

Report from the Senate

The Senate of Canada does much good work that is little heralded. Lifestyles 55 believes Canadians need to know what the senators do and to understand their points of view.

Senator Pat Bovey questions what is happening in Churchill

Hon. Patricia Bovey asked the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs about the crisis in Churchill: "It's now been more than 11 months since the Port of Churchill, the gateway to the North and the Arctic, and all the Indigenous communities between Gillam and Churchill in Manitoba, have been cut off as a result of the flooded rail line. Minister, can you tell us when you think these people will again be connected? When will they have access to food? When will they get their jobs back, and when will Churchill be able to fulfill its role and connect to the Indigenous people in other communities in Nunavut, the



Northwest Territories and points both east and west in the Arctic Ocean?"

Here is how the Hon. Carolyn Bennett responded: "I thank the senator for the question as well. The future and the promise of Churchill are exciting to all of us and for anybody who has been there to see the opportunities, as you've described, for resupply but also to be able to go up to Arviat and the communities there in Nunavut.

"We hope this terrible tragedy of the railway will focus everyone's attention on how we actually plan for the future in a sustainable way for that beautiful part of Canada. As you know, in our department we're immediately able to include Churchill in the Nutrition North approach, and that subsidy of perishable foods is ongoing until there's a permanent solution. It is, as you know, a gateway to the North, and the deep-water port is unique.

"Wayne Wouters, the former clerk of the Privy Council in Ot-



Hon. Patricia Bovey.

tawa, is leading those discussions about the rail line, and we understand those conversations are going very well. It is an essential part of our Arctic strategy. But when you think about the four absolutely solid tourism seasons – of the bird watching, then the belugas, the polar bears and the aurora, I think this is an opportunity for that part of Canada to be very well known by all Canadians, and I hope we will all be working together to make that happen."

And we wonder why nothing has changed for the folks in Churchill? And by the way, a quart of milk still costs over \$10! –Ed.