

Routine Proceedings

On this, the approaching forty-fifth of the liberation of The Netherlands, we commemorate the more than 7,600 Canadians who gave their lives for freedom. At the same time, we, the people of Canada and The Netherlands together, take comfort in the knowledge that out of the anguish and the horrors of war, there developed warm and powerful bonds of friendship that still endure today.

The foundation of a special relationship between our countries was established during the dark years of the Second World War. When Holland was overrun by the Nazis in May 1940, Queen Wilhelmina sought refuge in England and from there headed her country's government in exile. But even Great Britain was a precarious haven and in 1942, the Crown Princess Juliana was persuaded to leave for Canada where she made her wartime home, another dimension to this tangible and historic bond.

• (1510)

Perhaps I should mention in the context of what we are discussing here this afternoon that only this weekend I spoke with the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, accompanied by Mr. Fred Williams of the Royal Canadian Legion, Newfoundland. They had just returned from the pilgrimage abroad to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Battle of Gallipoli, one that is deeply ingrained in the minds and hearts of many veterans of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment who served in that campaign. They remarked on the solemnity and the reverence of that occasion.

Mr. Speaker, as the Official Opposition veterans affairs critic, I am very pleased to join the minister's pilgrimage to The Netherlands to pay tribute and to honour the memory of those Canadians and to recognize what they achieved for others and for themselves in the cause of freedom.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my caucus and my party, it is a pleasure to join with the minister and my colleague from the Official Opposition to also recognize these coming days in honour of the forty-fifth anniversary of the liberation of The Netherlands by the First Canadian Army.

I had the pleasure and privilege of being there five years ago on the fortieth anniversary in the company of George Hees, the former minister, who won a Distinguished Service Cross in the Schelde Estuary, trying to get across the canal.

I appreciate the fact that the minister has invited me and some other colleagues to join him at the celebrations in Holland next week and the week after.

One thing impressed me very much in that previous experience. I am sure I will find it again starting next week. That is the school children, all three generations from the last 45 years, learn what happened from 1939 to 1945 and what Canadians did. I just wish more of the same would happen in our schools—not for the glorification of war, but for what we did to fight for peace in our own country. I hope that among ourselves and others we will do more to make sure that Canadians, present and future, will be fully informed.

Outside of this Chamber right now is a remembrance, a gift from the people of Holland, tulips in bloom. There could be no finer gift to decorate this Hill and these buildings. We who attend these ceremonies over the next 10 days will do our best to express our appreciation to the committees all over Holland which organize and provide hospitality and accommodation for thousands of Canadian veterans.

Many hundreds of Dutch people became spouses of Canadian veterans. These Canadians were very smart. They married people from Holland. I have a number of these people in my riding.

I hope, Sir, that this House will continue the tradition of each year acknowledging both World Wars and the Korean War, wars that had to be fought and in which we fought. We took no part in those wars that did not have to be fought. That is to the everlasting credit of our country.

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INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

PRESENTATION OF FIFTEENTH REPORT OF CANADIAN NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Mr. Bob Hicks (Scarborough East): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34, I have the honour to present to the House the fifteenth report, in both official languages, of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association.

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PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36 on behalf of a number of people from the community of Kamloops. These people point out a whole list of