

[English]

—still the President of the World Food Council, Eugene Whelan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NIAGARA RIVER POLLUTION—CANADA-UNITED STATES AGREEMENT

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of great importance to the people of Niagara Falls and all of the people of Canada. That is the matter of the contamination of the Niagara River.

All evidence indicates that the level of PCBs and other toxins is increasing. Up until now our American friends have refused to move on this issue. That is why I congratulate the Minister of the Environment (Mrs. Blais-Grenier) on her recent trip to Washington. Her obtaining of an agreement to setting an agenda for clean-up of the Niagara River is a tremendous step forward.

As for the Official Opposition, its sudden interest in this area is rather surprising, but it is not kidding anyone. The people of my area know that for 15 years the Liberal Party of Canada did nothing to clean up the Niagara River. That is why the actions of our Minister of the Environment are applauded, not only by the people of Niagara but by all Canadians.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

PLIGHT OF CANADIAN SENTENCED IN NEW JERSEY

Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to the attention of the House once again the case of Bruce Curtis, a 20 year old Nova Scotian now in the second year of a 20-year prison sentence in New Jersey in the United States.

As many of us here are aware, Mr. Curtis is a graduate of a private school in Nova Scotia. In July of 1982 he paid a visit to a school friend's home in Loch Arbour, New Jersey. That friend, Scott Franz, lived with his step-parents, Alfred and Rosemary Podgis. On the evening of July 4, following a week or more of domestic violence, during which Mr. Podgis had repeatedly threatened both Scott and his wife, Curtis and his friend slept with loaded rifles by their sides to protect themselves. The next morning Scott shot and killed his stepfather. In the confusion that followed, Bruce Curtis claimed that he fled in panic. He said that in doing so he stumbled into Mrs. Podgis and that the gun he was carrying discharged accidentally, killing her instantly.

At the trial of the two young men in March of 1983 Scott Franz secured a reduction of his 30-year sentence for murder

S.O. 21

to 20 years by plea bargaining with the prosecutor, who allowed Scott to name Bruce Curtis as the master planner behind both deaths. Since perjury and plea bargaining were employed in the original trial, both the conviction and the unduly harsh sentence that followed have left a wrong that needs to be righted. I call upon the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie), the Solicitor General (Mr. MacKay), and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) to employ every means at their disposal to see that justice is done in the case of Mr. Bruce Curtis and his family.

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VE DAY

COMMEMORATIVE VISIT TO EUROPE

Mr. William G. Lesick (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, a number of days ago the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen), and other leaders in the House commemorated VE Day. Yesterday I returned to Canada following my participation with a parliamentary delegation to the Netherlands and Italy marking the end of World War II. This delegation consisted of outstanding generals, an air marshall, navy commanders, colonels, privates, and ordinary citizens. It would take an hour for me to explain my feelings about this trip. It was an experience I shall never forget.

The Dutch people of Holland demonstrated their love and appreciation of Canadians, the people who liberated their country. The delegation was treated royally by Princess Beatrix, the ambassadors, mayors, and hundreds of thousands of ordinary citizens.

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Our delegation, under the leadership of one of our Canadian heroes, the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Hees), visited cemeteries where we paid fitting tribute to our fallen comrades. We sought out the graves of our lost friends. We offered our prayers of thanksgiving; we shed tears in their memory.

On May 4 the Dutch people have a day of official mourning when they honour their war dead and the peace of the last 40 years. After the silent march and dedication, a young girl walked up to me, extended her hand and said "Thank you". "For what", I asked, perplexed. "For our liberation" she said, and walked away. Even the young people of Holland know what freedom truly is. I am proud to be a veteran.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member's time has expired.