



CANADA

Debates of the Senate

2nd SESSION

• 39th PARLIAMENT

• VOLUME 144

• NUMBER 2

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, October 17, 2007



THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA
SPEAKER

CONTENTS

(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

Debates and Publications: Chambers Building, Room 943, Tel. 996-0193

Published by the Senate
Available from PWGSC – Publishing and Depository Services, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5.
Also available on the Internet: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

THE SENATE

Wednesday, October 17, 2007

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

Prayers.

AFGHANISTAN—FALLEN SOLDIERS

SILENT TRIBUTE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before we proceed, I would invite senators to rise and observe one minute of silence in memory of Captain Matthew Johnathan Dawe, Master Corporal Colin Bason, Corporal Cole Bartsch, Private Lane Watkins, Captain Jefferson Francis, Corporal Jordan Anderson, Private Simon Longtin, Master Warrant Officer Mario Mercier, Master Corporal Christian Duchesne, Major Raymond Ruckpaul, and Corporal Nathan Hornburg, whose tragic deaths occurred this past summer while serving their country in Afghanistan.

Honourable senators then stood in silent tribute.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to draw to your attention the presence in the gallery of Her Excellency Jozefina Topalli, Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Albania. Her Excellency is accompanied by her husband, Tony Topalli, as well as several members of the distinguished Parliament of Albania, including Mr. Leonard Demi, M.P.; Mr. Rexhep Uka, M.P.; Mr. Blendi Klosi, M.P.; Mr. Pal Dajci, M.P.; and Mr. Gjovalin Prenga, M.P.

Our distinguished colleagues from Albania are accompanied by His Excellency the Ambassador of Albania to Canada.

We welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

THE HONOURABLE BERT BROWN

WELCOME TO THE SENATE

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, it gives me great pleasure this afternoon to formally introduce to the Senate of Canada our new colleague, the Honourable Bert Brown. Senator Brown will represent the province of Alberta in this chamber.

Throughout our country, Bert Brown's name is closely identified with Senate reform. It has been well over 20 years since he used a tractor to plough the words "Triple E or Else" in a neighbour's barley field. In the following years, he has stayed true

to his beliefs and has promoted the importance of Senate reform both within his home province and across the country.

Bert Brown has practised what he has preached by putting himself forward as a candidate for a Senate seat. In 2004, he placed first in the province's Senate elections, receiving the support of over 300,000 of his fellow Albertans — a level of public support that most politicians can only dream of obtaining.

• (1410)

Bert Brown is the only Canadian to be elected twice as a senator-in-waiting, having also won election in 1998. Two decades since his journey began, Senator Brown follows in the footsteps of our late colleague the Honourable Stan Waters as the second person to be appointed to this chamber following election by the people in the province of Alberta. I am proud to note that both elected senators were appointed by Conservative governments.

In addition to his steadfast commitment to democratic reform, Bert Brown comes to the Senate of Canada with a wide variety of other interests and expertise. He is a property development consultant, a retired farmer and a former newspaper columnist. He has been deeply involved in his community, including serving as Director of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. In 2003, Senator Brown was awarded the Alberta Centennial Medal in recognition of the significant contributions he has made to the province.

Honourable senators, I cannot let the moment pass without noting that Bert's wife Alice, who is in the gallery, once served on the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, and it is a pleasure to see Alice here and to meet their daughter.

In July, our Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, said:

For more than 20 years, Bert has been a passionate and persuasive advocate for the democratization of the Senate. Selected by those whom he is set to represent, I have no doubt that he will serve Alberta and its interests well.

To that we could add Canada's interests.

Honourable senators, I agree with the words of our Prime Minister. On behalf of his caucus colleagues, the Conservative Party of Canada, and I am sure on behalf of us all, I extend our very best wishes to Senator Brown as he takes on his new work and responsibilities in the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I wish to welcome, at the beginning of the Second Session of the Thirty-ninth Parliament, a new senator from my home province of Alberta. Senator Brown resides in Kathryn, Alberta, just northeast of Calgary. Prior to this he lived nearby in Balzac, which, for those who do not know, is a hamlet along the Calgary-Edmonton corridor with rolling plains and a clear view of the majestic Rocky Mountains.

Senator Brown was a farmer and is now a zoning and property development consultant in Calgary. In 2005, Senator Brown received the Alberta Centennial Medal in recognition of his significant contributions to the province. I am proud to say that four Alberta senators share this great honour.

It should be noted that Senator Brown is not the only accomplished member of the Brown clan. Senator Brown's wife Alice also has a long history of public service and civic engagement. In 1998, in recognition of her contribution to the quality of life of women in Canada, Ms. Brown received the Governor General's Award in commemoration of the *Persons* case.

There can be no doubt, honourable senators, that Senator Brown is a committed and persistent democrat. Rather than sitting on the sidelines or opting out, Senator Brown has worked within the existing Canadian political system in order to bring about the changes and reforms he believed in. Though I sit across from him today, divided by party and some differences of opinion, I recognize in Senator Brown a man who has the interests of his province at heart. Senator Brown, on behalf of your fellow senators from Alberta, as well as the members of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the Senate, I again welcome and congratulate you on your appointment to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

THE HONOURABLE ANDRÉE CHAMPAGNE

RECOVERY FROM ILLNESS

Hon. Andrée Champagne: Honourable senators, I would like to say how happy I am to be here today. After being away for nearly eight months, I find that the privilege we have to sit in the Senate of Canada has again taken on an importance that we sometimes find all too easy to forget.

Your thoughts and prayers helped me out of the abyss from which no one, except my husband, believed I would emerge one day. To all your questions, I have a short answer: septicemia caused by meningococcal bacteria left me in a coma for 42 days, with all the attendant problems.

• (1415)

Rarely today is anyone hospitalized for as long as 65 consecutive days.

Although I have recovered the reflex to breathe and relearned how to walk, move my fingers and find the words for things most of the time, I am still convalescing. My kidneys, which for too long were dependent on machines to function; my heart, which repeatedly suffered septic shock and is recovering from an infarction; and my memory, too, are all still healing. As a result, it will be a few more months before I can resume working at the same pace as you; the same pace I worked at early this year. I am counting on all of you to let me return to work gradually. Thank you in advance for your understanding and your friendship.

In closing, I would like to express a wish. It is my fervent wish that you will join with me to convince Health Canada to ensure that, before leaving the country, all members of Parliament and senators and all the officials who travel with us on missions are immunized against all known strains of meningococcal bacteria. Clearly, meningococcus does not strike only children and adolescents. I, a grandmother, am proof of that, and no one should have to go through what I did.

Yes, I survived, thanks to the miracle of modern medicine. The love of my family and friends helped a great deal as well. But who knows, you might not have been as lucky.

[*English*]

Dear friends, today my vocal chords will not let me sing and my feet show only nine toes, but I feel so lucky to be alive and so happy to be here!

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier Cool: Honourable senators, today, October 17, is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. I would like to speak briefly about poverty in Canada, and particularly about children living in poverty and also parents, since poor children do not come from rich parents.

[*English*]

This past September 11, a comprehensive policy report on child poverty in Canada was released by Campaign 2000, a non-partisan network dedicated to ending child poverty. The author of the 48-page report, Professor Marvyn Novick, reminds us that we, as federal parliamentarians, have not lived up to our 1989 all-party promise to eliminate child poverty in Canada by the year 2000.

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, still today, in 2007, 800,000 of our children, more than one out of every 10 children, live in poverty. This proportion has not changed since we made that promise in 1989, almost 20 years ago. Statistics Canada sets the poverty line at an annual income of less than \$27,000 for a family of four. I think we can agree that that is not much to feed, clothe, house, educate and transport four people — sometimes difficult choices must be made.

The report examines the prevalence of poverty among our children, especially considering the unprecedented years of economic prosperity our country is experiencing.

[*English*]

Honourable senators, why must our children be hungry, cold and left aside when our country's Human Development Index is sixth in the world? Why does Canada still have poor kids when our gross domestic product is ranked eighth in the world and when our wealth per capita exceeds \$28,000?

[*Translation*]

The report proposes clear and integrated ways to deal with the problem of child poverty once and for all. Specifically, Campaign 2000 recommends that child poverty in Canada be reduced by at least 25 per cent by 2012 and by at least 50 per cent by 2017.

• (1420)

[*English*]

To reach this realistic goal, the federal government should up its Child Tax Benefit to \$5,100 per year. This increase alone would reduce the rate of child poverty in Canada by 37 per cent. The federal government should also increase its work tax credits.

[*Translation*]

Federal and provincial governments should guarantee a \$10 per hour minimum wage, make substantial investments in early childhood education and childcare, and put more money into social housing.

Furthermore, the provinces should expand their coverage for prescription drugs and dental care and enable families to take full advantage of the federal government's annual child benefit by not clawing it back from social assistance benefits paid to society's poorest families.

THE HONOURABLE BERT BROWN

WELCOME TO THE SENATE

Hon. Marcel Prud'homme: Honourable senators, I would like to say a few words of welcome to the Honourable Bert Brown.

First, however, I would like to say how pleased I am that Senator Champagne is back with us. She is an inspiration to everyone who, like me, may one day need the courage to go through some very difficult times. I would like to thank her for her tremendously inspirational words.

