

[Translation]

Hon. Eymard G. Corbin: Honourable senators, there are a few comments I would like to make. We were told in committee that this decision was based on the law of averages. I suppose the law of averages helps the average person, but everybody knows that the law of averages hurts people on low incomes, the weak, the poor, the needy and, in this case, people who live in rural areas.

Take, for instance, the province of New Brunswick. Obviously, a student who lives with his parents in Fredericton, which has two universities, the University of New Brunswick and the St. Thomas University, will pay less for his university education than someone who lives in Campbellton and has to rent a room in Fredericton, pay for his own food, transportation, and so forth.

So the law of averages doesn't help the person who lives in a rural area, in the case of Bill C-76. I don't deny for one minute there are poor people and young people in need in our larger urban centres. However, I have always defended the interests of people who live in rural areas. I see myself as someone with a rural background, although Grand-Sault has a population of 7,000 or 8,000, 15,000 with the outlying areas. But we don't have a university. This means young people who want to go to university have to pack their bags and go to Edmunston. You can't commute to Edmunston every day to go to university. Or else to Fredericton, 135 miles further south, or to the University of Moncton, which is even further away, or to Dalhousie University in Halifax. If they go to Quebec City to take courses that are not available in New Brunswick, it costs even more.

In addition to all the other extra expenses people from rural areas have, we have to put up with this kind of nuisance. We were told in committee that it was not that much of a burden, but for someone who has to go to a university or college outside his place of residence, this represents a substantial extra expense. That is why I will vote against this proposal.

[English]

• (1500)

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault: Honourable senators, I should like to make some closing remarks, if no other honourable senator wishes to speak.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Honourable senators —

Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, even if there are no

other speakers save for Senator Perrault, I should like to adjourn the debate.

As honourable senators know, on Wednesdays the Senate meets at 1:30 p.m. in order to try to adjourn as close to 3 p.m. as possible. That allows committees that are already scheduled to commence meeting at 3 p.m. Today, there are three committees scheduled for 3 p.m. and one for 5 p.m..

Therefore, I would move the adjournment of the debate. We can take a decision tomorrow on this matter without spending too much time today on a vote, if one is called for.

On motion of Senator Lynch-Staunton, debate adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I ask that all remaining Orders, Inquiries and Motions stand, except for the motion of Senator Carney. She would like to make a short statement on a motion that she placed on the Order Paper yesterday.

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): We have no objection, honourable senators. As we indicated to Senator Carney yesterday, we will give leave to have the matter proceed today, and we are willing to do so.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Hon. Pat Carney: Honourable senators, yesterday I gave notice of my intention to raise in this chamber a question of privilege, and to seek leave to have the issue referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges, Standing Rules and Orders if the Speaker finds that a *prima facie* case has been made.

The breach of privilege arises from an article filed by Gordon MacIntosh of Canadian Press which ran in several Canadian newspapers, including the *Vancouver Sun* and *Province* in my home city of Vancouver on or about March 27.

The nature of the question of privilege is the allegation in the article that I received payment of \$20,000 from the Government of Canada for "lost" ministerial papers which are described in the article as "largely safe and sound."

As I outlined yesterday, the ministerial papers in question covered the period when I served as Minister for International Trade, including the negotiations establishing the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. The article infers that I manufactured the missing file incident for personal gain, and that has been the inference advanced by several opposition members of the other place in public statements.