

THE LATE COLONEL FRED TILSTON

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, during our recess Colonel Fred Tilston, one of Canada's greatest war heroes, died.

People who never met Fred Tilston knew he had done something exceptional. The letters VC following his name needed no explanation. He was one of the bravest of the brave. He held the Victoria Cross.

Colonel Tilston won his VC in the Hochwald Forest of Germany in 1945, leading an attack on enemy positions. He was wounded three times while repeatedly running through heavy fire for fresh supplies. Canada now has only two living Victoria Cross winners: Cec Merritt and Ernest "Smokey" Smith.

The Canadian Armed Forces are still composed of men and women from the same mould as these, yet we no longer recognize the Victoria Cross in our honours and awards system.

Canada must retain the right to honour others who in the future may exhibit great courage. The finest tribute we could make to Fred Tilston would be to restore the Victoria Cross to its rightful place as Canada's premier decoration for valour.

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RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, I ask the government to continue its patient handling of debt arrears with the Russian Federation. The worst case scenario would be for Canada to pull the plug on the \$1.5 billion line of credit. The Russian shortage of hard currency does not preclude its desire to receive Canadian exports and ultimately to pay for them.

The \$20 million payment made last week on Canadian grain shows good faith on the part of the Russians, even though they remain well in arrears on the payment schedule.

I urge the government to be clear about the status of the loan guarantees for the sake of Canadian workers. Thousands of Canadian jobs hang in the balance on whether or not these commitments are fulfilled.

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Commodities such as grain and other agricultural products are a required staple, and steel tubular products will allow the development of the oil and gas fields so necessary for a vital economy.

I believe our support of the federation will not only behove Canadian exporters but also demonstrate our support for economic and political reform in the Russian Federation.

A meeting last week with Russian Ambassador Belonogov confirmed to me that continued dialogue and patience are necessary on our part.

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CLASS OF 72

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound—Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, October 30 marked the 20th anniversary of the election of the Class of 72. On October 30, 1972, 59 Conservatives, 23 Liberals, 11 New Democrats and 3 members of the Social Credit Party were elected to the House of Commons for the first time. Of those members, only 11 Conservative members and 2 Liberal members remain in the House today with unbroken electoral records.

In the Conservative caucus there is the right hon. Joe Clark, the hon. Harvie Andre, the hon. Perrin Beatty, the hon. Paul Dick, the hon. Jake Epp, the hon. Otto Jelinek, the hon. Frank Oberle, Bill Kempling, Gus Mitges, myself and, by no means the least, yourself, Mr. Speaker.

In the Liberal caucus there is the hon. Bill Rompkey and the hon. Jean-Robert Gauthier.

Given the fact that the political life expectancy of an individual in public life these days is quite short, those who count themselves among the Class of 72 are to be commended for their tenacity in bucking the electoral trends over the past 20 years.

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES IN NEW BRUNSWICK

Mr. Douglas Young (Acadie—Bathurst): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada should proceed bilaterally with the Government of New Brunswick to enshrine the principles of Bill 88 in the Constitution.