

• (1405)

CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mrs. Georgette Sheridan (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, members will remember that on March 8, International Women's Day, I rose in this House to pay tribute to the accomplishments of the four Saskatchewan women making up the Sandra Peterson rink on winning the Scott Tournament of Hearts which all good Canadians, at least from the cold parts, will know as the national women's curling championship.

I am pleased to report to this House that once again the Peterson rink has distinguished itself by winning the Women's World Curling Championship in Obersdorf.

Lest members conclude that only the women of Saskatchewan can curl, I would add that the Canadian men's rink also became world champions this weekend, skipped to victory by former Saskatoonian Mr. Rick Folk.

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[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT FORUM

Mr. Jean Landry (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, the findings of a study conducted by the employment forum and made public yesterday show that the very high rate of unemployment cost the Quebec economy \$30 billion and the Canadian economy \$109 billion last year.

This situation cannot go on any longer. The members of this forum unanimously reaffirmed the consensus in Quebec: one solution for the problem of unemployment is to give Quebec full and complete responsibility for labour force training. This solution is a necessity, not a whim.

In the daily *Le Devoir*, Jean-Robert Sansfaçon wrote: "If Jean Chrétien's Liberals stubbornly ignore this, it means that they have learned nothing about the dynamics of Quebec society. Sooner or later this error will turn against them."

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[English]

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island): Mr. Speaker, during the election the party now in government made much of promises to have more open government and freer votes. Today the government and all members of this House have an opportunity to vote for a good idea and to leave party discipline behind.

Later today we will be voting on a Reform amendment to put a cap on the total number of MPs elected. I believe that essentially every Canadian supports the idea that we do not need more than 295 MPs. Many believe we need fewer. I urge all MPs to vote in favour of this amendment, to vote in such a way that undoubtedly represents the majority view in each constituency.

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I am expecting that this evening we will see a clear indication of the Liberal Party's commitment to deliver on its promise of freer votes.

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[Translation]

MANPOWER TRAINING

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, I think that the Reform Party's recent statements about Quebec are disrespectful. They add to them by saying that Quebec is imposing its will on Ottawa on the issues of lower cigarette taxes, the establishment of the environmental secretariat in Montreal and the postponement of the federal-provincial conference on labour. Such allusions are out of place.

I ask the government to act diligently to solve the manpower issue with Quebec and the provinces concerned. It is time to reduce overlap. Perhaps this obstinacy is due only to some over-centralizing officials. The government would show flexibility by understanding Quebec's traditional demands and adopting an updated federalism that is more acceptable to all provinces.

Under the Constitution, we certainly agree that labour force training is an educational issue and education is within provincial jurisdiction: it is their responsibility and they would provide training more economically. That is what the people of Beauce think.

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[English]

GUN CONTROL

Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, the senseless acts of violence in the past weeks have caused communities all across the country to cry out for stricter legislation regarding gun control.

Yesterday I met with 120 students from all across Canada as part of the Encounter with Canada program. During our exchange these young Canadians expressed their concerns over the recent developments regarding the Young Offenders Act and stricter gun control laws.

A concerted effort between government and community youth organizations along with the introduction of stricter gun enforcement laws are required to effectively deal with this problem.

[Translation]

I strongly support a total ban on handguns in Canadian cities to ensure that incidents like those which occurred recently in Ottawa and Toronto do not recur.

On behalf of the people of Saint-Denis, I ask our government to seriously reconsider the Firearms Control Act in order to end acts of violence in our cities.