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To some extent three of those problems, the lack of affordable housing, inadequate public transportation, and the need to clean up the environment, are all linked. The development of a modern, high-speed commuter rail network around our cities would not only help solve transportation problems, but would also provide the infrastructure necessary to increase substantially the supply of less expensive land available for badly needed housing, while at the same time reducing pollution and conserving energy.

The linchpin is the high-speed commuter rail network. Rail is a federal responsibility and no Progressive Conservative Government has ever failed to build a railway to solve a problem. Let us hope this one will not be the exception.

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CHILDREN

THIRD WORLD DEBT BLAMED FOR DEATHS OF CHILDREN

Mr. John F. Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, in the last 12 months at least half a million children in the Third World have died because of a slowdown or reversal of economic progress in their countries. UNICEF, in its annual report released yesterday, places the blame squarely on the crushing burden of debt owed by these countries to banks and financial institutions in the industrialized world.

UNICEF has called for a summit of world leaders to reduce this deadly accumulation of debt. It has asked for Canada's assistance in promoting such a summit. As one of the rich countries in the world we have an obligation to accede to the request.

I call upon the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) to make every effort to ensure that such a summit will be held. In 1989 the UN will be adopting the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The protection of these rights, however, must start now.

[*Translation*]

GENERAL ELECTION

SUPPORT OF THE POPULATION OF LOUIS-HÉBERT

Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Louis-Hébert): Mr. Speaker, my first words are to congratulate you on your reelection as Speaker of this Hon. House. On November 21st, constituents of Louis-Hébert returned me here and I want to thank them today. Like my first term, this second one entails heavy responsibilities, but I am convinced that with the support of all my constituents and people in the community, I can perform my role in an efficient and dignified manner.

As in the past, I intend to keep listening to the people in Sainte-Foy, Sillery and Cap-Rouge, and my constituency office will always be open to all.

In this holiday season, I would like to extend to all those I am privileged to represent in this House my best wishes, and may the New Year bring peace, health and happiness to you and members in your family!

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● (1410)

[*English*]

NATIONAL CAPITAL

CALL FOR ENLARGEMENT OF REGION

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, earlier this year the united counties of Prescott—Russell and the municipalities of Clarence Township, Cambridge Township, North and South Plantagenets, Plantagenet Village, and the Town of Rockland signed resolutions asking that the National Capital Region be enlarged to include their own municipalities.

After Question Period I intend to move in the House of Commons a Private Member's Bill to enlarge the National Capital Region to give that privilege to residents of the constituency that I have the honour and privilege to represent. I hope to have the support of all Hon. Members in this House so this Bill can be enacted as soon as possible.