I will welcome the Honourable Bert Brown in French to ensure that he understands my perspective. I have been waiting for a long time to welcome him warmly to this chamber.

I am looking forward to a public debate with him about the meaning of an equal, effective Senate. I believe that the Senate is effective. Contrary to what may have been said yesterday, I believe that the Senate has served Canada well, and I want to emphasize that point.

The honours bestowed on Honourable Senator Keon and the tributes paid to all honourable senators over the years are proof that they have made a significant contribution. It saddens me to hear anyone say that the Senate has not served Canada well. Such things could surely have been expressed differently.

People talk about an effective Senate, an equal Senate, and an elected Senate. The honourable senator and I have met, and I had the opportunity to discuss this issue with him briefly. I will

[Senator Losier Cool]

now have plenty of time to prepare for this debate with him. I think we would do well to explore the idea of holding a public debate here, as well as in Senator Brown's home province of Alberta.

[*English*]

I also wish Senator Brown's wife and family a warm and happy welcome. The atmosphere of the Senate, where we speak French and English, is beautiful and less unruly than the House of Commons. If any reform is necessary, for the moment I say the House of Commons is the one in great need of reform.

THE HONOURABLE WILBERT J. KEON, O.C.

CONGRATULATIONS ON INDUCTION INTO CANADIAN MEDICAL HALL OF FAME

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, I rise as Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology to recognize two members of our committee, but first, I extend a warm "welcome-back" to Senator Champagne. I am glad to see her on her feet again.

On the evening of October 2, it was my pleasure, as well as that of Senator Pépin, to attend, in London, Ontario, the induction ceremony of the Honourable Senator Wilbert Keon into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame.

Dr. Keon has had a long and distinguished career serving Canadians. Even before his appointment to the Senate in 1990, he was well-known in the medical field, nationally and internationally, for his work in cardiology and cardiac surgery.

• (1425)

He was the first Canadian heart surgeon to perform an artificial heart implant and the first Canadian infant heart transplant. He was the founder of the University of Ottawa Heart Institute in 1976. The institute was the culmination of a unique dream that was built into reality. He retired as president of the institute in April 2004.

In the Senate, he has been an avid contributor both in this chamber and on committees. He has brought his medical knowledge and taken a keen interest in the health of Canadians. He has demonstrated, time and again, that he cares for people and has a genuine interest in making their lives better. His work on the report *Out of the Shadows at Last*, dealing with mental health in Canada, has been acknowledged across the country.

I have had the privilege to work closely with Senator Keon on the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology for the past year. Recently, he started a study through a subcommittee on the idea of population health, which focuses on the social determinants of health.

I remember sitting in Senator Keon's office a few months ago and him telling me that he was to be inducted in the hall of fame. I could see the pride in his eyes and the honour he felt. He was joining the likes of Dr. Frederick Banting and Dr. Wilder Penfield, pioneers in Canadian medicine, and Senator Keon deserves to join them. Well done, Senator and Dr. Keon!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

NATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE PURSUANT TO KYOTO PROTOCOL IMPLEMENTATION ACT TABLED

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, in accordance with section 10.2(a)(ii) of the Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act, the response of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy to its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act.

[Translation]

PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

2006-07 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the annual report of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada for the period from April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007, pursuant to the Privacy Act.

STUDY ON FUNDING FOR TREATMENT OF AUTISM

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE TABLED

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, pursuant to rule 28(3), the government's response to the twelfth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology tabled on March 1, 2007, during the Senate's previous session.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO CHANGE COMMENCEMENT TIME ON WEDNESDAYS AND THURSDAYS AND TO EFFECT WEDNESDAY ADJOURNMENTS

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

That, for the remainder of the current session,

- (a) when the Senate sits on a Wednesday or a Thursday, it shall sit at 1:30 p.m. notwithstanding rule 5(1)(a);
- (b) when the Senate sits on a Wednesday, it stand adjourned at 4 p.m., unless it has been suspended for the purpose of taking a deferred vote or has earlier adjourned; and
- (c) where a vote is deferred until 5:30 p.m. on a Wednesday, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings, immediately prior to any adjournment but no later than 4 p.m., to suspend the sitting until 5:30 p.m. for the taking of the deferred vote, and that committees be authorized to meet during the period that the sitting is suspended.

• (1430)

[English]

AUNG SAN SUU KYI

NOTICE OF MOTION TO CONFER HONORARY CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate, I give notice that later today, I shall move:

That,

Whereas Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of Burma's National League for Democracy, has been recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize as one of the world's leading champions of peace, democracy and non-violence;

Whereas she has been repeatedly deprived of her liberty and contact with her family since July 1989, as retribution for her support for the cause of freedom, democracy, human rights and justice for the people of Burma;

Whereas she led the National League for Democracy to victory in multi-party democratic elections in 1990, the results of which were ignored by the military regime;

Whereas she remains one of the leading forces in the continuing struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma and a symbol of the desire of the people of Burma for political freedom;

Whereas recent events show that her desire for democracy and peace is deeply shared by the people of that country;

Whereas her long struggle to bring freedom and democracy to the people of Burma has made her the embodiment of those ideals and an inspiration to us all; and

Whereas Canada has previously acknowledged the contribution of other leading champions of human dignity, granting them honorary Canadian citizenship;

Therefore, the Senate of Canada resolves to bestow the title "honorary Canadian citizen" on Aung San Suu Kyi and requests that the people of Canada demonstrate their friendship and solidarity with Aung San Suu Kyi as an honorary citizen of Canada, and through her, to the people of Burma.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, is leave granted?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Motion placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration later this day.

**FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT
BANK OF CANADA ACT**

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Hugh Segal presented Bill S-201, An Act to amend the Financial Administration Act and the Bank of Canada Act (quarterly financial reports).

Bill read first time.

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

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

**BILL TO PROVIDE JOB PROTECTION
FOR MEMBERS OF THE RESERVE FORCE**

FIRST READING

Hon. Hugh Segal presented Bill S-202, An Act to amend certain acts to provide job protection for members of the reserve force.

Bill read first time.

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

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

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. John G. Bryden presented Bill S-203, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (cruelty to animals).

Bill read first time.

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

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

NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein presented Bill S-204, An Act respecting a National Philanthropy Day.

Bill read first time.

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

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

• (1435)

BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Yoine Goldstein presented Bill S-205, An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (student loans).

Bill read first time.

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

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

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein presented Bill S-206, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (clean drinking water).

Bill read first time.

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

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

STATUTES REPEAL BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Tommy Banks presented Bill S-207, An Act to repeal legislation that has not come into force within 10 years of receiving Royal Assent.

Bill read first time.

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

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

DRINKING WATER SOURCES BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein presented Bill S-208, An Act to require the Minister of the Environment to establish, in cooperation with the provinces, an agency with the power to identify and protect Canada's watersheds that will constitute sources of drinking water in the future.

Bill read first time.

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

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

[*Translation*]

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette (Leader of the Opposition) presented Bill S-209, to amend the Criminal Code (protection of children).

Bill read first time.

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

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

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein presented Bill S-210, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (suicide bombings).

Bill read first time.

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

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

CANADA SECURITIES BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein presented Bill S-211, An Act to regulate securities and to provide for a single securities commission for Canada.

Bill read first time.

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

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

• (1440)

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE PROTECTION 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-280, An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (coming into force of sections 110, 111 and 171).

Bill read first time.

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

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

[*Translation*]

KELOWNA ACCORD IMPLEMENTATION BILL

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-292, to implement the Kelowna Accord.

Bill read first time.

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

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

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

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-299, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (identification information obtained by fraud or false pretence).

Bill read first time.

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

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

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ACCOUNTABILITY BILL

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with a Bill C-293, An Act respecting the provision of official development assistance abroad.

Bill read first time.

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

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

• (1445)

[Translation]

ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

MEETING OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE, MAY 22-24, 2007—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Pierre De Bané: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 23(6), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, whose chair, the Honourable Andrée Champagne, was so terribly afflicted and who, thank God, is once again in our midst.

This report concerns the participation of the Canadian delegation to the meeting of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee of the APF, held in Sofia, Bulgaria, from May 22 to 24, 2007.

[English]

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO STRIKE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Hon. Sharon Carstairs: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 57(1)(d), I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That a Special Committee of the Senate be appointed to examine and report upon the implications of an aging society in Canada;

That, pursuant to rule 85(1)(b), the committee be comprised of seven members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection and that three members constitute a quorum;

That the Committee examine the issue of aging in our society in relation to, but not limited to:

- promoting active living and well being;
- housing and transportation needs;
- financial security and retirement;
- abuse and neglect;
- health promotion and prevention; and

- health care needs, including chronic diseases, medication use, mental health, palliative care, home care and caregiving;

That the Committee review public programs and services for seniors, the gaps that exist in meeting the needs of seniors, and the implications for future service delivery as the population ages;

That the Committee review strategies on aging implemented in other countries;

That the Committee review Canada's role and obligations in light of the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing;

That the Committee consider the appropriate role of the federal government in helping Canadians age well;

That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to examine witnesses, to report from time to time and to print such papers and evidence from day to day as may be ordered by the Committee;

That the Committee be authorized to permit coverage by electronic media of its public proceedings with the least possible disruption of its hearings;

That, pursuant to rule 95(3)(a), the Committee be authorized to meet during periods that the Senate stands adjourned for a period exceeding one week;

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the Committee on this subject during the First Session of the Thirty-ninth Parliament be referred to the Committee;

That the Committee submit its final report no later than June 30, 2008, and that the Committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 90 days after the tabling of the final report.

