are creating a serious hazard to the wild stocks. If half of what is written in regard to what has happened in Norway and Ireland is correct, I would like to know what the government is planning to do immediately in order to resolve this serious situation that would impact the wild stocks on the West Coast.

Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, as the honourable senator knows, and certainly as I have read and followed, the significant question that seems to be on the minds of many British Columbians is the tremendous growth of sea lice, or what has been certainly reported as the tremendous growth of sea lice, on salmon as a result of fish farms. That is exactly why, on January 31, 2003, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans outlined a collaborative action plan to be implemented by Fisheries and Oceans in the Province of British Columbia.

Senator St. Germain: Honourable senators, could the minister outline the plan? Is the plan to shut down portions of these operations during the wild species runs? What will be done?

The department is a proponent of the aquaculture industry as well as the regulators. Does the honourable leader not think it is time to move the aquaculture industry to Agriculture and have Fisheries and Oceans be the regulator?

Senator Carstairs: Honourable senators, the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council released an advisory in November 2002 indicating that there was strong anecdotal evidence to suggest that pink salmon declines were linked directly to sea lice. The action plan was the result of that information. Obviously, the government was doing its job properly in this case. It has outlined a five-part comprehensive action plan to address these potential risks. The action plan will include a freshwater monitoring program, a marine monitoring program, an active salmon farm management approach, a long-term research plan; and a public consultation and dialogue process.

Senator St. Germain: The question is: If it is proven that it is as hazardous as it appears and as the honourable minister has described, would the government be prepared to shut these operations down immediately to protect the wild species on the West Coast?

Senator Carstairs: Honourable senators, at this stage, that is still a hypothetical question. Clearly, both the studies and the analysis must be done, and they must be done in a true scientific manner, where the greatest possible involvement of those in the field, not only on the ecology side but also on the fish farming side, is brought to bear. At that point, a decision will be made.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

CUTS IN GRANTS TO MILITARY ASSOCIATIONS

Hon. J. Michael Forrestall: Honourable senators, my question, which has to do with one that I raised two or three times in recent days, concerns the cutting back on contributions to long, well-established institutions in our country, namely, the Federation of Military and United Services Institutes of Canada and the Conference of Defence Associations.

Yesterday, the minister was good enough to respond to the effect that these institutions no longer met certain defence or government criteria. That is fine. I can accept that. However, I must confess that, if I waited till later on today or tomorrow morning, I could look at the Estimates to determine whether any change has come about with respect to the status of not only those two associations, but also the Army Cadet League, the Air Cadet League, the Navy League of Canada, the Royal Canadian Navy Benevolent Fund, and the Air Force Benevolent Fund. The Security and Defence Forum, which I must admit I have never even heard of, is to receive \$1.7 million. As well, the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, the Southern Conflict Studies, the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, and another institute I have never heard of, will receive \$1.125 million. There is also mention of the Institute of Environment Monitoring and Research. I am sure that it is very useful, but why it is in defence, I do not know.

Have any of those been affected by the Estimates that were tabled today or is it just the two that are the subject of my question? If that is the case, that is, those were the only two affected because they no longer met the requirement, then that is a governance problem and that is fine. What is the difference between the work that the Conference of Defence Associations and the Federation of Military and United Services Institutes of Canada are doing now and the work they have been doing since 1932? Why was this decision made to single out, if you will, these two?

Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the answer is really quite simple. There is a distinct difference between funding the core of an organization; that is, its secretarial staff or, perhaps, its executive director, and funding policy analysis work. The funding is applied to the study. Monies are granted and that particular organization then proceeds to undertake the study.

The funding that was going to the defence group was, in fact, core funding. Over the last few years, core funding for many departments has been cut. For example, the Status of Women has lost all of its core funding. The organization can be awarded

project-by-project funding, but not core funding. The belief is that, if an organization is viable and has a membership base, then the membership base should provide core funding for the organization.

Senator Forrestall: Honourable senators, it will be interesting for the Conference of Defence Associations to mull over that response tomorrow. If I were the Minister of National Defence, I would sooner be on my way to Afghanistan than on my way to the Château Laurier Hotel. However, we know what the minister thinks of that august group of Canadians.

REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES— SCRAPPING OF EQUIPMENT

Hon. J. Michael Forrestall: Can the minister confirm that the government indeed plans cost-cutting measures which will involve scrapping the four Tribal class destroyers, most, if not all, the Leopard main battle tanks, and the C-130E Hercules long-range search and rescue aircraft, as part of a reallocation of resources to help the minister find the \$200 million shortfall that he has, given that he has made a firm public undertaking to do that? Will he do it on the back of the military.

Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, let me begin with the honourable senator's comment before proceeding to his question, which related to the Minister of Defence's appearance tomorrow before the group at the Château Laurier. Knowing how fearsome he is, I do not think he will have any hesitation. I am sure he would rather be there than in Afghanistan.

As to the questions relating to the cost-cutting measures, no decisions have been made regarding equipment purchases or the equipment that is presently serviced by our Armed Forces but which may be deleted at some time in the future.

Clearly the direction of the honourable minister is towards having a well equipped Armed Forces component that is able to meet its international obligations. It will commence meeting those, once again, in Afghanistan, in August. Our personnel will go to Afghanistan equipped with the skill level that has been commended by so many countries. Over and over again, the United States gave credit to the Canadian Forces that served in Afghanistan, for their high level of skill.

REPLACEMENT OF SEA KING HELICOPTERS— CHANGES TO STATEMENT OF OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, on February 5 the honourable senator specifically asked a question about the 60 per cent reduction in the weight of self-defence and operational stores and whether that was not, somehow or other, a reduction in our statement of operational requirements. I would assure the honourable senator that the technical specifications have remained consistent. However, at the time of the statement of operational requirements, it was stated that there would be internal deployable stores of 18 sonobuoys and six smoke markers. The quantities have not changed, but the weight of them has changed substantially.

Hon. J. Michael Forrestall: Honourable senators, the minister has opened a Pandora's box that I would love to pursue. The fact is that the difference between the one set of orders that remains constant and what we will be dealing with is night and day. All of a sudden, nothing qualifies except the Eurocopter. That is what the government set out to do and that is what it has got. You mislead us with smoke and mirrors and veiled truths. Although every answer the minister gives us is true, she neglects to tell us what is going on.

• (1420)

Can I draw the conclusion from her response that no decision has been made with respect to the Tribal Class and the Hercules, that this is, in fact, under consideration?

Senator Carstairs: The honourable senator may not draw that conclusion. It is my understanding that everything is under consideration, but he cannot take any specifics that any individual piece of equipment is under active consideration. The Minister of Defence has maintained that he should be able to find savings of \$200 million in his \$12-billion budget, particularly in light of the fact that he has received an increase of \$800 million in the budget line and another \$275 million in a one-time grant for this year to ensure that they begin the 2003-04 year without carry-overs.

With regard to the honourable senator's statement about the answers that I give, he knows full well that I give him exactly the material that I am provided, in as open a fashion as I possibly can.

