

S. O. 31

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 31

[Translation]

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

CONCEPTION OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the landslides that followed the earthquake of November 25 and that forced the interruption of rail traffic on the Senneterre—La Tuque subdivision, the Abitibi region is isolated.

No passenger train has served communities along the line. CN freight trains have been rerouted to Ontario, resulting in a very long detour of 1,300 kilometres.

Mr. Speaker, why not use the Franquet-Chapais line, which is 700 kilometres long, and thus save 600 kilometres of travelling!

CN is not helping Abitibi and Témiscamingue by continuing to ask for the abandonment of the Franquet-Chapais subdivision.

Mr. Speaker, what is the public interest for Canadian National in Abitibi-Témiscamingue and in Quebec?

* * *

[English]

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

CONCERNS OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLANDERS

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the people of Egmont for the tremendous demonstration of support and confidence they showed in me November 21. I want to assure my constituents that I will do my utmost to vindicate their judgment.

The people of Egmont in particular, and indeed of P.E.I. in general, showed a very serious mistrust of the Free Trade Agreement and a quite legitimate fear of its impact on them. They demonstrated their concerns by voting solidly Liberal during the campaign.

Local issues were also prominent in the campaign. Residents of Summerside have become extremely upset over the past couple of years by an offensive odour which emanates from the Summerside harbour from decaying seaweed, and it is particularly revolting at low tide.

In a deathbed conversion, the former Minister of the Environment acknowledged his sin of omission and committed the Government to solving the problem. In *The Guardian* of November 16, my Conservative opponent was quoted as saying that the Minister had committed his Government to finding a solution to Summerside's west end odour problem. Summerside residents fully expect the new Acting Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bouchard) to honour the commitment made by his predecessor, and I hope the Government will not choose to ignore this obligation because the voters of Hillsborough decided to terminate Mr. McMillan.

* * *

CANADIAN SPACE AGENCY

REGINA SUGGESTED AS SITE

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I wish to offer a solution to a problem currently causing a split in the federal Liberal Party. In the December 16 *Ottawa Citizen*, it was reported that "Ottawa-area Liberal Members of Parliament have asked the Prime Minister to locate the new Canadian Space Agency near the National Capital, even though their Leader says it belongs in Montreal".

As I know our Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) would like to contribute to the resolution of this Liberal embarrassment, may I offer the capital city of Saskatchewan—Regina—the sunshine capital of Canada, the city of lots of space, as the site for the new Canadian Space Agency center.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and have a good Christmas!

* * *

THE FRANCHISE

VOTING BY PROXY—COST OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg—St. James): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are strong believers in democracy, and we abhor anything that stands in the way of the right to vote.

During the recent election campaign I became aware of a problem facing some disabled voters in my riding of Winnipeg—St. James. Due to their disabilities, these individuals chose to exercise their right to vote by proxy.