

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

## FIXED LINK—ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Hon. Heath Macquarrie:** Honourable senators, it is no overstatement that Prince Edward Islanders are deeply divided over the construction of a bridge across the Northumberland Strait. Some strongly support it; others just as vigorously oppose. There is a third group, those who are perplexed at what is happening with respect to a matter that is almost as crucial as our entry into Confederation in 1873. These groups are not exclusive. For instance, I belong to both the second and the third one.

On March 19, the Federal Court of Canada ruled that an environmental assessment of the specific bridge design was required. Only one month later, Public Works Canada announced that the evaluation had been completed. This assessment was made not by an established group of environmental experts but apparently by the company which is desirous of building the bridge — obviously not a totally disinterested party. One wonders how, in so short a time, the Federal Court orders could be so fully carried out.

This winter also brought almost unprecedented ice conditions in the Northumberland Strait. The depth of the ice was greater than any figures used in assessing the jamming pressure on the bridge. Could that have been seriously studied in a few days?

One notes in a recent Public Works release that a series of meetings are being scheduled. While meetings are fine, does anyone seriously suggest that they are the appropriate venue for meaningful research? Did Edison develop the incandescent bulb at a public gathering? Among other anxieties is the suggestion that this major structure be proceeded with even before the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled on the department's own appeal of the Federal Court decision.

It may well be, honourable senators, that this bridge will be built, but surely no such vital construct should be done in haste. It would be a sad legacy for future generations if we did anything less than ensure that no chances are taken on environmental issues.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

## BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

SUBJECT MATTER OF BILL C-92, TO AMEND THE INCOME TAX ACT AND OTHER RELATED ACTS—REPORT OF COMMITTEE TABLED

**Hon. Jean-Marie Poitras:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the Twenty-sixth Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce.

[English]

## ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 59(1)(h), I move:

THAT when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, 28th April, 1993, at one thirty o'clock in the afternoon.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

## NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY SUBJECT MATTER OF BILL C-115

**Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I give notice that tomorrow, Wednesday, April 28, 1993, I will move:

THAT the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs be authorized to examine the subject matter of Bill C-115, an Act to implement the North American Free Trade Agreement, in advance of the said Bill coming before the Senate or any matter relating thereto.

## CANADA ELECTIONS 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-114, to amend the Canada Elections Act.

Bill read first time.