UNITED NATIONS

POSSIBLE WAR WITH IRAQ—PLAN TO BRIDGE DIFFERENCES AMONG MEMBERS OF SECURITY COUNCIL

Hon. Douglas Roche: Honourable senators, my question is directed to the minister. Can she clarify her statement of yesterday that there is no concrete plan or initiative by Canada regarding the Iraq crisis? We know that Ambassador Heinbecker is discussing with Security Council members and with Hans Blix a new one-and-a-half page document called "Ideas on Bridging the Divide," which is the Canadian government's presentation of a middle ground between the opposing positions now dividing the Security Council. We also know that the Prime Minister is flying to Mexico today to talk to the leadership of Mexico, which has a seat on the Security Council, about the Canadian plan. Since press speculation on the contents of the Canadian paper offers differing interpretations, can the minister table the paper, now, in the Senate, so we can see it?

Hon. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I do not have the paper, so I cannot possibly table it. However, the honourable senator has indicated in his question the correct interpretation. When he indicated that the ambassador is distributing ideas, that is exactly what he is doing. There is, as I indicated yesterday, no concrete plan. The Government of Canada is trying to act as a broker in a situation where we have great diversity by members of the Security Council and by the membership of the United Nations as a whole. It is trying to play, as much as it can, a positive role, to try to bring the parties together.

The very survival of the United Nations has to be a goal of each and every one of us, and it is interesting that sometimes wars evolve for very little reason, sometimes for very complex reasons. However, it is important that we do not have in the United Nations a recurrence of what happened to the League of Nations when two members, Japan and Manchuria, went to war over the blowing up of 38 inches of railway track.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, this is the second day in a row that we have passed by Government Business rather quickly. Did I miss something?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, my honourable colleague has realized that we are at Item No. 1 under "Other Business, Senate Public Bills," second reading of Bill S-14, which stands in his name.

[*English*]

NATIONAL ANTHEM ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Kinsella, seconded by the Honourable Senator Corbin, for the second reading of Bill S-14, to amend the National Anthem Act to reflect the linguistic duality of Canada.—(*Honourable Senator Kinsella*).

Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, that brings us to Other Business, and the Table has called item No. 1. Honourable senators, before I begin my remarks on Bill S-14, which is a bill that does not affect the National Anthem Act as we presently have it, I want to thank Senator Corbin for his support of this bill.

Honourable senators, it is simple. The National Anthem Act that Canada adopted in 1980 has just a few paragraphs with a schedule attached to it. The schedule that is attached to it has the musical score and the English and French words of *O Canada!*

Senator Rompkey: Could we hear the music?

Senator Kinsella: Honourable senators will recall that Bill S-3, introduced by our colleague Senator Poy, deals with that first schedule and only the English version of that first schedule. Bill S-14 proposes that the current schedule be numbered Schedule 1, and that a Schedule 2 be added to provide for a bilingual version of *O Canada!*

Bill S-14 does not affect the current schedule, which provides for the English and French versions of *O Canada!* Rather, the bill adds a new schedule to the National Anthem Act, which contains an official version of the anthem that melds the English and French words of our national anthem.

Honourable senators, like you, I often watch Hockey Night in Canada. Whether it is coming from the Molson Centre in Montreal, the Corel Centre here — the team named after a distinguished body on this Hill — or one of the other arenas, we know that the game begins with the singing of *O Canada*, and the singer will choose some of the lines from the English version and some of the lines from the French version. It is never the same in the different arenas that we attend.

My bill proposes having at least a common, agreed upon version that is a third option, if you like. As you know, honourable senators, I come from a bilingual province, the Province of New Brunswick. At public functions in our province where there is singing of *O Canada*, a tradition has been building over the years to do it half in English and half in French. When I am in those settings and half the crowd sings in French and half sings in English, frankly, it is an awful noise, an awful cacophony, rather than all singing together. I would like to see — and this bill attempts to provide us with at least an option — a common standard that might help to obviate the problems in public events so that all can be singing the same lines of the song.

• (1430)

We are familiar with the history of our national anthem. Calixa Lavallée, a music teacher in Quebec, was commissioned to set to music a poem written by Judge Adolphe-Basile Routhier. The tune made its debut on June 24, 1880, almost 13 years after Confederation.

In 1901, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall, later to be King George VI and Queen Mary, toured Canada. A group of schoolchildren sang *O Canada* in French to honour their visit. It is believed to be the first time that it was sung to an English audience.

The music was published in 1906, including the original French text and an English translation by a Toronto doctor, Thomas Bedford Richardson. In 1908, *Collier's Weekly* held a competition for an English text set to Lavallée's music. Mercy Powell McCulloch won the competition, but her lyrics never became popular.

Many new versions followed, including one by poet Wilfred Campbell and Toronto arts critic Augustus Bridle. However, it was the poetry of lawyer Robert Stanley Weir, penned in 1908, that came to be the accepted English version of *O Canada*.

In 1967, honourable senators, a special joint committee of this house and the House of Commons recommended that the government adopt the music for *O Canada* composed by Lavallée as the music for the national anthem of Canada. The committee also recommended keeping the French lyrics written by Routhier, and using the Weir lyrics as the English version, but replacing two of the “stand on guard” phrases.

Thirteen years after this joint committee had recommended *O Canada* as our national anthem, a bill was presented in the House of Commons on June 18, 1980, proposing the adoption of *O Canada* as the national anthem of Canada. My seconder for this bill, our distinguished colleague Senator Corbin, participated in that debate in the House of Commons at that time.

The bill was passed unanimously by the House of Commons and accepted unanimously by the Senate on June 27, 1980. On Canada Day that year, an act respecting the national anthem of Canada was proclaimed during a public ceremony here on Parliament Hill.

As I have mentioned, the schedule to the 1980 National Anthem Act has the sheet music with the English lyrics on top and the French lyrics underneath. However, the act is silent as to how our anthem should be sung at events that are national in nature, where it would be appropriate to sing the anthem in both of our official languages.

We have all attended various events, political dinners or sports events, where the volume falls off dramatically when *O Canada* is sung in one or other of the languages. At this time in our history, and with bilingualism firmly entrenched in the heritage of Canada, it is time to make an official optional version of *O Canada* that can be sung by all Canadians, regardless of their mother tongue.

Canadians across the country are already doing this. I have been quite amazed by the number of contacts that have been made with my office since this bill was introduced into this place.

The various versions that we often see, where there is a combining of the English and the French lyrics, result in many different versions being sung. As I said earlier, *O Canada* at the Montreal Canadiens hockey game is different from the version of *O Canada* sung at the Ottawa Senators games here in Ottawa.

It is interesting that many countries that have more than one official language, have a national anthem that combines their languages. For example, when they sing their national anthem in Belgium, they sing some of the words in Flemish and some in French. South Africa incorporates four languages in their national anthem, Zulu, Sotho, Afrikaans and English.

Honourable senators, it was quite by happy coincidence that the bilingual version of *O Canada* that we developed, and that is part of Schedule 2 of Bill S-14, has 21 words in English and 21 words in French. I am confident, notwithstanding the billions of dollars we take from the public purse and apply to education across Canada, that our school system is well capable of teaching 21 words of either English or French. I am quite confident, also, that the schoolteachers across Canada would not find it much of a challenge to teach English or French children 21 words in the other official language.

Bill S-14 is a third option. Canadians will still be able to choose to sing the national anthem in English or French. However, I believe that Canadians will embrace a version of *O Canada* that reflects the reality of our country. As the Speech from the Throne read last September stated, “Linguistic duality is at the heart of our collective identity.”

[Senator Kinsella]

I could not agree more. I call on my honourable colleagues to support this bill.

Hon. Terry Stratton: , Senator Kinsella, I understand you were interviewed on *As It Happens* not too long ago.

