

## PARLIAMENTARY PAGES

**Mr. Paul Steckle (Huron—Bruce):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure all members of the House will join me today in thanking an extraordinary group of young men and women, the parliamentary pages.

Often we come into the Chamber in a rush, preoccupied with our busy agendas, but we are always greeted with friendly smiles and cheerful attitudes. It may at times seem we take them for granted, but I wanted to let them know that we appreciate very much the work and assistance they give us while we are in the House. Without them our jobs would be much more difficult.

A couple of days ago I had the opportunity to speak with a few of the pages outside the Chamber. They were charming, intelligent and very much eager to learn about not only the political system but about myself and the people and riding I represent. Their dedication and enthusiasm needs to be greatly commended.

I want to say that the parents and families of the pages can truly be very proud of them and their achievements. I hope their experience here, although somewhat shorter than hoped, was enjoyable. I wish them well in their future lives and careers. I hope the next time they are in Ottawa they will stop in to visit us.

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[Translation]

## HOLIDAYS

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, two major holidays are coming soon in Canada. Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, on June 24, which was first celebrated in Montreal in the 1800s, is the national holiday for francophones across the country, including of course Quebecers.

Then there is Canada Day, on July 1, which is celebrated by all Canadians across the country.

[English]

Canada Day will be celebrated from coast to coast to coast.

[Translation]

These two major holidays are opportunities to celebrate with friends what unites us and makes this country one of the best in the world.

• (1405)

[English]

It is a wonderful opportunity for all of us as Canadians to celebrate these two great events within the next few days.

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## HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, as we approach the summer recess I cannot help but comment on how proud I am of the work we have accomplished in the eight months that have passed since we were elected.

We are keeping the promise of creating opportunity and hope for Canadians by addressing their needs first and bringing integrity back to public service. Indeed we have all faced many challenges in the Chamber since the House of Commons convened on January 17. However the challenges faced by my colleagues and I in the Chamber pale in comparison to the challenges you have faced in your inaugural session as Speaker of this place.

On occasion the emotion and anxiety displayed in the Chamber have threatened to disrupt the good work of the House of Commons, but you have managed to quench the flames of fiery debate without diminishing its substance. Mr. Speaker, to you and to all my colleagues in the House, have a safe and happy summer with family, friends and constituents.

**The Speaker:** I was going to cut him off, but I thought I would let him go on.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## NORTH KOREA

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères):** Mr. Speaker, it was a relief and very satisfying to hear the encouraging news brought back by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter from his trip to the Korean peninsula.

It seems that his efforts to defuse the situation created by the nuclear crisis involving North Korea were successful, since Pyongyang has agreed to freeze its nuclear program and will allow international inspectors to enter the country. A third round of discussions on the nuclear controversy between Washington and Pyongyang may very well be resumed through diplomatic channels.

We can only applaud this breakthrough created by the former U.S. president, who felt that the crisis seemed to be over. It will no longer be necessary for the UN Security Council to adopt strict sanctions against North Korea, if Pyongyang abides by the agreement obtained by Mr. Carter.

The Official Opposition would like to congratulate the former president on this valuable contribution to the cause of peace, in a tense situation that was deteriorating rapidly.