HUMAN RIGHTS

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE
TO STUDY ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE 2007 DECLARATION
ON ANTI-SEMITISM AND INTOLERANCE

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the following Resolution on Combating Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance, which was adopted at the 16th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, in which Canada participated in Kyiv, Ukraine on July 9, 2007, be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights for consideration and that the Committee table its final report no later than March 31, 2008:

**RESOLUTION ON COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM,
RACISM, XENOPHOBIA AND OTHER FORMS
OF INTOLERANCE, INCLUDING
AGAINST MUSLIMS AND ROMA**

1. Recalling the Parliamentary Assembly's leadership in raising the focus and attention of the participating States since the 2002 Annual Session in Berlin on issues related to intolerance, discrimination, and hate crimes, including particular concern over manifestations of anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance,
 2. Celebrating the richness of ethnic, cultural, racial, and religious diversity within the 56 OSCE participating States,
 3. Emphasizing the need to ensure implementation of existing OSCE commitments on combating anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia, and other forms of intolerance and discrimination, including against Christians, Muslims, and members of other religions, as well as against Roma,
 4. Recalling other international commitments of the OSCE participating States, and urging immediate ratification and full implementation of the Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity, and the Rome Statute,
 5. Reminding participating States that hate crimes and discrimination are motivated not only by race, ethnicity, sex, and religion or belief, but also by political opinion, national or social origin, language, birth or other status,
- The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly:
6. Welcomes the convening of the June 2007 OSCE High Level Conference on Combating Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding, in Bucharest, Romania as a follow-up to the 2005 Cordoba Conference on Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance;
 7. Appreciates the ongoing work undertaken by the OSCE and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (the OSCE/ODIHR) through its Programme on Tolerance and Non-discrimination, as well as its efforts to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti through its Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, and supports the continued organization of expert meetings on anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance aimed at enhancing the implementation of relevant OSCE commitments;
 8. Recognizes the importance of the OSCE/ODIHR Law Enforcement Officers Programme (LEOP) in helping police forces within the participating States better to identify and combat hate crimes, and recommends that other participating States make use of it;
 9. Reiterates its full support for the political-level work undertaken by the three Personal Representatives of the Chair-in-Office and endorses the continuance of their efforts under their existing and distinct mandates;
 10. Reminds participating States of the Holocaust, its impact, and the continued acts of anti-Semitism occurring throughout the 56-nation OSCE region that are not unique to any one country and necessitate unwavering steadfastness by all participating States to erase the black mark on human history;
 11. Calls upon participating States to recall that atrocities within the OSCE region motivated by race, national origin, sex, religion or belief, disability or sexual orientation have contributed to the negative perceptions and treatment of persons in the region;
 12. Further recalls the resolutions on anti-Semitism adopted unanimously by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at its Annual Sessions in Berlin in 2002, Rotterdam in 2003, Edinburgh in 2004, Washington in 2005 and Brussels in 2006;
 13. Reaffirms especially the 2002 Porto Ministerial Decision condemning "anti-Semitic incidents in the OSCE area, recognizing the role that the existence of anti-Semitism has played throughout history as a major threat to freedom";
 14. Recalls the agreement of the participating States, adopted in Cracow in 1991, to preserve and protect those monuments and sites of remembrance, including most notably extermination camps, and the related archives, which are themselves testimonials to tragic experiences in their common past;
 15. Commends the 11 member states of the International Tracing Service for approving the immediate transfer of scanned Holocaust archives to receiving institutions and encourages all participating States to cooperate in opening, copying, and disseminating archival material from the Holocaust;
 16. Commemorates the bicentennial of the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act which banned the slave trade in the British Empire, allowed for the search and seizure of ships suspected of transporting enslaved people, and provided compensation for the freedom of slaves;
 17. Agrees that the transatlantic slave trade was a crime against humanity and urges participating states to develop educational tools, programmes, and activities to teach current and future generations about its significance
 18. Acknowledges the horrible legacy that centuries of racism, slavery, colonialism discrimination, exploitation, violence, and extreme oppression have continued to have on the promulgation of stereotypes, prejudice, and hatred directed towards persons of African descent;

19. Reminds parliamentarians and participating States that Roma constitute the largest ethnic minority in the European Union and have suffered from slavery, genocide, mass expulsions and imprisonment, forced assimilations, and numerous other discriminatory practices in the OSCE region;
20. Reminds participating States of the role these histories and other events have played in the institutionalization of practices that limit members of minority groups from having equal access to and participation in state-sponsored institutions, resulting in gross disparities in health, wealth, education, housing, political participation, and access to legal redress through the courts;
21. Underscores the sentiments of earlier resolutions regarding the continuing threat that anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance pose to the underlying fundamental human rights and democratic values that serve as the underpinnings for security in the OSCE region;
22. Therefore urges participating States to increase efforts to work with their diverse communities to develop and implement practices to provide members of minority groups with equal access to and opportunities within social, political, legal, and economic spheres;
23. Notes the growing prevalence of anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia, and other forms of intolerance being displayed within popular culture, including the Internet, computer games, and sports;
24. Deplores the growing prevalence of anti-Semitic materials and symbols of racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic organizations in some OSCE participating States;
25. Reminds participating States of the 2004 OSCE meeting on the Relationship between Racist, Xenophobic and Anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes and suggested measures to combat the dissemination of racist and anti-Semitic material via the Internet as well as in printed or otherwise mediated form that could be utilized throughout the OSCE region;
26. Deplores the continuing intellectualization of anti-Semitism, racism and other forms of intolerance in academic spheres, particularly through publications and public events at universities;
27. Condemns the association of politicians and political parties with discriminatory platforms, and reaffirms that such actions violate human rights standards;
28. Notes the legislative efforts, public awareness campaigns, and other initiatives of some participating States to recognize the historical injustices of the transatlantic slave trade, study the enslavement of Roma, and commemorate the Holocaust;
29. Urges other states to take similar steps in recognizing the impact of past injustices on current day practices and beliefs as a means of providing a platform to address anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance;
30. Suggests guidelines on academic responsibility to ensure the protection of Jewish and other minority students from harassment, discrimination, and abuse in the academic environment;
31. Urges participating States to implement the commitments following the original 2003 Vienna Conferences on Anti-Semitism and on Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination and subsequent conferences that include calls to:
 - a. provide the proper legal framework and authority to combat anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance;
 - b. collect, analyse, publish, and promote hate crimes data;
 - c. protect religious facilities and communitarian institutions, including Jewish sites of worship;
 - d. promote national guidelines on educational work to promote tolerance and combat anti-Semitism, including Holocaust education;
 - e. train law enforcement officers and military personnel to interact with diverse communities and address hate crimes, including community policing efforts;
 - f. appoint ombudspersons or special commissioners with the necessary resources to adequately monitor and address anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance;
 - g. work with civil society to develop and implement tolerance initiatives;
32. Urges parliamentarians and the participating States to report their initiatives to combat anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance and publicly recognize the benefits of diversity at the 2008 Annual Session;
33. Commends all parliamentary efforts on combating all forms of intolerance, especially the British All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism and its final report;
34. Emphasizes the key role of politicians and political parties in combating intolerance by raising awareness of the value of diversity as a source of mutual enrichment of societies, and calls attention to the importance of integration with respect for diversity as a key element in promoting mutual respect and understanding;

35. Calls upon OSCE PA delegates to encourage regular debates on the subjects of anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance in their national parliaments, following the example of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism;
36. Calls upon journalists to develop a self-regulated code of ethics for addressing anti-Semitism, racism, discrimination against Muslims, and other forms of intolerance within the media;
37. Expresses its concern at all attempts to target Israeli institutions and individuals for boycotts, divestments and sanctions;
38. Urges implementation of the Resolution on Roma Education unanimously adopted at the OSCE PA 2002 Berlin Annual Session to “eradicate practices that segregate Roma in schooling” and provide equal access to education that includes intercultural education;
39. Calls upon parliamentarians and other elected officials to publicly speak out against discrimination, violence and other manifestations of intolerance against Roma, Sinti, Jews, and other ethnic or religious groups;
40. Urges the participating States to ensure the timely provision of resources and technical support and the establishment of an administrative support structure to assist the three Personal Representatives of the Chair-in-Office in their work to promote greater tolerance and combat racism, xenophobia and discrimination;
41. Encourages the three Personal Representatives of the Chair-in-Office to address the Assembly’s Winter Meetings and Annual Sessions on their work to promote greater tolerance and combat racism, xenophobia, and discrimination throughout the OSCE region;
42. Recognizes the unique contribution that the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation could make to OSCE efforts to promote greater tolerance and combat anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination, including by supporting the ongoing work of the three Personal Representatives of the Chair-in-Office;
43. Reminds participating States that respect for freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief should assist in combating all forms of intolerance with the ultimate goal of building positive relationships among all people, furthering social justice, and attaining world peace;
44. Reminds participating States that, historically, violations of freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief have, through direct or indirect means, led to war, human suffering, and divisions between and among nations and peoples;
45. Condemns the rising violence in the OSCE region against persons believed to be Muslim and welcomes the conference to be held in Cordoba in October 2007 on combating discrimination against Muslims;
46. Calls upon parliamentarians and the participating States to ensure and facilitate the freedom of the individual to profess and practice any religion or belief, alone or in community with others, through transparent and non-discriminatory laws, regulations, practices and policies, and to remove any registration or recognition policies that discriminate against any religious community and hinder its ability to operate freely and equally with other faiths;
47. Encourages an increased focus by participating States on the greater role teenagers and young adults can play in combating anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance and urges participating States to collect data and report on hate crimes committed by persons under the age of 24 and to promote tolerance initiatives through education, workforce training, youth organizations, sports clubs, and other organized activities;
48. Reminds participating States that this year marks the 59th Anniversary of the United Nations Human Rights Commission’s adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which has served as the inspiration for numerous international treaties and declarations on tolerance issues;
49. Calls upon participating States to reaffirm and implement the sentiments expressed in the 2000 Bucharest Declaration and in this resolution as a testament to their commitment to “respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion”, as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act;
50. Expresses deep concern at the glorification of the Nazi movement, including the erection of monuments and memorials and the holding of public demonstrations glorifying the Nazi past, the Nazi movement and neo-Nazism;
51. Also stresses that such practices fuel contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and contribute to the spread and multiplication of various extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups;
52. Emphasizes the need to take the necessary measures to put an end to the practices described above, and calls upon participating States to take more effective measures to combat these phenomena and the extremist movements, which pose a real threat to democratic values.

