

S. O. 21

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—CONDITIONS FOR
ACCEPTANCE OF TREATY

Mr. John Rejmer (Kitchener): Mr. Speaker, the Canada-United States trade negotiations are now at a very crucial stage. However, Premier Peterson and Premier Pawley notwithstanding, Canadians need not fear that "the store" is about to be given away. It is worth reiterating the exact terms of the March 16 motion tabled by the Mulroney Government, namely:

That this House supports the negotiation of a bilateral trading arrangement with the United States, as part of the Government's multilateral trade policy, while protecting our political sovereignty, social programs, agricultural marketing systems, the auto industry, and our unique cultural identity.

These are the very explicit conditions under which an agreement would be acceptable to the federal Government. It is self-evident that the conditions outlined by Premier Peterson have already been addressed by the federal Government and I would, therefore, encourage him to get fully on board and support the Government's efforts toward improved trade and, thereby, greater economic growth.

● (1410)

To conclude, let it be emphasized that these negotiations are within federal jurisdiction and are being undertaken with this nation's best interests in view. Anything less than that will simply not be acceptable.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

U.S.S.R.—PLIGHT OF DISSIDENTS

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, today Parliament celebrates the presence in our city of Mr. Natan Shcharansky whose current freedom is a tribute to Mr. Shcharansky's enormous personal courage and determination, and a sign to all who cherish human rights that persistent international pressure such as this Parliament helped to generate in the case of Mr. Shcharansky can and does have an effect.

Mr. Shcharansky's message to Canadians, as I understand it, is that though we should be encouraged by *glasnost* in the Soviet Union we should not grow becalmed, that the notoriety of his release and that of others should not cause us to forget or diminish our efforts on behalf of the many others who have yet to be released, who have yet to receive the freedom that is theirs by virtue of being human, whether it be Jews who want to go to Israel, or Ukrainians, Baltic peoples, or others who want more political freedom. I am sure that I speak for all parliamentarians when I call on the Soviet Union to redress this moral flaw in the life of their country and heed the prophetic message of old to "set the captives free".

HUMAN RIGHTS

VISIT OF SOVIET DISSIDENT TO OTTAWA

Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Canadian Parliamentary Group for Soviet Jewry, I would like to welcome officially Natan, or as we know him Anatoly, Shcharansky to the nation's capital and to the House of Commons.

Mr. Shcharansky, a leading activist in the Soviet Union, was arrested in 1977 and convicted of treason, espionage and anti-Soviet activities, and sentenced to 13 years in prison. From the start his wife Avital began a lonely world-wide vigil to tell the true story of the injustice which had been committed by the U.S.S.R. Canada was the first country in the world to recognize the plight of Anatoly Shcharansky and to speak out against the Soviet Union for its human rights violations.

The release of Shcharansky on February 11, 1986, marked the end of a nine-year, world-wide campaign to secure his release. None of us can imagine the pain, anguish and loneliness which Anatoly endured during his incarceration. Two lengthy hunger strikes may have compromised his long-term health. But Shcharansky, who had become a symbol of the fight for human rights, never gave up hope. Mr. Shcharansky's journey to freedom continues to give hope to the many thousands of refuseniks and prisoners of conscience who are still being denied their basic human rights.

I believe we should withhold any premature widespread condemnation or applause for Gorbachev's new policy of openness, or *glasnost*, even though we welcome the recent release of several prominent refuseniks.

I want to advise Mr. Shcharansky that he can count on Canadian parliamentarians, together with Canadians throughout the country, to continue the battle for human rights in the Soviet Union.

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FARM CREDIT CORPORATION

INTEREST RATE INCREASE

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) raised the long-term lending rate for Farm Credit Corporation loans for the second time this summer to 12.25 per cent. At a time when the inflation rate in our country is only 4 per cent this means that the real rate of interest for farm loans is over 8 per cent, one of the highest rates in history.

Last week a confidential report of the Farm Credit Corporation revealed that over 11,500 farm mortgages, involving \$1.5 billion, are in serious financial difficulty, cash flow problems, or subject to foreclosure.