Senator Kinsella: That is correct.

Senator Stratton: I believe you sang a version of *O Canada* on that program and you did quite well. Since you have a songbook in front of you, would you mind doing that version for us here?

Senator Robichaud: That might kill the bill!

Senator Kinsella: My honourable colleague, the Deputy Leader of the Government has counselled that this might kill the bill. Therefore, I will take the question under advisement and report back.

Hon. Richard H. Kroft: Honourable senators, I am intrigued by the suggestion of the honourable senator. I have been interested in the language of the national anthem since the bill was first introduced. Would Senator Kinsella, in thinking about this nationally acceptable and appropriate version, consider having a look at the French language version of *O Canada*, particularly in terms of gender and religious sensitivity? Perhaps it could be made more broadly acceptable and reflective of the nature of this country as well, contrary to the existing version.

Senator Kinsella: I thank the honourable senator for the question. I am not hesitant to reflect upon the hypothesis of whether or not language, and the language we use, helps to shape our ideas; or whether it is our ideas that help to create our language. There is a great American psychologist by the name of Benjamin Orf, who did a lot of research on that subject. My understanding of that research is that we are still not sure which it is. It probably goes both ways.

I am a supporter of the bill that Senator Poy has before us, which deals with some of the lines of the English version that is in the act as it stands. I am not afraid of looking at the question of whether or not language can be exclusive. We have been having a good discussion on that principle.

• (1440)

In this case, I am dealing more with what is happening across Canada. School children are singing both the English version and the French version of our national anthem; only the language is different. Our colleague, Senator Corbin, pointed out to us, when we were debating the other issue some time ago, that you can look at the poetry of the lyrics in either of the two official languages and have quite a discussion as to whether some of the French lyrics are similar to lyrics of the Louis XIV era, in a way. However, it is the poetry of the language that matters. As Senator Corbin questioned: Should one change what the poet or the artist has presented?

The English version and the debate that Senator Poy has engendered constitute a different issue. I am proposing that we take the existing English and French versions and develop a

version that would be common across Canada. In that way, at gatherings of all kinds, in any town, city or province, anglophones and francophones could sing in unison — one version together.

I trust that has answered the question of the honourable senator. If this bill reaches committee stage, it is hoped that committee members will find that the fullness of the meaning of the poetry from the lines that I have chosen from the English and French versions actually make good sense and that they present a nice image in terms of the content and the connotation of the terms of both the French and the English words.

On motion of Senator Banks, debate adjourned.

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

BUDGET—REPORT OF COMMITTEE ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Meighen, seconded by the Honourable Senator Atkins, for the adoption of the Sixth Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence (budget—study on health care provided to veterans of war—permission to engage the services of personnel and to travel), presented to the Senate on February 13, 2003.—(*Honourable Senator Robichaud, P.C.*).

Hon. Michael A. Meighen: Honourable senators, yesterday, Senator Robichaud showed a special interest in this motion. It concerns a budget request for fiscal year 2002-03 with regard to our Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs. Our subcommittee is currently considering the benefits for war veterans and peacekeepers.

The study has two parts. Part one relates to the Service Income Security Insurance Plan, which provides insurance in the event that a member of the Canadian Forces dies or is maimed. Part two relates to services for victims of post-traumatic stress disorder. Work on the study is quickly advancing, and the study has received much attention.

Attendance at the hearings, media coverage and broadcasting through CPAC are all good.

The motion requests \$2,000 for meals during meetings, as well as for the services of a media relations coordinator. For five meetings, \$1,500 is required. The sum of \$600 is required to pay our communications coordinator, who responds to public inquiries. There are a few other minor expenses. The total amount is \$2,000. This amount is not, in my opinion, excessive for such a necessary and essential study on our veterans.

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I thank the Honourable Senator Meighen for the information he has just provided. I support his motion.

Senator Meighen: I thank the Honourable Senator Robichaud for supporting my motion.

[English]

The Hon. the Speaker: Is the house ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question!

The Hon. the Speaker: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Meighen, seconded by the Honourable Senator Atkins, that the Sixth Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence be adopted now. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to and report adopted.

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE CONCERNING PREMATURE DISCLOSURE OF REPORT ON PUBLIC INTEREST IMPLICATIONS OF BANK MERGERS—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the seventh report of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce (question of privilege raised by the Honourable Senator Kolber) presented in the Senate on February 25, 2003.—(*Honourable Senator Kolber*).

Hon. E. Leo Kolber moved adoption of the report.

He said: Honourable senators, yesterday I presented the seventh report of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce. This report was prepared after an investigation by your committee into the question of privilege relating to the premature disclosure of the report of the public interest implications of large bank mergers in Canada, raised by me in this chamber on December 12, 2002.

Your committee studied this matter thoroughly, engaged in debate and decided not to call any witnesses. Your committee came to the conclusion that no further action is required with respect to the question of privilege, except to raise the awareness of senators and staff as to the need for and requirement of confidentiality. Additionally, your committee is of the opinion that security procedures should be established to avoid a repeat of this breach of privilege.

• (1450)

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Honourable senators, I have many questions. Perhaps I should look at this report. It is a committee report and is part of the new process. I do not quite understand how the two processes interface, but perhaps, I should review the report.

I would have hoped that the Honourable Senator Kolber would have been more fulsome in his remarks. I will review the report and speak at my earliest convenience.

I move adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. the Speaker: The Honourable Senator Kolber has started the debate; the Honourable Senator Cools is entitled to speak or move the adjournment of the debate, which is a votable motion, but not a debatable motion.

Senator Kolber: Honourable senators, can we have a vote on it?

The Hon. the Speaker: It is moved by Senator Cools, seconded by Senator Baker, that further debate be adjourned to the next sitting of the Senate.

Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Senators: Yes.

Some Hon. Senators: No.

The Hon. the Speaker: Will those honourable senators in favour of the motion please say “yea”?

Some Hon. Senators: Yea.

The Hon. the Speaker: Will those honourable senators opposed to the motion “nay”?

Some Hon. Senators: Nay.

The Hon. the Speaker: I believe the “yeas” have it.

On motion of Senator Cools, debate adjourned.

STUDY ON STATE OF HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

FINAL REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Kirby, seconded by the Honourable Senator Cook, for the adoption of the third report (final) of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, entitled: *The Health of Canadians — The Federal Role, Volume Six: Recommendations for Reform*, tabled in the Senate on October 25, 2002.—(*Honourable Senator LeBreton*).

Hon. Landon Pearson: Honourable senators, Senator LeBreton has yielded to me, and this matter will stand in her name when I finish my statement.

Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to the motion of Senator Kirby for the adoption of the Third Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology. It is an excellent report. I commend the work of all concerned.

However, I should like to express my concern that neither it nor the Romanow Report nor, indeed, the First Ministers Agreement on Health Care, all of which purport to put medicare on a more sustainable footing for the future, do more than make occasional mention of children.

Yet, Canadian children are Canada’s future and children have unique health care needs. They are not small adults. We must specifically address how a modernized system would improve their health, particularly those most at risk.

Honourable senators, you know me as a long-time advocate for the rights and freedom of children everywhere. Good health care is one of the core commitments that Canada has recently encouraged other countries to adopt as part of a new international agreement "a world fit for children."