[Translation]

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO URGE GOVERNMENT TO NEGOTIATE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH EUROPEAN UNION

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

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to engage in negotiations with the European Union towards a free trade agreement, in order to encourage investment, free movement of people and capital.

[English]

CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

RECOGNITION OF TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY— NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Sharon Carstairs: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 57(2), I give notice that, two days hence:

I shall call the attention of the Senate to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

• (1450)

[Translation]

QUESTION PERIOD

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MEASURES TO COMBAT POVERTY

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would like to welcome Senator Brown. We hope to work with him on issues of interest to all Canadians.

My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In response to the Speech from the Throne delivered by the old government — apparently after 20 months in office, the nomenclature has changed — I would like to comment on what was not in the Speech from the Throne.

I did not see much on early childhood education programs; I did not see much on fighting child poverty; nor did I see much on affordable housing. However, we saw a GST cut, which, in my opinion, will certainly help the well-off a little more than low-income earners, since they do not have any purchasing power.

I would like to know how the minister's government, which seems to be devoid of compassion for the poorest people in our country — according to the latest studies, there are currently more than one million poor children in Canada — will narrow

the gap between the wealthy, who will benefit from a GST cut; and the less fortunate, for whom there was nothing in the Speech from the Throne?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I thank the senator for her question. Before I begin my answer, I wish to congratulate the honourable senator on her new position as Quebec Lieutenant of the Liberal Party Caucus.

Honourable senators, last night's Speech from the Throne, I am grateful to say, has been well-received across the country. The Leader of the Opposition lists a couple of areas where she believes that certain segments of the Canadian population have been left out. I would disagree. The Throne Speech is the statement of the government's intentions.

In all five themes of the Throne Speech, Canadians in every walk of life, whether rich, middle class or poor, are represented. For instance, the theme regarding the modernization and the strengthening of democratic institutions is not just meant for the Houses of Parliament, this is our democratic structure. We are providing effective economic leadership by aggressively moving forward with broad tax relief that includes a further promise in respect of the GST, as the Leader of the Opposition said. That does affect low-income populations. People on low incomes also buy taxable groceries, clothes, appliances and other goods to which the GST applies.

On the issue of environment and health, perhaps people living in certain centres in the country are impacted more by poor air and water quality, particularly the quality of water used by our Aboriginal people. The government has made strong signals that it intends to move forward in these areas.

[Translation]

MEASURES TO INTEGRATE IMMIGRANTS

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I want to go back to what is not in the Speech from the Throne. I want to tell the Leader of the Government that we, in Canada, have a tradition of equal opportunity. We also have a tradition of inclusiveness and compassion. The Leader of the Government is probably aware that, in Quebec, a commission is currently dealing with the issue of reasonable accommodations, and that one of the main complaints received at the hearings concerns the lack of funding to integrate the new immigrants that Canada needs to fill job vacancies in every province of the country.

In my opinion, it is a well-known fact — unless people in Ottawa do not have access to Quebec TV channels — that learning the language is currently one of the main obstacles to the integration of immigrants, along with all transitional measures relating to trades and professions.

• (1455)

Could the Leader of the Government tell us where, in the Speech from the Throne, I can find measures that will provide to people in Quebec and in the rest of Canada, wherever there are immigrants, with transition programs that will help them integrate into our society and make a contribution to Canada?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I totally agree. The strength of the country is dependent upon being able to attract new Canadians into the country. Labour force figures from across Canada have indicated that the country requires further immigration, especially skilled workers.

I wish to point out that the Speech from the Throne was a statement of where we are going from here; what the government plans to do as it moves forward. That does not wipe out all of the great and various measures we have taken in the past. Many things that were not in the Speech from the Throne were not there because we have taken a lot of action on some of these very areas in the past.

With regard to training, we are spending \$81 million over two years for adult learning, literacy and training in essential skills. In April, Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, the department in which I am also involved, created the new Office of Literacy and Essential Skills to support families, communities and workplace literacy. In Budget 2006, we invested \$28 million in the enhanced language training initiative, which primarily assists new Canadians.

MEASURES TO COMBAT CHILD POVERTY

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Yesterday's Speech from the Throne left millions of Canadians — including myself and members of the opposition — troubled both with the tone and content of the speech. I am referring now to child poverty. As many honourable senators know, issues relating to child poverty are a priority for me; in particular, dealing with children in this area of Ottawa. How troubling to see little reference to action the government will take to address the shocking prevalence of child poverty in this country.

In Ottawa, just a doorstep away, according to the Ottawa-Carleton Child Poverty Action Group, one in five children live in poverty. In Renfrew County, one in eight live in poverty. Campaign 2000 tells us that Canada is second only to the U.S. as a low-wage country among industrialized nations.

Yet, let us take a closer look. There is nothing in the Speech from the Throne to address this problem. Homelessness was framed as an inconvenience or worry for the middle class, not as the tragic red flag that should call any well-meaning and responsible government to action.

Will the government turn its focus to providing support and opportunities to those Canadians who need help the most, low-income families and their children?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): I thank the honourable senator for his question. I take issue with the words he used in relation to homelessness. The Prime Minister specifically dealt with one form of the homelessness issue when he talked about the launch of the national drug strategy in Winnipeg. He addressed the situation with regard to the homeless when the Mental Health Commission was announced with Senator Keon and former Senator Kirby here in Ottawa.

As I said in response to the Leader of the Opposition, the Throne Speech sets out five distinct areas where the government will proceed in providing good leadership and building a strong, safe country. We have already taken action on a number of fronts to help low-income Canadians. Budget 2007 introduced a new tax benefit to help low income Canadians get over the "welfare wall." The working income tax benefit is worth \$550 million per year. Budget 2006 included new housing trust funds for provinces and territories for affordable housing, including funds for Aboriginal people off-reserve and northern housing. It also cut the GST, introduced the Universal Child Care Benefit and raised the amount of the Child Disability Benefit. The new homelessness partnering strategy, worth \$269 million over two years, took effect on April 1, 2007. The government is providing \$256 million to the two-year extension of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Homeowner Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program, directed specifically at renovation projects for low-income households.

• (1500)

As the Secretary of State for Seniors, I am proud to say that one of the priority areas that the new National Seniors Council focused on when we met in Halifax last Thursday and Friday is to provide support to unattached low-income seniors, who are mostly women, though there is also a significant number of men. This group is particularly vulnerable because they are at that stage in life when it is more difficult to strive beyond their earning capability.

Senator Munson: Honourable senators, I have a brief supplementary. Although she might not be able to provide the answer today, can the honourable senator tell the house how many children live in poverty in this country today despite these initiatives?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I do not know the answer to the question but, obviously, one child living in poverty is one child too many. I do not know whether Statistics Canada has those figures, but I will take the honourable senator's question as notice.

MEETING OBJECTIVES OF KYOTO PROTOCOL IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, on June 2, 2007, the Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act was given Royal Assent. It received the endorsement of both Houses of Parliament and is as much a law of the land as any law can possibly be. Last night, to the profound disappointment of many Canadians, the government acknowledged once and for all that it will break this law. How can this mandatory-minimum lock-them-up-and-throw-away-the-key government think that everyone else should obey the law while it picks and chooses which Canadian laws it should obey?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I hate to disagree with Senator Mitchell because people do that at great peril, but the fact is that the government has respected the will of Parliament in meeting the filing requirements of Bill C-288 within the timelines while continuing to push forward with what Canadians want — real and concrete action to fight climate

change, rather than years of inaction. The government met the requirements of Bill C-288, a private member's bill, as it was passed by this house.

Senator Mitchell: That is like saying, "Officer, I was travelling within the speed limit for most of my trip." In the Speech from the Throne, the Governor General stated: "Climate change is a global issue and requires a global solution." It should come as no surprise to the government that Canada already has a global response — the Kyoto Protocol.

