

sure that this news does give hope to the workers of that industry in Quebec who will now play an active role in boosting the construction industry in the United States. The Canadian Government did spend \$2 million on those negotiations, but I can say that never has so little money been so profitable to workers of the forest industry in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

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• (1410)

[English]

COMMUNICATIONS

CLOSURE OF CNCP TELEGRAPH OFFICES

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, the recent decision by CNCP Telecommunications to close a number of its local telegraph offices across Canada, including one in my riding of Kingston and the Islands, has caused grave concern and apprehension. It will mean the end of over the counter personalized service in many towns and cities throughout the country. The most serious impact of this short-sighted decision will be felt in the business sector in each community. Tenders, contracts, notices of change to specifications, and many other instruments of business, are communicated by telegram and telex, where the date and time of receipt are, in most cases, a matter of legal significance. Delays on these transactions can be both time consuming and costly, and may even result in the forfeiture of a contract.

As a publicly owned federal agency, CNCP Telecommunications has a responsibility to ensure that Canadians have convenient and immediate access to a national communications service, for both personal and commercial transactions. I therefore urge the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) to take immediate steps to reverse the decision of CNCP Telecommunications with regard to the closure of so many of its local offices.

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INCOME TAX

PROPOSAL TO ABOLISH CHILD TAX EXEMPTIONS

Mrs. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Madam Speaker, we congratulate the National Council on Welfare for again proposing reform of the child tax system to benefit those families with greatest needs. Their proposal to abolish the regressive child tax exemption in favour of universal family allowances and child tax credits makes practical economic sense. Many organizations support this position. The present

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child tax exemption provides greatest benefits to high income families and no benefits at all for the poorest families. One billion dollars in tax revenues is lost each year which could be used for a more equitable system of family benefits. We support the recommendation to abolish the regressive child tax exemption, and favour an increased universal family allowance which is taxed back progressively as family incomes increase.

The report, called "Family Allowances for All", recognizes the universal family allowance as a foundation of Canada's social security system. Family allowances provide independent income for mothers and stimulate consumer spending. They recognize all Canada's children. We call on the Government once again for a review of both income support programs and the income tax system in order to provide maximum benefits for families and particularly for those who are suffering from increased unemployment and poverty.

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NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS

RELATIVE STRENGTHS OF AMERICAN AND RUSSIAN ARSENALS

Mr. Paul E. McRae (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Madam Speaker, on Monday President Reagan indicated that groups like those who support a nuclear freeze "would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority". Members of this House will remember the President, in front of a bar chart, showing American nuclear missiles in blue and Russian missiles in red, and over the years the blue bars becoming shorter and the red bars longer. The President concluded that this showed Russian superiority.

What the President did not say was that, while the bars showed Russian superiority in missiles, the American Government has been consciously reducing its numbers in favour of new Mirv'd missiles, that is to say, missiles containing multiple independent re-entry vehicles or warheads, each capable of landing on separate targets over a wide area. For example, one Trident submarine missile has 24 warheads. In fact, in round numbers, the American forces possess about 30,000 warheads versus 20,000 Russian warheads, including 9,000 to 8,000 ICBMs respectively. Only 300 of these warheads on each side would destroy both nations.

The 1982 U.S. Department of Defence Annual Report states, "While the era of U.S. superiority has long since passed, parity, not U.S. inferiority, has replaced it". Therefore, Madam Speaker, this is the time for our Government to join with the United States House of Representatives whose Foreign Affairs Committee on Monday voted 27 to 9 in favour of a bilateral nuclear freeze, the same motion found in the so called minority report prepared by six Members of this House from all three political Parties.