

**“Madame Bardot, Canada is no longer a colony!”,
says senator Céline Hervieux-Payette**

OTTAWA, March 22, 2006 – Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette and Senator Michel Biron, with the support of Senators Charlie Watt and Willie Adams, who are currently in the North, and Senator Marcel Prud’homme, have joined forces against the international campaign against seal hunting practices, a traditional activity of the Inuit and Canadians living on the perimeter of the continent, that is, in Newfoundland, the Magdalen Islands etc.

“The seal hunt is an essential part of the Inuit way of life. Since food is very expensive in the North, local food sources such as seal meat are essential to people’s survival. It would be devastating for the Inuit if we were to lose our right to hunt. For traditional Inuit, it is a matter of life and death,” said Senators Charlie Watt and Willie Adams.

Robert B. Cahill, Executive Director of the Fur Institute of Canada, added that “this trade is worth \$16.5 million per year and allows families to remain in their community.”

In the opinion of Henri Motte, an oceanographer and fishery development researcher from the University of Ottawa, “the survival of seal stocks is guaranteed, as they have increased from 1 million to 5 million head over the past 25 years. The annual ground fish consumption of 325,000 seals is approximately 468,000 tonnes. Killing these 325,000 seals increases fishing capacity by 30%; it is now approximately 1 million tonnes annually.” This opinion is also shared by the eminent Canadian ecologist, Pierre Dansereau.

Let us recall that Canada banned the hunting of whitecoats and bluebacks in 1987. The Marine Mammal Regulations prohibit the trade, sale or bartering of the furs of these young seals. Similarly, seal hunting is prohibited in breeding areas. Moreover, it is prohibited to kill a mammal except in a manner that is designed to kill it quickly. “Millionaires such as Paul McCartney and Brigitte Bardot must surely be loath to face the facts,” noted Senator Biron.

For her part, Senator Hervieux-Payette, reminded Ms. Bardot that “Canada is no longer a French colony.” The Senators argue that if Brigitte Bardot and Paul McCartney used their fame to defend children and women who are the victims of war, abuse and violence instead of insidiously attacking the seal hunt, which is a way of life for a minority in Canada, they would have their support.

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