

### THE LATE ANDREI SAKHAROV

**Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands):** Mr. Speaker, today the world mourns the passing of human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Andrei Sakharov.

Sakharov will go down in history as a man dedicated to peace and protection of individual liberties. As we watch the swirl of change in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union we often associate that change with the name Gorbachev, but for most of his adult life Andrei Sakharov was persecuted for promoting greater freedom and democracy for the Soviet people.

From his forced exile in Gorky, Sakharov was a beacon of hope for his compatriots and a symbol of dissent for peoples from around the world. He not only criticized the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, but U.S. involvement in Vietnam, repression in the Middle East and racism in South Africa.

With his wife Yelena Bonner, Sakharov worked to change what was thought for so many years to be the unchangeable. Although we mourn the death of a great world figure and transmit our condolences to his wife and partner, Yelena Bonner, we take solace in the knowledge that Andrei Sakharov was able to see the fruits of his life work and long persecution.

The transformation of geopolitics we have experienced over the past months is a direct result of Andrei Sakharov. The world and our children's future are brighter for him.

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### IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West):** Mr. Speaker, the minister of immigration recently responded to the forced deportation of Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong by the British Government by criticizing their actions but did not offer any assistance on our behalf; nor did the minister show any international leadership to help the boat people who have been interned in refugee camps for years.

In fact the Canadian government's assistance to the Indo-Chinese over the next three years plans to accommodate only 16,000 people, which sadly pales in comparison to the 90,000 brought to Canada during the 1979-1980 period.

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Conversely, under this government, the largest group of the wealthiest immigrants arriving in Canada under the immigrant investor program is from the same country in which the Vietnamese are presently being interned.

By refusing to assist the Indo-Chinese properly in their hour of need, the Minister of Immigration has set a course toward the rich and powerful. That is not only a dangerous course; it is also a colossal shame.

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[*Translation*]

### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec—Est):** Mr. Speaker, despite record economic growth and the increasing prosperity of Canadians, NDP and Liberal members are busy perpetuating the myth that Canadians have been worse off since the Conservatives came to power. According to the statistics, the opposite is true. The number of Canadians living below the poverty line today is three-quarters of a million less than the figure recorded in 1984. Poverty levels have declined since 1984, from nearly 17 per cent to 13 per cent. The average family income has reached its highest level ever, with an increase of 1.8 per cent over 1987, after adjustment for inflation. Low income levels for children under 16 declined between 1984 and 1988 from 20.1 per cent to 15.4 per cent. The number of adult women—16 years of age or over—living below the poverty line dropped by 30,000 last year, adding up to a total decline of 229,000 since 1984. Poverty levels for senior citizens dropped between 1984 and 1988, from 21.6 per cent to 17.2 per cent. This is good news, Mr. Speaker! Our economic recovery program works. I think we should tell Canadians, and I hope the media will help us explain what is really happening in our society!

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[*English*]

### PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

**Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean):** Mr. Speaker, on October 30 and again on December 6 constituents of Nepean and myself met in open fora to discuss the government's proposed GST. In addition, hundreds of letters have