

S. O. 31

In 1944, Macedonia was taken over by the federal Yugoslav government. Finally, after a long, suffering struggle spanning almost five decades, Macedonia held a referendum on independence and declared itself independent on November 17, 1991. The overwhelming results freed Macedonia from the shackles of communism and the yoke of Yugoslavia.

It is time for Canada to recognize this proud, independent republic. Without the world's recognition, Macedonians cannot be properly represented on the world stage.

* * *

[*Translation*]**HOME OWNERSHIP**

Mr. Yvon Côté (Richmond—Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and our government have just taken a timely initiative that will enable 200,000 Canadians to own a home, by allowing a down payment of 5 per cent instead of 10 per cent to buy a house. This will benefit over 200,000 Canadians, including thousands of Quebecers, who, especially in isolated regions, did not have the income that was previously required for home ownership.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, this favorable measure will help get the economy out of our present recession. This finally shows our government's great ability in taking tough measures to fight inflation and to lower interest rates when they were called for. It was unthinkable to bring in such a measure any sooner. However, this government can present incentives for home ownership. I say bravo. There will be more in the budget.

* * *

[*English*]**CHINESE NEW YEAR**

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, today is Chinese New Year. Chinese Canadians are celebrating the Year of the Monkey while Vietnamese Canadians celebrate Tête.

The past year has seen more Chinese families reunited through immigration, business investments have increased and young Chinese Canadians continue to excel in scholarship and in professions. Canadians of Chinese origin are making a rich contribution to our multicultural Canada.

Chinese New Year is a time of hope and renewal. Chinese Canadians have waited patiently and worked hard for recognition of past injustices that early settlers suffered as a result of the racist head tax and the Chinese exclusion act. Once again, I call on the government to acknowledge these injustices with appropriate redress.

I also urge all parties to support constitutional amendments that will protect minorities from future discrimination.

May the Year of the Monkey bring a renewed Canada with health, happiness and prosperity for all Canadians. Kong Hai Fatt Choy.

* * *

HOME OWNERSHIP

Mr. Garth Turner (Halton—Peel): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the government approved a plan to allow first-time home buyers to get 95 per cent financing on their real estate purchase.

That is great news. What was not so great was the attempt of the Leader of the Opposition to claim credit for an idea the government has been working on for a very long time. Canadians do not care where the ideas come from. They just want good ones.

Five per cent down is good, as long as home buyers are careful not to over-mortgage themselves. The lowest mortgage rates in over two decades is also a good idea, making this an excellent time to buy.

Finally, being able to use RRSP funds for first-time home purchases is another good idea, supported by many MPs on both sides of the House. We all urge the finance minister to listen, to reflect and just do it in the next budget.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, yes, this week has been proclaimed International Development Week, but it will only be meaningful if the government commits and restates its policy targets of directing Canadian aid to benefit the poorest populations in developing nations.