In this agreement, helping children get a healthy start in life is described as the essential foundation of human development. Building that foundation is not easy. Promoting the healthy lives of children and their families is more than simply providing access to medical services. It also means assisting in early childhood development, improving access to quality education and protecting children against abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect. In short, a world fit for children acknowledges that children's needs are multifaceted and complex.

Here in Canada, I was delighted by the announcement in last week's budget that more money would be added to the \$2.2 billion of new federal investment for children that was set aside a couple of years ago to support the First Ministers' Agreement on Health Renewal and Early Childhood Development. That initial investment, to be implemented over five years, although some provinces fell somewhat short of responding to children's real needs during its early stages, was an encouraging step in the right direction. Now there will be more money specifically targeted to childcare, as well as an augmentation to the National Child Benefit to help poor families.

The Child Disability Benefit announced in the budget is particularly welcome. However, in the new health agreement with the provinces, concluded two weeks before the budget, the interests of children, with a couple of notable exceptions, are still only implied rather than explicitly stated. This makes me uneasy. I am afraid that unless we act now to direct money to children's health services, we will still be failing children and Canada's families.

Children and youth under 18 represent nearly one quarter of the population of Canada. Thankfully, most Canadian children are healthy, but a significant and growing minority of Canadian children live with complex health issues, disabilities or chronic health conditions.

Some of these children are first generation immigrants fleeing hunger, violence and trauma. Other children struggle with debilitating childhood diabetes, epilepsy and cerebral palsy. Children born in poverty, and currently more than 1.1 million children and people under 18 in Canada are living in low-income families, are more frequently confronted by serious health problems related to their poverty, such as addictions, depression, injuries and infectious diseases, including a growing number of sexually transmitted diseases.

Honourable senators, the health issues of Aboriginal children are worthy of a whole separate speech. The infant mortality rate of Aboriginal children is twice as high as other Canadian children and surviving youth are at higher risk for diabetes, early death from injuries and even suicide. These are Third World health problems in a First World country.

A majority of Canadian children visit the family doctor for their primary health care and only see paediatricians for specialized care or what the medical world refers to as secondary and tertiary care. It is estimated that 7 to 10 per cent of Canada's children require a full range of health care providers from primary care doctors and paediatricians to specialists and psychologists. There are some disturbing indicators that these specialized health service providers for children are spread thin.

One of the realities of our health system is that the last ten years of fiscal constraint have taken a big bite out of child centred health care services. In fact, many children stand-alone hospitals, with a few exceptions such as the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, are being absorbed by hospital amalgamation. Most specialized care for children now takes place in what we call hospitals within hospitals. Paediatric service centres are inside adult hospitals. There may be some positive reasons for this trend, but as one of the women who fought so hard to establish CHEO and its child and family friendly environment, I have real concerns about what happens when a paediatric hospital or wing no longer has separate governance.

As it is, Canada only has 16 university affiliated academic hospitals that provide specialized care in paediatrics. All of them are in urban areas. On a practical level, this means parents in small communities typically travel more than three hours with their sick children to reach a hospital with specialized paediatric services. Their children are too often being treated as if they were miniature adults. Why? In many general hospitals paediatric expertise is being diffused. For example, if a senior paediatric nurse retires, union agreements often mean that the hospital is obliged to staff the job opening with the next available senior nurse, and the replacement is not necessarily required to be a paediatric nurse. Overtime, as paediatric experts leave, they are not being replaced.

A recent report by the Canadian Paediatric Society predicted an acute shortage of specialty health care for children across Canada. The fact is that there are not enough young paediatricians replacing the retiring paediatricians, and these younger doctors are staying in Canada's big cities. Brain drain, the reduced number of students being admitted to medical schools and the reduced number of paediatric training spots are all factors contributing to a looming crisis. Shortages of some paediatric sub-specialists are becoming particularly acute. The result is that medical staff with little or no training are often providing care to children with complex medical conditions.

Helping children with short term acute medical needs is one problem, but perhaps an even bigger challenge in our system is to provide adequate long-term care to children with more complex conditions. Hospitals and long-term care institutions are no longer funded to have beds for children with complex or continuous care needs. It is now expected that these children will be cared for in the home and in the community. This shift from the hospital to the community is in theory a good one. Sick children should not be separated from their families and parents need to be close to their other children as well as to their jobs. The truth is that Canada's communities are sorely lacking enough dedicated child and family services.

Children suffering from chronic childhood diseases and developmental or behavioural conditions need the support of not only doctors and nurses, but also educators, social workers, homecare workers, psychologists and psychiatrists, among others. All too often, long waiting lists mean children do not receive the appropriate services fast enough. Some parents take matters into their own hands and pay for services such as home care. However, for the many Canadian families living near or below the poverty line, that is not a realistic option.

• (1500)

Let me illustrate this point with an example. Imagine you live in northern Alberta and your daughter badly needs to be put on a respirator permanently. Leaving behind your spouse, job and other children, you and your sick daughter travel five hours to reach the highly regarded Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton. The operation is a success, since this hospital is a magnet for the best and brightest paediatric experts in the region. So far, so good. Then, the hospital informs you that they cannot keep your daughter for more than the minimal recovery period. Back home, you and your family doctor scramble to find community resources that will enable you to care for your daughter at home. She will need years of home care.

You quickly discover there are no paediatric nurses in your area and you are expected to provide the bulk of this care. Furthermore, you must go through numerous application processes and interviews with multiple agencies and ministries to determine eligibility for what little help the system is able to give. Your family is exhausted — physically, emotionally and financially.

One of the most positive and encouraging ideas I see emerging from this recent review process is the expansion of the Canada Health Act to include medically necessary home care services for several categories of patients, including those in the palliative stage. However, the new First Ministers' Agreement falls short of this promise. It only promises expanded home care funding to address short-term acute care; in other words, help for families dealing with dying parents, spouses or children. It is encouraging to note that the agreement acknowledges that children have end-of-life issues.

The budget partly addresses this by instituting the new Child Disability Benefit to help those families dealing with medically fragile children, including children who have suffered traumatic birth injuries. Thanks to good medical care and new technologies, these children are not dying, but they do require round-the-clock care and help from professionals trained to deal with their multiple needs.

The families of children with chronic and debilitating diseases deserve our support and compassion. If we really want to help these families, they need more than that money. We must ensure that the home care support for these families includes a much wider range of health services for children than are currently available. It is one thing to have the money, but quite another to decide on which items it should be spent.

Honourable senators, I would also like to touch briefly on primary health care. Commitments regarding primary health care are promising, and if children's unique health needs are taken into account, it will certainly lead to better care for children. One outstanding goal should be to provide all Canadian children who require complicated primary care access to professionals who are trained to care for children, like paediatricians, speech-language pathologists, child psychologists and so on. This access must not be fragmented. Families with sick children should not have to run the maze of health, education and social services.

I am pleased to see that the four essential building blocks of primary health care in the Romanow report included early detection and action. This, and other commitments aimed at strengthening the delivery of primary health, should take into consideration the importance of educating health providers on children's developmental issues.

As I said earlier, children are not small adults. Timely access to appropriate services is critical to children and youth, who are in a constant state of growth and development. Late diagnosis of children's developmental problems results in delayed or even inappropriate intervention. Early intervention is key to helping a child live with, or even overcome, his or her problem. There should be no excuse for missing that short window of opportunity to help a child. Having your child or grandchild diagnosed with developmental problems like autism, or an eating disorder like anorexia nervosa is hard enough, but to find out that earlier diagnosis and treatment might have greatly improved the quality of your child's life is heartbreaking.

