

**AFTER RECESS**

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

**STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31**

[English]

**HONG KONG VETERANS**

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester):** Mr. Speaker, just before he left on his far east trip, the Prime Minister received a letter from our Hong Kong Veterans Association reminding him that Japan had never apologized for its treatment of them.

On Tuesday, we saw how effectively that message was carried across the Pacific when Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu apologized for what he described as the "unbearable suffering" his country brought to the Canadian servicemen. The apology, according to at least Southam News, went far beyond anything expected.

We realize that nothing can properly make up for what our Hong Kong veterans went through in the war. However, it is some consolation to know that their ordeal was a big reason why Canada became one of the first countries in the world to pay prisoner of war compensation.

In fact, our country has paid out over \$50 million in POW compensation to former prisoners of the Japanese or their dependants. No amount of money can fully compensate our Hong Kong veterans for what they endured, nor can words, but yesterday's apology in Tokyo shows that their bravery in action and courage in captivity is acknowledged.

On behalf of the veterans in my riding, I want to say how pleased we are with this result.

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**NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK**

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, 1991 marks the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Disabled and the end of the Decade of the Disabled.

In 1985 Canada showed its support for disabled persons by issuing a declaration on the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. Since then, however, Canada's record of leadership and action on disability issues has been poor.

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The rights of disabled persons have still not been officially acknowledged by a United Nations convention. Such international recognition would go a long way to ensuring the rights of all persons with disabilities.

The theme of National Access Awareness Week is "Access is a Right". This government must take the initiative and make that come true at both a national and international level.

I call on this government to show real leadership and true commitment to disabled Canadians and to disabled persons throughout the world, and ask that it seek to establish a United Nations convention that will recognize and support the rights of all disabled persons.

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**U.S. IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to make the House aware of recent actions by U.S. government officials which amount to nothing more than paranoid harassment.

Six members of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua travelled to Winnipeg last week as part of an exchange program with the United Church. Two of the six, a 60-year old fisherman and a 25-year old secretary, did not have their U.S. entry visas before the group left Managua.

When the group arrived in Miami they had to stay overnight to wait for their connecting flight to Winnipeg. U.S. Immigration officials quickly separated the two from the group, forbade them to communicate with the others, and held them under armed guard. In fact, the two were escorted by armed guard all the way until their flight left the ground after a stop in Minneapolis.

The actions of the U.S. Immigration officials were way out of line. These people all had valid travel documents, Canadian visas, return air tickets and a letter from the Moravian Church naming the six as members of an inter-church exchange program.

It is bad enough that they had to go all the way to Costa Rica and pay \$40 to get their Canadian visas to go on this trip. This harassment from the U.S. officials just made matters worse, and I call on the U.S. ambassador with the hope that our Nicaraguan friends will not be subjected to the same treatment on the way home.