

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, December 19, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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### STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 31

[*English*]

#### 1991 CANADA WINTER GAMES

**Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, from February 17 to March 2, 1991, the eyes of our nation will be firmly focused on my province of Prince Edward Island as 2,500 of our country's best young athletes will gather to compete in the 1991 Canada Winter Games.

The excitement and anticipation of the games are evident throughout the Island as 4,000 volunteers work together to prepare for this important event. In all, 68 communities will play host to competition as Islanders welcome Canadians to the place where our forefathers gathered to give birth to our nation in 1864. This will be a great opportunity for all of us to realize the potential of a united and cohesive Canada as we bring Canadians together in a common cause.

I encourage members from all parties, from all corners of our country, and all Canadians to come to Prince Edward Island to take part in this important national event. We can rest assured that the 1991 Canada Winter Games will be an exciting Canadian event.

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[*Translation*]

#### ELECTION IN HAITI

**Mrs. Nicole Roy-Arcelin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, December 16, a democratic election was held in Haiti. Father Jean Bertrand Aristide was elected with more

than 70 per cent of the popular vote, after more than 35 years under a dictatorship Duvalier. As a friend of the Haitian people, I am glad the election process was orderly and democratic.

After electing Jean Bertrand Aristide, a personal friend and respected Haitian leader, this country will be able to make great strides towards democracy and justice. That is why I want to ask my government not only to increase material aid to this country but also to promote economic and political relations with a newly-elected government that will be more supportive of justice and open government, in a new, democratic Haiti.

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[*English*]

#### CANADIAN MERCHANT NAVY

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden):** Mr. Speaker, during Question Period last November 8, I asked the Minister of Veterans Affairs if he would do the right thing and quickly introduce legislation that would give war veterans status to former members of the Canadian Merchant Navy who during World War II had sailed through dangerous waters.

The minister seemed to indicate that his department was looking into it. I understand the minister was telling not only me and this House but also the veterans most concerned with this question and the people of Canada that his department would be discussing with a number of veterans groups the possibility of giving veterans status to World War II merchant navy veterans.

We were wrong. Neither the minister nor anyone from his department has attended any meetings of the study group which the veterans groups have set up to study a number of questions including the matter of merchant seamen.

The minister should take the earliest possible opportunity to give war veteran status to Canada's merchant seamen who served our country during World War II. Surely this is an issue that has been studied to death and should be acted on immediately. But, if the minister insists on studying it a little more, he or his representa-