Why is the government so defeatist and incapable of leading the country to meet great challenges that it simply will not try to meet the requirements in the Kyoto Protocol? Is it afraid to try because it is afraid to fail, or is it because it understands implicitly that it cannot provide the level of leadership required to achieve Kyoto protocols?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, Senator Mitchell's party colleagues, including his leader, have stated clearly at one time or another that the Kyoto targets could not be met.

• (1505)

The honourable senator's former leader, Mr. Chrétien, blames it on his successor, Mr. Martin, whose Minister of the Environment was Mr. Dion. Also, as Mr. Goldenberg pointed out in his book, Mr. Chrétien signed on to the Kyoto agreements without having the slightest idea of how he would implement them. It has been pretty well determined that it is impossible to meet the Kyoto targets. Yet, as the Speech from the Throne said, in effect, Mr. Dion proposes that we meet the targets within the next 77 days, or now 76 days — and it is not global.

Of course, we will see what happens with the Throne Speech, but if it passes, I think we can then move on to what we should do. We have involved ourselves, led by the Prime Minister, in various forums and discussions on climate change, and have already engaged other countries at the G8, APEC and United Nations. We will continue to press for an agreement to cut global emissions in half by 2050. Canada is committed, as the Prime Minister stated when he was in New York a few weeks ago, to working constructively within the United Nations program.

As I said in this place before, our country has a strong plan that will be a valuable guide for a post-2012 framework. At the UN in September, the Prime Minister outlined our vision for a framework on climate change, which includes developing new technologies. Obviously, Canada can take a lead in this area because we are technological leaders. Our vision also includes increasing the supply of renewable energy, which we can also take a lead in; finding cleaner ways to convert hydrocarbons into energy; and securing private capital investment.

Senator Mitchell: When the Leader of the Government reiterates what was already said in the Throne Speech, which is that "it is generally understood that Kyoto objectives are unattainable," what proof does she and her government have of that statement? Do they have some secret study that they have not released? Are they listening to scientists who are paid by certain special interest groups, or are they making this up to defend their ideological position?

[Senator LeBreton]

Senator LeBreton: We were listening to many people in the environmental field, and to many people of all political stripes, who realize, as the editorial in the *Gazette* in Montreal said today, the Kyoto ship has left the port, or words to that effect. The fact is that the Kyoto targets cannot be met, as everyone knows. The honourable senator's own leader, who was a former Minister of the Environment, has acknowledged that publicly on a number of occasions, as have other leading spokespersons in his party.

So let us stop worrying about the fact we did not meet the Kyoto targets — everyone knew we could not; I do not think it is any big surprise — and get on with implementing a solid plan that the Prime Minister advanced not only when he was at the G8 over the summer and the APEC in Sydney, but at the United Nations.

MEASURE TO ADDRESS ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, my question is also to the Leader of the Government in the Senate in regard to the Throne Speech. What emanated from it was relatively positive news for First Nations in the areas of housing, job training and residential schools. There was a formal apology from the Prime Minister in regard to individuals in residential schools who were subjected to this northern sovereignty. My question relates to what came out of the Throne Speech in regard to specific claims, which is that legislation would be forthcoming.

Is it proper to ask whether we can see this legislation before the end of this calendar year? This huge injustice has stood out there and the Prime Minister has clearly indicated under former Minister Prentice of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and now Minister Strahl, that this injustice will be rectified.

• (1510)

Could the Leader of the Government give us an indication of when this Parliament will be able to start dealing with this specific claims issue, which I think is urgent in the minds of our First Nations people?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I thank the senator for the question. As the honourable senator knows, the Honourable Jim Prentice, the former Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, made great strides in the area of specific claims, including changing the process. I cannot give an exact timetable, but I know that Minister Strahl has made significant progress on the files. There was much work done by Minister Prentice, and Minister Strahl has acknowledged that he was able to pick up the files and did not have to go back to square one.

I will attempt to give Senator St. Germain a definitive timetable. I do know that this is something that the government and the minister want to proceed with immediately and that there will not be a long lag time.

I acknowledge the honourable senator's words. I talked to some Aboriginal people last night after the Throne Speech. The Prime Minister will apologize on behalf of the government for the residential schools. This matter regarding the injustices people suffered was very well-received and very much appreciated.

MEASURES TO ADDRESS POST-SECONDARY
EDUCATION ISSUES

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is addressed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In yesterday's Speech from the Throne, the government stated:

The bedrock of our workforce is middle-class Canadians and their families. These families worry about the rising costs of higher education . . .

I could not agree more; Canadian families do worry about the rising cost of post-secondary education. Yet, in the Throne Speech, the government's vision for the nation, post-secondary education barely gets a mention.

Why did the government not give the issue of post-secondary education the attention it deserves in the Throne Speech?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I thank the senator for the question. It is interesting that in the First Session of this Parliament, I was answering questions about why the government did not implement policies that were promises of the previous government. Now that we are in the new session of Parliament, I am receiving questions about why certain matters were not in the Throne Speech. We have been the government for over a year and a half, and many of the matters about which I am being asked regarding yesterday's Throne Speech, I was not asked about in the last session, when we were actually doing these things.

In Budget 2006 and Budget 2007, the transfers to the provinces for health care and education were vastly increased, and post-secondary education was one particular area for the provinces. We have only to witness the recent Ontario election, where the Liberals were going around claiming what a great success they had achieved in post-secondary education, which is very nice, but they should also have acknowledged that they received a considerable sum of money from the federal government in order to do that.

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: Honourable senators, that view is not shared by students.

Why is there nothing to help Canadian students pay the increasingly high cost of post-secondary education, through a federal policy or program such as, for example, the Millennium Scholarship Fund?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I will take as notice the question on the Millennium Scholarship Fund. I will provide an answer as quickly as possible.

FINANCE

ATLANTIC ACCORD—
OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS REVENUES

Hon. James S. Cowan: Honourable senators, a week or so ago, the Prime Minister and the Premier of Nova Scotia announced a compromise arrangement designed to settle the dispute between those two governments in regard to the impact on the Atlantic accord of Budget 2007. That arrangement was contained in an exchange of letters signed by ministers representing the two governments.

• (1515)

I have been advised by officials of the Government of Nova Scotia that the Government of Canada must introduce legislation to provide the legislative framework for these arrangements. Will the Leader of the Government in the Senate confirm that the government intends to introduce such legislation, and will she ascertain from her colleagues in cabinet when we can expect to see it?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, I thank the senator for the question. I believe he is mistaken. There is no legislation to be tabled. This involved discussions that clarified the Atlantic accord as it related to Nova Scotia. If individuals in the Nova Scotia government believe legislation is to be tabled, that was not what the Prime Minister, Premier MacDonald, Minister MacKay and Gerald Keddy, the Member of Parliament for South Shore-St. Margaret's, agreed to.

Hon. Jane Cordy: I wish to thank the minister for that answer.

Premier MacDonald has been talking about the Canada-Nova Scotia clarifying agreement. I have been searching for the agreement. I have looked on the Nova Scotia website and my office has been looking on the Government of Canada website. I can find a pair of letters exchanged by Minister Flaherty and Minister Baker on the Nova Scotia website, but, as I also said to Minister Fortier last night, I am unable to find a copy of the agreement. I wonder if the minister could let me know where I can find this information.

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I believe people are misinformed if they think this agreement was a new agreement or some side deal, which it was not.

The Prime Minister and Premier MacDonald announced a resolution to the province's concerns related to the interpretation of the Atlantic accords. While Nova Scotia opted into the new equalization formula, the premier expressed concern that the province could lose money if it opted in permanently now and future offshore oil and gas development made the Atlantic accord more beneficial. However, we do not know if that will happen. Minister Flaherty has been clear that we are prepared to make the choice more flexible to ensure that benefits have not been lost. Nova Scotia — and Newfoundland and Labrador, for that matter, if the province so chooses — will be able to opt in to either the 2005 equalization formula or the new equalization formula, but not a combination or stacking of the benefits of the two formulas. Their Atlantic accord benefits will be protected no matter which equalization formula they choose.

The Prime Minister agreed with Premier MacDonald to an arbitration process with Nova Scotia to determine the value of the Crown share in the 1986 Nova Scotia Offshore Accord.

Senator Cordy: Nova Scotians remain somewhat cynical about the word of this Prime Minister and this government. Is there any place that we can find a detailed analysis of what exactly was agreed to? There is a vagueness in the letters from Minister Flaherty and Minister Baker of Nova Scotia. The current letters or information that I have seen in the newspaper about the “non-agreement” shows that Nova Scotia will receive less money for the next nine or 10 years than they would have received from the Atlantic accord, which was signed in 2005. Is this information written down anywhere? I have seen articles in the newspaper, but now I discover that there is no agreement and that it is only letters that are somewhat vague to those of us reading them. For those of us who are interested, can we find specific details somewhere so that in nine years we are able to look back and say that we should receive more money at this time?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, that was precisely why they went back and made commitments to Nova Scotia. Again, I point out that there was concern about the interpretation. It is clear that the intent of both governments was not to see Nova Scotia in a position where it would lose money.

• (1520)

I read the letters of Minister Baker and Minister Flaherty. They were rather long and detailed letters. I do not know what else could be said, unless the honourable senator is looking for something that neither the ministers nor the governments intended.