We can do better. It is within our reach to provide all Canadian children with adequate and timely age-appropriate health services. However, the solutions require political will, creativity and the commitment to put children first.

Honourable senators, let me share a success story. Five years ago, health authorities in Hamilton, Ontario, decided to dramatically improve child mental health services and the support provided to families. The idea was to take advice and intervention to the people, instead of waiting for people to go to the experts. Social workers, nurse practitioners, and even consulting psychiatrists now regularly go out into the community to meet with paediatricians and their patients. They provide advice and consultation that help reduce the need for expensive and time-consuming assessments.

Putting some power into parents' hands also cuts waiting time. Parents can now take parenting training courses at local community centres. Such courses help parents to identify their children's problems early and link them to appropriate information resources in the community. Parents can also discuss their child's behavioural problems by telephone. The Brief Child and Family Phone Interview, as it is called, is administered by a clinician, and often reveals mental health issues that might previously have taken months to detect.

[Senator Pearson]

What makes Hamilton's approach particularly successful is that it was designed with the children's needs in mind. Paediatricians have become the first-line consultants for children with behavioural problems, as well as medical issues. Services are now as ministry-linked as possible. Mental health programs are all under the same umbrella, despite the fact that funding sources may be different. Authorities in Hamilton say this was no small feat. The fact that health services are generally delivered by so many different agencies and levels of government makes replicating what they did very difficult. The hard work is paying off. Parent surveys in Hamilton indicate that people in that community are happy with the changes to their community's child health services.

Honourable senators, we must keep this example in mind as we look to the future of medicare in this country. The problems of sick children, especially seriously injured, chronically ill or dying children, are devastating to families. Strengthening health services and support for children will ultimately benefit the whole family.

As the various levels of government in Canada continue their joint efforts to improve our health care system, based on the Kirby and Romanow recommendations and the new federal-provincial health agreement, I urge all concerned to review proposals in light of children's specific and unique needs. Changes to primary health care delivery and home care services must recognize the special needs of children and youth, and we must allocate funds and services to meet those needs.

The call for a national immunization strategy for children has my full support, as well as the support that of the Canadian Paediatric Society and the Canadian Medical Association, but it puzzles me why it was the only proposal to specifically name children. Consider, for example, the proposals addressing disease prevention. There is no question that all Canadians should reduce tobacco use and fight obesity, but all the research points to the fact that early intervention is critical for preventing disease. Targeting children and youth will help make preventing the diseases that come from tobacco addiction and obesity all the easier.

I know that all honourable senators share my deep concern that the future direction of our health system reflects the realities of Canada's families and the ongoing health needs of Canada's children. Let us work together to ensure that decisions being made now are truly in the best interests of our future by being in the best interests of our children.

The Hon. the Speaker: I am getting signals from the Table. Apparently, Senator Pearson's 15 minutes are up. Do you wish additional time?

Senator Pearson: I would be happy to answer a question.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Herbert O. Sparrow: Honourable senators, as I understand it, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is rampant in children living in Canadian society. I do not have the figures with me

today, but statistics from our jail system indicates that a high percentage of inmates have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome to some degree. As a society, we say that we cannot take action against the mothers who give birth to these children. We say that the mothers' body is her own and society has no right to interfere in that. As a result, a great many children are being born with this syndrome when we could have, somehow or other, intervened when the alcoholic mother was carrying the unborn child, to solve it by stopping the alcoholism with the mother.

Is the honourable senator aware of any work that is being done towards ensuring that our medical professionals can have some input to ensure the healthy birth of those children?

The federal government pours money into child welfare throughout the nation in order to relieve poverty.

• (1510)

Almost without exception, and I could be wrong about this as well, when the federal government increases child welfare benefits, provincial governments reduce the amount they put in. We hear very little about this. The federal government takes credit for this, but the money actually is reduced at the other end by the provincial governments. It is an unfair situation whereby we believe we are being generous, but we are actually not being generous because the money comes off the other end. Would the honourable senator care to address that?

Senator Pearson: With respect to the first question, the issue of FAS/FAE, foetal alcohol syndrome/foetal alcohol effect, is extremely important. It is particularly so in areas of the country like that of the honourable senator's, but it is important everywhere. It is not only some of the poor who inflict this upon their children, but many middle and upper class mothers do not realize that drinking as heavily as they do will have the effect it has.

Putting that in its place, I am happy to say that there is a great deal of effort being made to address the issue in the sense of prevention. If you can encourage the mothers and get to them very soon after they become pregnant, then it is possible to work with them to reduce the alcohol consumption and prove to them that what they are doing will impact on their children. We have increasing numbers of successful interventions of that sort. The other area of intervention is to get there before they get pregnant and tell everyone and make it very clear that this is a totally preventable condition.

Once the children are born, then it is up to us to give them the assistance. While these children will carry a disability all their lives, we are discovering more and more ways to address this disability and help them live with this condition. The ultimate goal, of course, would be to reduce it and eliminate it completely. Some programs now being directed out of Health Canada, particularly under the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, the Minister for Children and Families, are focusing on ways in which to address this very complicated and tragic problem. I think we will see some good news in a fairly short time in that regard.

Another issue that many of us are acutely conscious of is that the provinces tend to take away what the feds give. In this case, it is particularly sad because the intention of the Child Tax Benefit was to break the welfare wall so that families would not be discouraged by the extra expenses they would incur by getting off the welfare system. There has been relative success. It is not huge, but it is moving in the right direction. The problem with the commitment of the provinces, that whatever money they saved, they would reinvest in programs directed to children, and each province would report every year about what they have done, is that, for certain provinces, reports seem to be more vague than they should be, and I am not convinced they have actually done with the money what they committed to do. However, the augmentation to the Child Tax Benefit will put it higher than the welfare level, so there will be more money for these parents to retain in their pockets. It is a long and challenging issue to find the right way to ensure that children in low-income families are not suffering.

Senator Sparrow: Is there any way that we can further put pressure on the federal government or the provincial governments to use such grants for what they are intended? We are not really doing that. They use the argument that they spend the money for other poverty issues, but it may not be direct family income. We are trying to get these people above the poverty line. Can the honourable senator suggest ways that the Senate or her group, or whomever could take greater action, try to encourage the federal ministers to insist that that be done?

Senator Pearson: Honourable senators, with the growing understanding that the provinces are not doing exactly what they had agreed to do, this new addition of money into early childhood care and development programs will be much more tightly structured, and if a province will not do what we say they are supposed to do, they will not get the money. We have been learning from difficult experiences. That is the only way to do it. Monique Begin fought that battle with the National Health Care Act. My sense is that we are moving more in that direction, and I am hoping in another year we will have more evidence of being able to keep better control over what we are investing, because we are investing for reasons that are really important, and such programs should be effective.

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, I thank Senator Pearson for an excellent presentation. She has certainly shown to me, in my time in the Senate, what a strong advocate she is for the rights of children. I was very interested in what the honourable senator had to say.

