

S.O. 21

LATVIA

ANNIVERSARY OF PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Mr. Andrew Witer (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, on November 18, 1918, Latvia was proclaimed an independent democratic republic. Independence perished when the Soviet Army marched into Latvia in 1940.

The anniversary of Latvian independence is celebrated in recognition of the spirit of independence and freedom which still burns bright in the hearts of the Latvian people. As a nation, Latvia has had to endure great hardship, suffering from the devastation of two world wars and lengthy periods of foreign occupation. Today, on the 68th anniversary of its independence, Latvia remains illegally occupied by the Soviet Union.

When at times we take for granted the liberties we enjoy in Canada, we need only recall the adversity and strife suffered by Latvia to appreciate our good fortune as Canadians. November 18 is an important day of commemoration for Latvians throughout the free world. Let us join with them in marking this day as one of special significance for all who value freedom, liberty, and justice.

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NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

CHEMICAL INSTITUTE OF CANADA'S CRITICISM OF BUDGETARY CUTS

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Oberle) has responded to the criticisms of the cuts to the National Research Council budget by stating that those criticisms are due to partisan considerations. I want to bring to the Minister's attention the fact that the Chemical Institute of Canada, representing 8,000 professionals in the chemical field, has written to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) criticizing the Government for the cuts it has made to the National Research Council budget, and stating that continuous cuts in research will dismantle many scientific endeavours which have taken decades to build, and will relegate Canada to the position of a second-rate science nation.

We in the New Democratic Party agree with that view. We believe the announced review is unnecessary and what the Minister should do is put back the funds he has taken away from the NRC. Research teams are being broken up, expensive equipment such as the \$50 million Algonquin Observatory is being effectively abandoned, and we have to ask ourselves whether we can afford not to make these—

● (1415)

Mr. Speaker: I regret that the Hon. Member's time has expired.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

REPORTS ON QUALITY OF ST. CLAIR RIVER WATER

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, as all Hon. Members are aware, my constituency of Sarnia—Lambton contains many chemical plants situated along the St. Clair River. Similarly, every Hon. Member knows that occasionally we experience chemical spills into the river from these plants. This is the negative news of which we are all made aware in great detail.

For example, when the least toxic form of dioxin was detected in the parts per quadrillion range in a single sample of Sarnia drinking water, the information was immediately released and highly publicized. While not pleasant, this report was accepted as it fell within the Ontario provincial Minister's statement that he would not be party to any delay in reporting of data, good or bad.

It is, however, unacceptable that the constituency of Sarnia—Lambton had to wait several months for the news from the Ontario Minister of the Environment that, after extensive testing, no dioxins had been found in the St. Clair River between January and June, 1986. In fact the news was released to the press in late October. Several weeks later the report was given to the concerned organizations in my constituency. I would urge the federal Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan) to liaise with his provincial counterpart to ensure that timely reporting with a balanced perspective becomes a fact.

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SHIPBUILDING

MINISTER'S REPORTED REFUSAL TO MEET INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House of the so-called consultation process of the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. Hockin) and the Government's attitude toward the shipbuilding industry of Canada. Last week the President of the Canadian Shipbuilding and Ship Repair Association was informed by officials of the Minister that the Minister could not meet with everyone and that he was simply too busy.

The Minister's predecessor was not too busy to meet with representatives of the Fisheries Council of Canada when it wanted to discuss the retention of the import duty exemption for foreign-built fishing vessels. Why then has the Minister refused to meet with representatives of Canada's hard-pressed shipbuilding industry who seek to reverse this exemption? Is it because the Minister is all too familiar with the broken promises the Government made to the Canadian shipbuilding industry? Is it because the Government has made a decision to write off this industry and allow thousands of jobs to be exported to other countries?