My honourable friend says that people are cynical about it. I was in Nova Scotia last week and read some of the newspaper stories. Obviously, Premier MacDonald, the Prime Minister, Minister MacKay and Gerald Keddy worked very hard to clear up some of this misunderstanding with regard to interpretation. I believe they satisfied themselves. From what I can understand, people are satisfied that they have come to this agreement and we can put this issue behind us.

[*Translation*]

ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

MEETING OF COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE, MARCH 6-8, 2007—REPORT TABLED

Leave having been granted to revert to Tabling of Reports from Inter-Parliamentary Delegations:

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 23(6), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation respecting its participation in the meeting of the Co-operation and Development Committee held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from March 6 to 8, 2007.

[Senator LeBreton]

CONVENTION ON ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN, MAY 3-7, 2007—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 23(6), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation to the seminar of the APF Network of Women Parliamentarians on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, held in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on May 3 and 4, 2007.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY—
DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of Her Excellency the Governor General’s Speech from the Throne at the opening of the Second Session of the Thirty-ninth Parliament.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government), seconded by the Honourable Bert Brown, moved:

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

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

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

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

He said: Honourable senators, it is an honour for me to table this motion. I believe in this government and its agenda, and I am convinced that the measures announced yesterday evening in the Speech from the Throne will have numerous benefits for all Canadians throughout the country.

Allow me to extend my thanks to a number of my colleagues in this chamber, with whom I have had the honour to work for many years. First of all, I wish to thank our Speaker, the Honourable Senator Kinsella, a compatriot from Atlantic Canada who has demonstrated his value in directing the proceedings of this upper house, which can be boisterous at times, and has shown fairness and patience.

I also wish to thank the Leader of the Government, the Honourable Senator LeBreton, for her guidance to our caucus and her support to me in this chamber. I also thank my colleague,

the Honourable Senator Stratton, for his dedicated albeit often thankless work as government whip.

On the other side, the Honourable Senator Hervieux-Payette has shown that she can meet challenges as Leader of the Opposition. She is assisted by the Honourable Senator Tardif, with whom it is a pleasure to work; and by the Honourable Senator Fraser, with whom I had a great working relationship and whom I often miss. I would also like to thank Senator Cowan for his work as opposition whip.

Honourable senators, the men and women on both sides of this chamber have proven that they are dedicated to their duty to act as a chamber of sober second thought for all Canadians. I know that each one of us, on both sides of the chamber, works very hard. That work is appreciated by the government and by all Canadians.

I would also like to thank the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, for the leadership he has shown in government and for all Canadians. I would also like to thank the Prime Minister for trusting in me to work as Deputy Leader of the Government.

[English]

Honourable senators, since taking office, the Conservative government has cut taxes for working families and seniors, tackled crime with tougher sentences and more police, passed the toughest anti-corruption law in Canadian history, delivered choice and support to parents with the Universal Child Care Benefit, and restored fiscal balance with the provinces and territories, providing the funds to ensure that Canadians receive the medical care they need in a timely manner.

By delivering results for families and taxpayers, the government is building a stronger, safer and better Canada. Yesterday evening's address by Her Excellency confirms that the government will continue to build upon these accomplishments based on five core priorities.

The first is a proud and sovereign Canada in which Canada's government rigorously defends our nation's place in the world. This includes the realization of a strong Arctic vision and a responsible, effective path forward in Afghanistan.

The second priority is a strong federation in which the government will continue to strengthen and modernize its democratic institutions. This includes formal limits on federal spending power and — yes — Senate reform. Senator Cowan will be pleased to hear that.

Third, the government will continue to provide effective economic leadership and a prosperous future by aggressively moving forward with broad tax relief that includes a further promised reduction in the GST.

The fourth priority is a safe and secure Canada. The government will continue to tackle crime and strengthen the security of Canadians.

Fifth, the government will continue to improve the environment and health of Canadians by delivering realistic and achievable results in areas such as environmental enforcement and product and food safety.

Canadians elected the government to improve life for themselves and their families. Under the strong leadership of Prime Minister Harper, that government is building a better Canada.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, there is a very striking contrast between our government and the former administration. The current government is pragmatic, disciplined, balanced and focused on results. It has shown true leadership on the world scene.

[English]

There is no question that the Canadian economy has done well in recent years. The nationwide jobless rate last month was 5.9 per cent, a level not seen in three decades. The dollar, worth 62 cents just five years ago, has traded in recent days above par to that of the U.S., a level not seen in three decades.

[Translation]

Last month, the government announced one of the biggest debt reductions in Canada's history. Less debt means lower interest payments and lower taxes.

Thanks to the tax-back guarantee in the Budget Implementation Act adopted this spring, every time the debt shrinks, the interest saved is applied, as it should be, to income tax cuts for Canadians who, as we know, work very hard.

We are a prosperous nation. It is clear that most of the policies that have moved our economy forward over the past 10 years have been the result of the pragmatism, courage and vision of the last Conservative government. These policies include bringing in free trade, transforming the Foreign Investment Review Agency into Investment Canada, repealing the national energy program, and instituting expenditure management, as well as privatization, sales tax reform, income tax reform, inflation control targets, and deregulation.

The Liberals opposed these measures when they were in opposition. However, these measures are the driving force behind today's economy.

I would like to remind honourable senators about two of these policies, which they condemned prior to 1993, and then proceeded to implement. First, the goods and services tax replaced the former federal sales tax, or FST. We all know that there were a lot of problems with the FST.

• (1530)

Replacing the FST with the GST made Canada more competitive and made the revenue base more stable. Honourable senators, I am sure that you remember the GST debates.

[English]

In this chamber, Senators Corbin, Fairbairn, Grafstein and Watt and, in the other place, future Senators Callbeck, Harb, Robichaud and Rompkey all rallied against the GST, telling us that it would hurt the poor, it would hurt literacy, it would hurt

the North, it would hurt students, it would hurt small business, and that it would not survive. Senator Robichaud was there. I remember them crying about all the ills of the GST.

[*Translation*]

Did the Liberals abolish the GST, as promised by Jean Chrétien?

Some Hon. Senators: No!

Senator Comeau: Of course not. Not only did they fail to abolish the GST, but, during their first term, they entered into harmonization agreements with the Atlantic provinces before signing an administrative agreement with Quebec.

Honourable senators, I would now like to discuss free trade, a second measure criticized by the Liberals, even though it drives the Canadian economy. Twenty years ago this month, Canada and the United States concluded negotiations on an initial free trade agreement. That agreement was later expanded to include Mexico and become NAFTA.

If we had listened to our colleagues across the floor, there would have been no free trade agreement with the United States and no NAFTA.

The Liberal leader wanted to rip up the agreement. The Liberal members in the House of Commons opposed the bill, and the Liberal senators refused to adopt it before the election was called in 1988.

The nightmarish scenarios propagated both Houses and during the 1988 election campaign never came to fruition. The border still exists, Canadian culture has never been stronger, and the Great Lakes have not been drained to quench the thirst of our American neighbours.

Canada has maintained its sovereignty. Most of the trade decisions reached under NAFTA have been beneficial and bilateral trade is thriving.

In reality, since the Free Trade Agreement came into effect in 1989, bilateral trade has quadrupled, and nearly \$2 billion worth of goods crosses the border every day. Today, more than 5 million Canadian jobs depend on guaranteed access to the American market.

The majority of jobs created in recent years can be attributed to increased exports to the United States and other countries. Spin-offs from the Free Trade Agreement for employment, the standard of living and our overall competitiveness have been extremely positive for Canada.

This agreement with the United States was reached thanks to a government that, like the government of Stephen Harper, showed pragmatism, vision and the willingness to play a leading role on the world stage.

[*English*]

Unfortunately, while the former government was quite willing to reap the benefits of free trade, it had no interest in maintaining a good relationship with our neighbours to the south. We have all

[Senator Comeau]

had occasional disputes with our neighbours and one may have occasional disagreements with customers in business. However, one needs to have the foresight, discipline and vision to deal with these differences in a responsible manner. A company will not be in business very long if the team publicly calls the CEO of its largest customer names best described as “somewhat unparliamentary.”

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, a solid business case for the Atlantic Gateway was recently made.

According to a study by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the benefits of the Atlantic Gateway include the creation of nearly 61,000 person-years of employment, which represents \$2.1 billion in salaries. That is huge.

After years of neglect, it is time to act. We must build bigger, more efficient ports and more efficient transportation and marketing systems as well.

I would draw the Senate’s attention to the announcement made last weekend about the Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of the Atlantic Gateway, which was signed by the federal government and the Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador.

With this announcement, the federal government is delivering on its commitment to develop the country’s trade gateways and corridors. The Atlantic Gateway Memorandum of Understanding will guide future investments and increase Canada’s overall competitiveness over the long term.

The common vision of the five governments is to establish the Atlantic Gateway as a strategic, integrated and globally competitive transportation system, facilitating the movement of international commerce on North America’s east coast.

Honourable senators, last week Prime Minister Harper and his counterpart in Nova Scotia, the Honourable Rodney MacDonald, announced that they had succeeded in allaying the concerns of the province surrounding the interpretation of the Atlantic Accord. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Prime Minister Harper and Premier MacDonald. I also want to thank Minister Peter MacKay and MP Gerald Keddy for their contribution to this solution.