The honourable senator spoke about the frustration that families have when they have a sick child, particularly if it is a child who may be developmentally delayed. She mentioned autism. I taught five-year olds for many years, and I saw children who came to school who were somewhere along the autism spectrum and saw the effect that it had on families. The families were dealing with social workers. They were dealing with the family doctor, with the IWK, physiotherapists, and speech pathologists in some cases. Then, when the child is five years old, another body is brought into the picture, which is the education system or the school. In some cases, the families were getting conflicting advice from the professionals they were dealing with. I remember hearing about parents being told not to let the education system know that their child was developmentally delayed because it might affect how the child was treated. Well, it did not take a teacher very long to determine that there was a

learning problem with the child. Instead of everyone working cooperatively and letting us educators have information to best help the child, it was often difficult to receive what was needed.

The honourable senator spoke about home care, and mentioned the good things that are happening in Hamilton. Would Hamilton have people who deal with the families to help them coordinate all these agencies so that it is a less frustrating experience? The frustration often reached out adversely to other children who were in that particular family. Would a home care situation deal with the family as a whole to guide them to filter out what is best for the child and the family with all these agencies?

Senator Pearson: Thank you for that question, Senator Cordy. My understanding of the Hamilton issue is based on a discussion over the telephone, so I have not actually visited. However, that was the essence of the idea. Every child should have an advocate to advocate for them through the whole system, particularly someone who is within the system and is able to touch the other bases. It is very hard for parents, particularly parents who are stressed, to know how to do it. It is hard enough for adults to make their way through the health system without some help from their physician. I am glad you mentioned that idea because it is one I like to reinforce in the work I am doing. Every child in the health care system should have an advocate. If it cannot be the paediatrician or the family physician, then there should be someone designated. It makes a lot of sense.

[Translation]

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, this item stands in the name of the Honourable Senator LeBreton, and I think that it could still stand in the name of the Honourable Senator LeBreton.

• (1520)

On motion of Senator Robichaud, for Senator LeBreton, debate adjourned.

[English]

LEGACY OF WASTE DURING CHRÉTIEN-MARTIN YEARS

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator LeBreton calling the attention of the Senate to the legacy of waste during the Martin-Chrétien years.
—(Honourable Senator Bryden).

Hon. John Buchanan: Honourable senators, I rise to speak to the inquiry of the Honourable Senator LeBreton and, specifically, the issue of the maritime helicopter program. I know that the members on the other side, particularly those from Nova Scotia, will be interested to know how much this program will cost the taxpayers at the end of the day. They will also be interested to know that the Sea King helicopters, which are over 40 years old, are still flying over Halifax and Dartmouth; and there is no hope that they will be replaced for many years. It is important that honourable senators listen to my description of the current situation.

[Senator Pearson]

Senator Forrestall has provided us with historical background information on the helicopter program and so I will confine my comments to the reasons the program was cancelled, the cost of that cancellation and the cost of ensuring, hopefully some day soon, that we will have new helicopters.

Honourable senators, we must go back to the year 1993 and specifically the federal election campaign of that year. Prime Minister Chrétien was a candidate and the Leader of the Opposition when he became involved in the helicopter program.

It is interesting to note, honourable senators, that we have had a Committee of the Whole, where three people from the Department of Public Works and from the Department of National Defence were on hand to answer questions from senators on the maritime helicopter program. The problem was that those three people had no answers because honourable senators were asking questions relevant to 1993.

Honourable senators, how was it that the then Leader of the Opposition and candidate in the federal election campaign, Jean Chrétien, obtained the information that led him to say that he would cancel the contract signed by the Conservative government? He had no idea about the procurement process and how much it had cost. In fact, when the three departmental officials were asked what details Mr. Chrétien had in 1993 to prompt the cancellation of the contract when he won the election, the answer was: "We were not in the department at that time." They kept looking up into the gallery and so I said, "Well, I wonder if the people in the gallery, who were probably in the department in 1993, would come down to answer the question." The response was, "Well no, the people in the gallery were not in the department in 1993 either." We were given no information on the criteria used by Mr. Chrétien to suddenly say, during the 1993 election campaign, that he would cancel the \$4.6 billion program to replace the search and rescue helicopters and the Sea King helicopters. He did it for one reason and one reason only: He sensed, at the time, that it was good politics to do it. There was no other reason.

In 1993, after the election, Mr. Chrétien, with a stroke of the pen, cancelled the contract without even considering the cost to the Canadian taxpayers, of that cancellation. Thus, we had a situation that included cancelled contracts, no helicopter contracts in place, cancellation fees to be paid and penalties to be paid. The cost, at the outset of the program for 43 helicopters was to be \$4.3 to \$4.4 billion. That was the cost of the contracts in 1992-1993 signed by the former Conservative government. That was the deal that Prime Minister Chrétien cancelled in 1993 after coming into office.

The figure used at the time by press releases from the Liberal government and from the Liberal campaign was \$5.8 billion. We will accept that. If that is the figure, we will use that figure, but it still does not help the government. We will use that figure because it was quoted in Liberal press releases and no one on the other side could argue against it. Some, of course, were members of Parliament at the time and they know that that figure was used — \$5.8 billion.

What happened then? All of the companies involved in the contract said that it was not fair because they had contracts and were, therefore, entitled to compensation and penalty payments for the cancellation of those contracts. The end result was that \$500 million in compensation and penalties was paid to the contractors; and that figure was probably closer to \$800 million to \$1 billion. Those figures were to be found in the Canadian press, including the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Halifax Herald*, one of Canada's great newspapers.

Honourable senators, let us say that \$500 million is the cost of the cancellation, because Mr. Chrétien, with the stroke of the pen, determined that there would be no more helicopter contracts; they were thereby cancelled. Canadian taxpayers had to pay half a billion in penalties and compensation.

Take that figure and add it to the cost of the new helicopter program, which the Liberals were contemplating but did not effect for many years later; honourable senators will come up with a figure that is about \$2.8 billion more than if the Conservative program of 1992-1993 had been continued. That is a lot of money — \$2.8 billion.

Senator Furey, who has just taken the Chair, would understand this because search and rescue helicopters are often deployed in Newfoundland. The Sea Kings also operate in Newfoundland. There are no new helicopters.

Senator Rompkey: We have the Labradors.

Senator Buchanan: The search and rescue helicopters that the Liberals decided to purchase are exactly the same as those the Conservatives had agreed to take; but this purchase will entail an additional cost of hundreds of millions of dollars. That is absolute waste.

Honourable senators, let us take a look at the costs. The cancellation fees were \$500 million. The cost of the Sea King maintenance upgrade, which has to be maintained until the year 2008 and which has been extended to 2010, will be \$600 million. Fifteen Canada Search and Rescue Project helicopters will cost \$790 million; and the long-term in-service support for those helicopters will cost \$1.7 billion. Keep in mind, honourable senators, that these costs were included in the original contract that was signed in 1992-1993 by the Conservative government.

I will continue the breakdown of the costs. The 28 Maritime Helicopter Project helicopters will cost \$2.9 billion, and the long-term in-service support will cost \$1.7 billion. The administrative cost, because of splitting the procurement as the Liberals did, will be \$400 million.

• (1530)

Is the Honourable Senator Kinsella surprised when I tell him that the total cost of the Liberal program is \$8.6 billion? That is a conservative estimate.

Senator Kinsella: Waste!

Senator Buchanan: That is waste. The total cost of the Conservative program that was cancelled by Mr. Chrétien and Mr. Martin in 1993, according to government figures, was \$5.8 billion. In other words, it will now cost the Canadian taxpayer \$8.6 billion. The helicopters would have been in service now. They could have been used by our servicemen in British Columbia, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia at a cost of \$5.8 billion. It will now cost \$8.6 billion.

