

Since the Minister of Canadian Heritage is unable to see the distinction between theatre and real life, he is unfit to serve as heritage minister, a position which entails the responsibility of ensuring the survival and development of the francophone and Acadian communities. Their circumstances are neither a tragedy, nor a farce, but a daily fight for the right to live in French.

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[English]

### PATRONAGE

**Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, does this sound familiar: “As this tired, old government drones on toward an overdue election the list of promoted hacks and bagmen grows even longer and so does the odour of nepotism, patronage and payoffs. In recent days we have witnessed an orgy of Tory patronage that defies imagination”? Only last year this was said by my hon. colleague for Kingston and the Islands in response to Tory patronage appointments.

It is amazing how going from opposition to government shortens the memory. I guess that explains the decision to appoint two more senators for nothing more than pure patronage. This is an obscene affront to democracy. It just goes to show the extent to which the Liberals are really concerned about restoring honesty and integrity in our political institutions.

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### ABORIGINAL FRIENDSHIP CENTRE PROGRAM

**Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on the statement made yesterday by the member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake regarding the potential funding scenarios to the aboriginal friendship centre program.

On behalf of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, last Friday I met personally with the National Association of Friendship Centres and had an opportunity to listen to NAFC concerns about the program review exercise and the impact on their centres, several of which I have visited in recent months.

[Translation]

The federal government recognizes that the aboriginal friendship centres movement is essential to the cultural survival of native people who leave their reserves to settle, whether on a permanent or a temporary basis, in the city.

[English]

The program review exercise is a government wide initiative. The Department of Canadian Heritage as well as other federal departments will have to make decisions that will be consistent with government policies and priorities.

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[Translation]

The Liberal government has made it one of its priorities to help communities—

**The Speaker:** Unfortunately, I must interrupt the hon. member.

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● (1410)

### LEBANON

**Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to draw attention to an important day for Canadians of Lebanese origin.

Yesterday marked the 51st anniversary of the proclamation of the independence of Lebanon. I wish to pay tribute to Lebanese-Canadians for the contribution they have made to this country since they immigrated here.

[English]

The importance that Canada places on its relationship with Lebanon was recently demonstrated with the announcement to reopen the Canadian embassy in Beirut in the new year. It is my hope that the peace being established in Lebanon will bring with it a renewed hope after much suffering.

[Translation]

I would like to extend my best wishes to all Lebanese-Canadians in my riding of Saint-Denis, and in particular to those who belong to the Quebec Lebanese-Syrian Association who recently celebrated the 75th anniversary of the founding of their association.

[English]

Best wishes to all, ahid esteklell, merci beaucoup.

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[Translation]

### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride and interest that, like all Canadians, I followed Team Canada's great performance in Asia. I wish to express all my admiration to the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien and thank him for successfully leading the largest mission ever seen in China.

Mr. Prime Minister, you showed the entire world that Canadian expertise is an exportable asset and that our products are among the best in the world. Through your firmness, assurance and patience, you have rallied the provincial premiers and the cream of business people in Canada and Quebec around you.

Whether Mr. Parizeau likes it or not, Quebec was represented very well by the hon. member for Saint-Maurice.