Nova Scotia will enjoy increased flexibility. It will be able to opt for the new equalization formula without the risk of losing the advantages it was given under the terms of the 2005 accord.

The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia also agreed on a process to determine the value of their Crown share under the original Atlantic Accord.

This is an historic solution that will put an end to a dispute that, for more than 20 years has been an awkward problem for the successive federal and provincial governments. These are not simple issues. The Atlantic Accord was very technical. Even well-meaning people could interpret it in different ways.

Honourable senators, the February 2007 budget was concerned with restoring the fiscal balance. The Liberals, led by Mr. Dion, have always denied the existence of such an imbalance. We should remember that the first Atlantic accords were signed only after the Conservatives, who were in opposition at the time, pushed the former government to reach an agreement with Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador.

In November 2004, when the issue was put to a vote in the House of Commons subsequent to a Conservative motion, Stéphane Dion and all Liberal members, except two, voted against payment of all revenues from offshore development to Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia.

All the Liberals voted against the motion and it is thanks to the Conservative Party that these measures have gone forward. Whereas the former government refused to take action for years, this government has implemented concrete measures to achieve fiscal balance and deal with the provinces' concerns.

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (The Hon. the Acting Speaker): Honourable senators, I must advise Senator Comeau that his speaking time of 15 minutes has expired.

Senator Comeau: Honourable senators, I am one of those who believe that we should restrict ourselves to 15 minutes for this type of speech. Therefore I will stop here.

• (1540)

[*English*]

Hon. Bert Brown: Honourable senators, I feel privileged and humbled to stand in this chamber today to second the motion on the Speech from the Throne, as put forth by Senator Comeau. I want to thank my new colleagues who have made me feel welcome in this chamber. I know some of you personally and have for a number of years. I hope some day to know all of you.

I also thank Prime Minister Harper and his government for having the wisdom and the political courage to continue to advance the cause of democratizing the upper chamber, not only by appointing me but also by continuing to be firmly committed to the election of future senators. This moment is an opportunity to express my gratitude to the people of Alberta who have twice elected me as a senator-in-waiting.

It was back in August of 1983 when the Canadian Committee for a Triple-E Senate went national after an Alberta committee, founded in May of that year, began to attract supporters from other provinces. From a handful of Albertans in 1983 to almost 80 per cent of Canadians from coast to coast now publicly in opinion polls telling us they want to elect their senators, the idea of Senate reform has grown slowly but steadily. Suffice to say that Canada now has a Prime Minister publicly and firmly committed to the election of future senators.

There are now 12 vacant Senate seats in eight provinces and more to come. Prime Minister Harper wants to see them filled by an election process. In Alberta alone, the three Senate elections saw 650,000 votes cast in 1989; 890,000 votes cast in 1998; and 2,200,000 votes cast in 2004. In all of these elections, many in the

national media ridiculed the process, as did more than a few academics and pundits, but Albertans kept the faith in supporting the cause and kept voting in increasing numbers.

Honourable senators, as articulated by the Conservative government of Stephen Harper, it is now time for the idea of the election of senators to be expanded to other provinces so that people from all parts of Canada can benefit from what Alberta has benefited from twice, both with my election and with the election of former Senator Stan Waters. It is my sincere hope that this process will help generate a new consensus with respect to provincial representation in the Senate, and Canada will then move from a democracy to a great democracy.

Honourable senators, in my new role as an elected senator, I vow to continue to advance and support efforts to make the Senate more accountable, more democratic and more reflective of what Canadians have come to expect from their governing institutions in a modern democracy.

As the Prime Minister stated last year prior to his appearance before a Special Senate Committee:

Canada needs an upper house that provides sober and effective second thought. Canada needs an upper house that gives voice to our diverse regions. Canada needs an upper house with democratic legitimacy.

Honourable senators, it is my hope that my appointment to this chamber as an elected senator will serve as an important symbol that further delay on Senate reform must cease. I look forward to working with parliamentarians and Canadian citizens of all political stripes and backgrounds to realize the ideas that I and others have been campaigning for over the last 24 years.

Our institutions are a reflection of who we are and what we aspire to as a democracy.

My Alberta is a dynamic province made up of productive farmland, foothills, bustling cities, thriving towns, diverse and energetic people and, of course, the Rocky Mountains.

In considering the themes outlined in the Speech from the Throne and in everything that this government has achieved in its mandate, I also feel that our pride in what our country is, or has been about, should not diminish our ambition for what it could be in the future: a Canada that has modern and democratic forms of governance, which adequately balance the interests and concerns of all parts of the country; a Canada where we have a federal government that is fully sensitive to the needs of our diverse regions, provinces and territories, cities and towns, and citizens of all backgrounds; and a Canada where the federal government engages the provinces in a disciplined approach to federal-provincial relations with the overriding objectives of ensuring the health and well-being of all Canadians.

I look forward to helping the Prime Minister and his government in implementing this agenda. I also look forward to working with all senators in this chamber as we discharge our constitutional duties to provide sober second thought on legislation and issues that come before us.

While the route that I have travelled to get here is different from that taken by all of you, my commitment to this institution and making it better is one that I take most seriously.

The people of Alberta have been patient souls. Their loyalty to democratic choice for those who will represent Albertans in this chamber of Parliament is about to pay off for the second time in three elections.

The act of taking my seat in this chamber, while not a revolution, is a testimony to the power of an idea whose time has come: "Senate reform is like a staircase, you take it one step at a time."

In closing, and on a personal note, I wish to thank the members and supporters of the Canadian Committee for a Triple-E Senate. Many loyalists have served with me and supported me. They know who they are. I am compelled, however, to personally thank Dr. David Elton, Professor Emeritus of Lethbridge University — a confidant, an adviser and a very good friend who has always been a source of great wisdom and patience.

My family and friends have also been supportive of me in many ways. I also want to say that I look forward to working with my fellow members in the Conservative Senate caucus, as ably led by the Leader of the Government in the Senate, Minister Marjory LeBreton.

Finally, I want to thank my wife, Alice, for her support and help in everything that I do. Without her, I would not be here.

On motion of Senator Tardif, debate adjourned.

• (1550)

AUNG SAN SUU KYI

MOTION TO CONFER HONORARY CITIZENSHIP ADOPTED

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Deputy Leader of the Government), pursuant to notice earlier this day, moved:

That,

Whereas Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of Burma's National League for Democracy, has been recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize as one of the world's leading champions of peace, democracy and non-violence;

Whereas she has been repeatedly deprived of her liberty and contact with her family since July 1989, as retribution for her support for the cause of freedom, democracy, human rights and justice for the people of Burma;

Whereas she led the National League for Democracy to victory in multi-party democratic elections in 1990, the results of which were ignored by the military regime;

Whereas she remains one of the leading forces in the continuing struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma and a symbol of the desire of the people of Burma for political freedom;

Whereas recent events show that her desire for democracy and peace is deeply shared by the people of that country;

Whereas her long struggle to bring freedom and democracy to the people of Burma has made her the embodiment of these ideals and an inspiration to all of us; and

Whereas Canada has previously acknowledged the contributions of other leading champions of human dignity, granting them honorary Canadian citizenship;

Therefore, the Senate of Canada resolves to bestow the title "honorary Canadian citizen" on Aung San Suu Kyi and requests that the people of Canada demonstrate their friendship and solidarity with Aung San Suu Kyi as an honorary citizen of Canada, and through her, to the people of Burma.

Hon. Tommy Banks: Honourable senators, I have a question of mere information. I think everyone here, at least certainly I, agree with the thrust of this motion and the honour that is being given to this spectacular person whose commitment is beyond a doubt. I note that in the motion each time the country of which she is a resident and prisoner is referred to as "Burma." Is there any international legality which would make the motion even more effective if we were to refer to it by the name its residents call it, which is "Myanmar"? Is it still legally called Burma someplace?

Senator Comeau: My understanding is it is still legally called Burma. In my view, and it is not the government's position, although it may decide to support me, the regime in power now is not one I think any parliamentarian, at least in this chamber, would wish to support. Why should we recognize their name for a country that refuses to recognize their duly elected leader, their Prime Minister? Why should we recognize that name? Therefore, let us leave the name Burma in the motion as it is now.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sharon Carstairs: Honourable senators, I will support this motion to make Aung San Suu Kyi an honorary citizen of Canada. I would be remiss if I did not recognize the other parliamentarians of Burma who remain in jail. It is very clear that Aung San Suu Kyi has been under house arrest since 1989, but there are 26 parliamentarians in prison. They were duly elected in 1990. She, unfortunately, was not eligible to be elected in 1990. The government forbade her the right to run. Of the 26 duly elected that we know of, 13 of them have been in prison, some of them for 15 years. We know that in the case of two, their so-called term, their sentence, expired this year, at which point they were immediately told they would be required to spend two more years in prison.

We know that as a result of actions of monks and the public in Burma this summer, 13 more parliamentarians were arrested, and we do not know where they are. They certainly have not been subject to any trial procedure, but we know they are not free. We know they are not at large; they are in custody somewhere. We hope they are still alive. We also know of six parliamentarians who actually died in custody, and we know of two parliamentarians who were assassinated.

Honourable senators might ask why I have all this information at my fingertips. As some know, I chair the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians of the Inter-Parliamentary

Union, and we have been dealing with this case since the 1990s. I will outline some of the decisions we made at our meeting last week in Geneva.