Honourable senators, why is that? The reason is quite evident. Legally, you cannot just take a contract and cancel it. You must pay compensation.

Sea King maintenance and upgrade has to be done. We have had crashes of Sea King helicopters over the last ten years. They are being maintained by first-class mechanics in Shearwater and elsewhere, but it costs money to maintain them and to keep them in the air. In addition, the long-term service for the new helicopters that have not even come off the line yet must be considered.

When you add it all up, \$2.8 billion of taxpayers' money has gone right down the drain. To some people, \$2.8 billion may not be much money, but, to the Canadian taxpayer, it is.

Years ago, in 1957, we had politicians here in Ottawa who said, "Well, if there are no jobs in Atlantic Canada, let Atlantic Canadians move to Ontario, and we will pay them to come up here." That same gentleman also made the statement back in 1957, "Oh, what's in a million? Doesn't mean a thing." We all know what happened in 1957. There was an election, and John Diefenbaker ensured that people knew what was in a million.

What do we have now, in 2003? It is not "What's in a million?" Today it is "What's in a billion?" or "What's in \$2.8 billion?" Remember that \$2.8 billion is a conservative figure. It is much more than \$2.8 billion, but let us use that figure.

Honourable senators, if you talk to the military, as Senator Cordy does in the Dartmouth area, and ask them, "What could you do with \$2.8 billion today to help the navy in Halifax," they would list many uses for that money. Ask the people at the Victoria General Hospital, the QEH complexes and the Dartmouth Hospital, what they could do with \$2.8 billion and they would tell you.

The Armed Forces are suffering. The hospital situation is suffering. Yet, the amount of \$2.8 billion is going right down the drain because the Prime Minister of Canada decided in 1993, by the stroke of a pen, to cancel the helicopter program at a cost of \$8.3 billion.

What's in a billion? Honourable senators could look at another situation: The gun registry, which I, and most of us over here voted against, was to cost \$3 million net.

Senator Murray: \$2 million!

Senator Buchanan: Like a good Cape Bretoner, the honourable senator knows his figures.

It was to cost \$2 million. Remember, I said: What's in \$2.8 billion. The gun registry is another boondoggle. What's in another \$1 billion? There is another \$1 billion in the gun registry.

There is the wasted \$2.8 billion for the helicopters and another \$1 billion for the gun registry. The HRDC situation was also in excess of \$1 billion. The amount is now over \$5 billion. Think what the military could do with that! Think what the hospitals could do with that!

Honourable senators, the government has been wasting too much money for political reasons. The helicopter program was scrapped for political reasons.

Senator Kinsella: Who was the Minister of Finance?

Senator Buchanan: Mr. Paul Martin was the Minister of Finance. Therefore, we call it the Chrétien-Martin boondoggle of the helicopter program.

Hon. George J. Furey (The Hon. the Acting Speaker): I must advise the honourable senator that his time is up.

Hon. John G. Bryden: Could we have time for questions?

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Bryden: Honourable senators, first, I thank the Honourable Senator Buchanan for such a conservative, yet expert, speech on the question of the legacy of waste.

Certainly no one from Atlantic Canada questions the credentials of the honourable senator when it comes to being an expert on government waste, particularly in the creation thereof.

I have two questions. Before the honourable senator was plucked from the premier's chair of Nova Scotia by former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, and given safe haven from the Nova Scotia electorate here in the Senate, had the honourable senator not added billions of dollars to the debt of the Province of Nova Scotia? Perhaps that is the origin of the expertise, to know what is a billion.

Was the honourable senator or his successors ever able to get rid of the thousands of automatic toilet seats that the Nova Scotia government bought from a Tory friend and supporter?

Senator Buchanan: Honourable senators, those are interesting questions. When I left office, there was no question that the net debt in Nova Scotia was in the range of about \$6.5 billion. It is now over \$11 billion.

What happened in the interim? The interim, of course from 1993 to 1996, was a Liberal government. A Liberal government increased the net debt of Nova Scotia to \$11 billion.

[*Translation*]

Senator Kinsella: Bad question, Senator Bryden.

Senator Buchanan: I asked the former Senator Boudreau, who raised this question as well, if he would have built the new place by the General Hospital in the 1980s? Senator Cordy would agree with that. Would the honourable senator have built the new Morrison High School in Glace Bay? Absolutely. Would he have built the two hospitals in the north side? Would he have put money into the New Waterford Hospital? Absolutely. Would he have built the hospitals in Halifax? Would he have built Highway 125? Would he have built the highways down the Annapolis Valley? Would he have made Highway 104 all the way up to the New Brunswick border, four lanes? Would he have done all of that?

Honourable senators are not aware of the Sydney steel problem. That started in the 1960s and lasted until 1999. Did Premier Reagan stop the money to the Sydney steel plants? No. Did Russell McLellan stop it? Did John Savage stop it? No.

It turned out that \$2.8 billion was spent in the Sydney steel plant that kept thousands of people working for many, many years.

The same thing happened with Devco. Many billions of dollars went into Devco. However, some honourable senators would agree that it was money well spent over the years.

Would the honourable senator take back all of the highways that were paved, the Sydney steel money and all the people who worked there, the Devco mines and all the people who worked there, all of the hospitals, all of the schools and all of the infrastructure that made Halifax-Dartmouth the most dynamic city in Eastern Canada? Certainly, we would not have spent all the money, but remember this: we did not waste it. It is all there in the infrastructure.

• (1540)

I challenge honourable senators to take a look at the public accounts for those years. Honourable senators can see, on a per-year basis, how much money was spent by the Liberals in the 1970s, by the Tories in the 1980s and by the Liberals in the 1990s. I do not think my honourable colleague would rise to ask that question again.

Senator Bryden: Did the honourable senator ever get the money back for the hundreds of automatic toilet seats that he got from his Tory friend?

Senator Buchanan: I do not know. As I understand it, I think those toilet seats were sold later on by the Liberals. They did not get a very good deal when they sold them.

On motion of Senator Bryden, debate adjourned.

THE ESTIMATES, 2003-04 THE ESTIMATES, 2002-03

PARTS I AND II OF EXPENDITURE PLAN AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B) TABLED

Leave having been given to revert to Tabling of Documents:

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, two documents; the first entitled: "2003-04 Estimates, Parts I and II: the Government Expenditure Plan and Main Estimates," and the second being the Supplementary Estimates (B) 2002-03 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003.

THE ESTIMATES, 2003-04

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY MAIN ESTIMATES

Leave having been given to revert to Government Notices of Motions:

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2004, with the exception of Parliament Vote 10 and Privy Council Vote 25.

THE ESTIMATES 2002-03

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B)

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Supplementary Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003.

THE ESTIMATES 2003-04

NOTICE OF MOTION TO REFER VOTE 25 TO OFFICIAL LANGUAGES COMMITTEE

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages be authorized to examine the expenditures set out in Privy Council Vote 25, of the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2004.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO REFER VOTE 10 TO STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament, when and if the Committee is formed, be authorized to examine the expenditures set out in Parliament Vote 10 of the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2004; and

That a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that House accordingly.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

COMMITTEES AUTHORIZED TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, today is Wednesday and we are trying to get our work done by around 3:30 p.m. if possible, so that the committees will be able to sit. I would seek leave of the Senate for the committees to be able to sit at the same time as the Senate.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

ACCESS TO CLOSED CAPTIONING IN FRENCH INQUIRY

Hon. Jean-Robert Gauthier rose pursuant to notice of December 10, 2002:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the difficulties faced by national broadcasters in delivering real-time closed-captioned programming and the inequality of access to closed captioning in French of programming on Radio-Canada and other francophone networks, which broadcast barely 50 per cent of their programs with closed captioning, compared with the anglophone networks, which, like the CBC, broadcast 100 per cent of their programming closed captioned.

