

## GENERAL ELECTION

## NUMBER OF DAYS LEFT IN CURRENT TERM

**Hon. Royce Frith (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, on Friday, February 21, the Honourable Jean Chrétien, the leader of the Liberal Party, declared that the party is on an election footing. Undoubtedly he read the insightful words delivered exactly eight years earlier by the current Senate government leader.

On February 21, 1984, Senator Murray declared:

After four years, Canadians are entitled to have their say about the Government. After four years, Canada is entitled to a general election. For all practical purposes, the Government's term has come to an end. Considering the fact that for twenty-nine months, public opinion has been turning increasingly against the Government, and in the last eight months that percentage has become the majority, Canadians must be allowed to exercise their democratic rights in a general election. There is no justification for further delay.

Only political cowardice or contempt for the democratic process could explain why, after four years in power, the Government refuses to announce a general election. It has to, if it has any respect for democracy.

Today, on February 27, 1992, we are 268 days from the end of the government's four year mandate on November 21, 1992, and the clock is ticking. But if, in the words of Senator Murray, this government is afflicted with "political cowardice" and chooses to show "contempt for the democratic process," the clock will strike midnight 654 days from today, on December 12, 1993, which is five years to the day of the return of the writs.

To summarize, if Senator Murray's government respects democracy, its extinction is but 268 days away, and we are counting. But if Senator Murray's government is one that he himself would describe as cowardly and contemptuous of democracy, its members still have 654 days till judgment day.

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government):** Honourable Senators, I invite the Leader of the Opposition to refresh my memory again on November 21, 1992, if we are still here, and we will see then.

Meanwhile, I think I should draw to his attention very interesting statements made recently by Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier, the Member of Parliament for Vanier, who takes very strongly the position that there should be a resolution of the constitutional issue in the country before we have a general election.

[Translation]

## OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES, XVI

## CONGRATULATIONS TO CANADIAN ATHLETES

**Hon. Thérèse Lavoie-Roux:** Honourable senators, allow me to make mention of the success of our young Canadian athletes at the XVIth Winter Olympic Games, held in Albertville, Savoie.

Our athletes won seven medals, the highest number for a Canadian team since the Winter Games of Lake Placid, in 1932.

The older ones, and we are probably among them, are often harsh towards young people, and I believe it is important to stress the work, the tenacity and the perseverance of those young athletes, as well as the efforts of their coaches.

I believe that these young people have given us a true lesson in the pursuit of excellence. They were very successful in meeting the challenge to excel. They truly deserve our congratulations and our admiration.

[English]

## THE SENATE

## AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS TO SENATORS

**Hon. Jack Marshall:** Honourable senators, prior to coming to the Senate today I received a call from a citizen of Ottawa who asked me questions about the Blue Book in the Estimates, with reference to some of the items in the section on veterans affairs. I was embarrassed to have to tell him that I did not even know there was a Blue Book out. I asked him where he got it. He said he had come down to Parliament to get it.

I am wondering where the Senate stands in the pecking order for these documents. I understand it was tabled at ten o'clock today in the House of Commons.

**Senator Lynch-Staunton:** It is to be tabled today.

**Senator Marshall:** I hear now that it is to be tabled today, but that is still not good enough.

To emphasize that, on Tuesday night, as everyone knows, there was a budget presented. When I returned to my office there was no copy of the budget there. On Wednesday morning, I came and found a copy of the budget in one language only.

Are we already being abolished? Are we already being reformed? What is happening with the Senate when we cannot get the documents which are necessary for our everyday work?

## THE ESTIMATES, 1992-93

## TABLING

**Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the government's Expenditure Plan, Part I, 1992-93 Estimates, the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1993, Part II, 1992-93 Estimates, Sessional Paper no. 343-402, and Expenditure Plans Part III, 1992-93.

[Translation]

## SCRUTINY OF REGULATIONS

## FOURTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED AND PRINTED AS APPENDIX

**Hon. Normand Grimard:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to present the fourth report of the Standing Joint