We condemned the authorities' violent and wide-scale repression of peaceful protests in Myanmar through killings, ill-treatment and scores of arbitrary arrests of protesters, including those of 26 elected parliamentarians, many of whose whereabouts remain unknown. We strongly urged the authorities to release unconditionally those arrested forthwith and to refrain from further repressing dissent, to lift restrictions on human rights, and to end the harassment of political activism.

We affirmed that, as a result of the crackdown, the people of Myanmar are deprived of their only peaceful means to promote change in the country, given that their basic right to be represented by persons of their choosing, which they exercised more than 17 years ago, has never been respected. We considered that an outright defiance of the democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar and that the outcome of the national convention only serves to prolong and legitimize military rule. We stressed once again that any transition towards democracy will fail so long as it is not generally free, transparent and reflective of the people's will. We urged the authorities to engage in genuine dialogue with those elected in the 1990 elections and to release forthwith the 26 elected parliamentarians who continue to languish in prison.

We remain convinced that strong action by the international community is crucial to help to bring about the release and respect of democratic principles in Myanmar. We were heartened by the international outcry and response to recent events in Myanmar, and encourage the members of Parliaments of the IPU, in particular China and India, as neighbouring countries, to pursue and, given the seriousness of the current situation in Myanmar, to strengthen their national, regional and international initiatives in support of these objectives and would greatly appreciate being kept informed in this regard.

Honourable senators, Senator Banks asked a very good question. Why does our resolution refer to Myanmar and the resolution presented this afternoon use the term "Burma"? As the deputy government leader said, I believe Burma is the correct term because that is the manner in which the duly elected parliamentarians refer to this country. They call it Burma. Unfortunately, the United Nations uses the term "Myanmar," and the IPU has always used the designation that is given by the United Nations. I agree with Senator Comeau that this is a country that should be recognized as Burma because Burma is what the people elected to represent the people of Burma think it should be called.

Honourable senators, Aung San Suu Kyi represents the epitome of what democracy should represent. She has shown enormous courage and dedication to the cause. She has had to put her family's interest aside. One remembers well that when her husband died the authorities would not allow her to attend his funeral. They would not even allow her to be with him when he was ill because they would not allow her return to Burma.

Honourable senators must remember that along with Aung San Suu Kyi, there are millions of Burmese citizens who have no human rights. There are 26 duly elected parliamentarians, our colleagues, who are literally wasting away in Burmese jails.

Hon. Percy Downe: Honourable senators, I, too, rise in support of this motion as a member of the Canadian Parliamentary Friends of Burma. Our colleague Senator Jaffer serves with me on that executive. I obviously support this motion, but I will not repeat all the good points made by Senator Carstairs. I hope that Senator Comeau will explain to us or find out what other actions Canada is prepared to take. This is an important piece of the puzzle. I am particularly interested in Canadian companies that may be doing business in Burma and making a profit from military slave labour.

• (1600)

Has the government given any instructions or guidance to the Canadian Pension Plan Investment Board? Although the government does not direct the funding and investment, have they expressed an opinion to the board on investment in companies that are doing business in Burma at the current time? Do they have a list, for example, of which Canadian companies are operating in Burma? Are they proposing any sanctions against those companies? Do they propose any action to restrict those companies from doing business with the Government of Canada? Has the Prime Minister written to any of those companies? Has the Minister of Foreign Affairs taken any action? Could Senator Comeau find some additional information?

I am pleased to support the motion in and of itself, as I know others in the chamber are doing.

Senator Comeau: Honourable senators, I am pleased to hear that my honourable friend will be supporting the motion, and that is what the motion is all about. We did not include all of the extra questions that the senator has just asked. The motion is symbolic. Aung San Suu Kyi is a very courageous woman who symbolizes the problems faced by her country.

I would suggest that the senator place on the Order Paper all the questions he has asked. I am quite sure that he will get a better response than if I tried to track them down for him.

Senator Downe: I agree that this motion is a symbol of our support for Burma. However, in addition to symbolism, I believe that the Canadian government is in a position to take action in Canada and internationally. I will follow up on the senator's suggestion.

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

Hon. Senators: Question.

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

Motion agreed to.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

CONTENTS

Wednesday, October 17, 2007

	PAGE		PAGE
Afghanistan—Fallen Soldiers		Criminal Code (Bill S-203)	
Silent Tribute.		Bill to Amend—First Reading.	
The Hon. the Speaker	8	Hon. John G. Bryden	12
Visitors in the Gallery		National Philanthropy Day Bill (Bill S-204)	
The Hon. the Speaker	8	First Reading.	
		Hon. Jerahmiel S. Grafstein	12
<hr/>			
SENATORS' STATEMENTS		Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (Bill S-205)	
The Honourable Bert Brown		Bill to Amend—First Reading.	
Welcome to the Senate.		Hon. Yoine Goldstein	12
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	8	Food and Drugs Act (Bill S-206)	
Hon. Claudette Tardif	8	Bill to Amend—First Reading.	
The Honourable Andrée Champagne		Hon. Jerahmiel S. Grafstein	12
Recovery from Illness.		Statutes Repeal Bill (Bill S-207)	
Hon. Andrée Champagne	9	First Reading.	
International Day for the Eradication of Poverty		Hon. Tommy Banks	12
Hon. Rose-Marie Losier Cool	9	Drinking Water Sources Bill (Bill S-208)	
The Honourable Bert Brown		First Reading.	
Welcome to the Senate.		Hon. Jerahmiel S. Grafstein	12
Hon. Marcel Prud'homme	10	Criminal Code (Bill S-209)	
The Honourable Wilbert J. Keon, O.C.		Bill to Amend—First Reading.	
Congratulations on Induction into Canadian Medical Hall of Fame.		Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette	13
Hon. Art Eggleton	10	Criminal Code (Bill S-210)	
		Bill to Amend—First Reading.	
		Hon. Jerahmiel S. Grafstein	13
<hr/>			
ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS		Canada Securities Bill (Bill S-211)	
National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy		First Reading.	
Government Response Pursuant to Kyoto Protocol		Hon. Jerahmiel S. Grafstein	13
Implementation Act Tabled	11	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Bill C-280)	
Privacy Commissioner		Bill to Amend—First Reading	13
2006-07 Annual Report Tabled	11	Kelowna Accord Implementation Bill (Bill C-292)	
Study on Funding for Treatment of Autism		First Reading	13
Government Response to Report of Social Affairs,		Criminal Code (Bill C-299)	
Science and Technology Committee Tabled.		Bill to Amend—First Reading	13
Hon. Gerald J. Comeau	11	Development Assistance Accountability Bill (Bill C-293)	
Business of the Senate		First Reading	13
Notice of Motion to Change Commencement Time		Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie	
on Wednesdays and Thursdays and to Effect		Meeting of Parliamentary Affairs Committee,	
Wednesday Adjournments.		May 22-24, 2007—Report Tabled.	
Hon. Gerald J. Comeau	11	Hon. Pierre De Bané	14
Aung San Suu Kyi		The Senate	
Notice of Motion to Confer Honorary Citizenship.		Notice of Motion to Strike Special Committee on Aging.	
Hon. Gerald J. Comeau	11	Hon. Sharon Carstairs	14
Financial Administration Act		Human Rights	
Bank of Canada Act (Bill S-201)		Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Study Organization	
Bill to Amend—First Reading.		for Security and Cooperation in Europe 2007 Declaration	
Hon. Hugh Segal	12	on Anti-Semitism and Intolerance.	
Bill to Provide Job Protection for Members of the Reserve Force		Hon. Jerahmiel S. Grafstein	14
(Bill S-202)		The Senate	
First Reading.		Notice of Motion to Urge Government to Negotiate	
Hon. Hugh Segal	12	Free Trade Agreement with European Union.	
		Hon. Hugh Segal	18

	PAGE
Charter of Rights and Freedoms	
Recognition of Twenty-fifth Anniversary—Notice of Inquiry.	
Hon. Sharon Carstairs	18

QUESTION PERIOD

Speech from the Throne	
Measures to Combat Poverty.	
Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette	18
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	18
Measures to Integrate Immigrants.	
Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette	18
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	19
Measures to Combat Child Poverty.	
Hon. Jim Munson	19
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	19
Meeting Objectives of Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act.	
Hon. Grant Mitchell	19
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	19
Measure to Address Aboriginal Land Claims.	
Hon. Gerry St. Germain	20
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	20
Measures to Address Post-secondary Education Issues.	
Hon. Claudette Tardif	21
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	21

PAGE

Finance	
Atlantic Accord—Offshore Oil and Gas Revenues.	
Hon. James S. Cowan	21
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	21
Hon. Jane Cordy	21

Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie	
Meeting of Cooperation and Development Committee, March 6-8, 2007—Report Tabled.	
Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool	22
Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, May 3-7, 2007—Report Tabled.	
Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool	22

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Speech from the Throne	
Motion for Adoption of Address in Reply—Debate Adjourned.	
Hon. Gerald J. Comeau	22
Hon. Bert Brown	25

Aung San Suu Kyi	
Motion to Confer Honorary Citizenship Adopted.	
Hon. Gerald J. Comeau	26
Hon. Tommy Banks	26
Hon. Sharon Carstairs	26
Hon. Percy Downe	27



If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Publishing and Depository Services
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5