He said: Honourable senators, I would like to call the attention of the Senate to the difficulties faced by national broadcasters in delivering real-time closed-captioned programming and the

inequality of access to closed captioning in French of programming on Radio-Canada and other francophone networks, which broadcast barely 50 per cent of their programs with closed captioning, compared with the anglophone networks, which, like the CBC, broadcast 100 per cent of their programming closed captioned.

The problem is simple. Three million Canadians have a hearing impairment. Seven hundred and fifty thousand of them are in Quebec, 600,000 of whom are francophone. There are 1 million francophones outside of Quebec, 100,000 of whom are hard of hearing.

To give a comparison, there are as many francophones who are hard of hearing in Canada as there are residents in the national capital region. These Canadians must receive this service. They are asking Parliament to pressure broadcasters to understand that this service is essential in order for them to remain informed of international, national and regional news. There must be access to real-time closed-captioned television programming. There must be access to all of the safety messages and to a whole host of messages that people normally hear, but that people such as myself have trouble understanding.

Many people who have a hearing impairment have had it since they were young. Because of their disability, these children are sometimes forgotten and do not receive the services they need. Yesterday, for example, there was an article in the *Globe and Mail* about a family that was taking a school board to court because their seven-year-old child has a hearing impairment and was unable to receive care. He is no worse than the other children, but he does not hear.

[*English*]

The Hon. the Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt, Senator Gauthier, but I believe Senator Kinsella has a point of order or a matter to raise.

Hon. Noël A. Kinsella (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I simply wish to draw the rules to the attention of His Honour.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is the honourable senator drawing attention to our quorum requirement? I see that we have 15 senators present.

Senator Lynch-Staunton: Oh, they suddenly all appear.

The Hon. the Speaker: I would apologize to Senator Gauthier for the interruption.

[*Translation*]

Senator Gauthier: There is a seven-year-old child whose parents are suing the school board because he is not getting the treatment or services that a hearing impaired child is entitled to. I will not comment on this case, which is *sub judice*, but I thought it appropriate to draw attention to the fact that hearing impairment affects people of all ages.

• (1550)

There are the young and the not so young. Often, one of the problems is that the aging population refuses to recognize or admit that the number of hearing impaired people is on the rise. This is a reality. In my case, I became hearing impaired due to an unfortunate event. I fell ill and took a medication that killed my auditory nerve. Sometimes, it is funny to be unable to hear; people shout and we cannot hear them. At times, I can barely hear my voice when I turn up my hearing aid.

Sometimes, it is embarrassing because people get very close and shout in your ear. It is a little intimidating but, when it is a beautiful woman, I do not object. When it is a hairy man talking right in my ear and saying that I have not understood a word, that I seem like a snob because I am not reacting, it is more difficult to deal with.

In the Senate, I am able to work. In committee also, I am able to work, because I have access to a computer monitor that provides me with the written text of everything I cannot hear. I cannot understand why some broadcasters are resisting providing their audience with closed captioning.

Last November, I was happy when Radio-Canada and the CBC announced that 100 per cent of their programs would be captioned.

[English]

What about the French network? We have certain problems. They give you excuses.

Captioning, as they call it, was developed in the United States of America, in English. As a matter of fact, the TV sets that we all have in our house have a chip in them that allows anyone to access captioning through secondary audio programming, the SAP network.

However, this is not so available in the French language. Political animals, such as me, are most interested in learning about what is going on in the world, but often I cannot get information because it is not provided by way of captioning.

This service is provided on all American stations because they have a law, just as we have one here, that provides that, from 1995 all broadcasters must subtitle or caption their programming. They do not do it because people complain. As I mentioned to honourable senators, generally speaking deaf and hard-of-hearing people do not complain too much. I, however, do not mind complaining. I would suggest that this should be a priority of the Senate. It is our job to discuss these problems.

Last November, I asked the question: "Where do you train these people?" I was told that there are two schools, one in Vancouver and one in Edmonton, and both provide training in English. There is no French training available in Canada at this time. Do not ask for subtitling or captioning of French programming because we do not have the technicians who can do it.

We have five French reporters and nine English reporters here in the Senate. Honourable senators, we need more. The courts —

all the courts, Supreme, Federal, Tax Court — utilize their services continuously.

As I said, the broadcasting services should be using them. However, they often tell me that they cannot hire the technicians that they need because trained personnel are scarce.

[Translation]

In French, it is harder to accept, because we do not have access to an American network in French. Radio-Canada, the French network, is good, but it is not easy without closed captioning. TV5 is rarely closed-captioned. Access to French-language programming with closed captioning would be wonderful, but not easy.

There is no access to closed captioning in public spaces and on planes.

Today, Senator Kroft told me during a trip to Europe on an Air Canada plane, the closed captioning on screen was in German. Can you imagine? Not in French, not in English, but in German! He asked me how this was possible. I told him: "I do not know." This is unacceptable.

That is why I introduced the motion. I hope that the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications will review this problem and find solutions. If need be, Canadian carriers should be compelled to give safety instructions in both official languages. This is feasible for all modes of transportation, by air, land and sea.

I went to the Îles de la Madeleine last summer for the inauguration of what they call a municipality, an amalgamation. They amalgamated some municipalities. They declared Grosse Île an Anglophone municipality. I noticed that there were no safety instructions on the boat. There were televisions everywhere, admittedly. There were lots of commercials. Even Air Canada sells a variety of things on board its planes by way of television commercials. Boats do the same. How is it that they can use English and French for commercials, but not for safety instructions? I do not understand.

It is quite a feat to get anywhere, too. Take the plane, plug your ears and try to get to Vancouver. You will have an interesting trip. If the person next to you is nice, fine, but if the person you are sitting with does not understand, you will have a heck of a time figuring things out. I am not referring to what might happen should there be an accident; in that case, you've had it!

Is it too much to ask that the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications review this issue? No, I think this is a reasonable request. I have the support of the chair of the committee, who said the committee would review this. It will be my pleasure to invite representatives of Air Canada and other airlines, shipping companies and railways.

Let me come back to my original thought: closed captioning on television. This is a very important issue.

[*English*]

Some elderly people will deny that they have a hearing difficulty. I guess one might call that pride, but it is undoubtedly a difficult situation to be in. Everyone likes to understand and to participate. People like to hear what is going on. It is impossible for me to participate in a normal conversation unless the speakers speak slowly and I can read their lips. However, if you can write, I can read.

I am pleading that this Senate do something about this problem — not only for me, but also for the other 2 million Canadians.

[*Translation*]

I may seem to be repeating myself, but this is intentional. We must look into this problem. It is one of those problems that should be solved as quickly as possible.

Hon. Tommy Banks (The Hon. the Acting Speaker): Honourable senators, if no other senator wishes to speak, this inquiry is deemed debated.

The Senate adjourned until Thursday, February 27, 2003, at 1:30 p.m.

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