

Canada was therefore born out of a bill adopted by a simple majority.

The people of Canada had no say in this process, because a simple vote in the House was deemed sufficient to legitimize the process.

Unlike the act establishing Canada, the draft bill declaring Quebec's sovereignty will not come into effect without the support of the people of Quebec expressed in a referendum.

To all those Canadians with lofty democratic ideals, who consider a vote of 50 per cent plus one insufficient to legitimize the choice of Quebecers, I would suggest another look at their Canadian history books.

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[English]

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, since January 1 of this year I have received over 700 letters and 60 petitions from my constituents in Cariboo—Chilcotin rightly protesting the government's intention to introduce new firearms legislation. I would like to quote from one letter:

Ignorance is the cause of fear and the fear of firearms now is caused by a general lack of understanding of what a gun is, how it functions and how extensive our existing gun laws currently are. If the public understood what an honest citizen must currently go through to legally acquire a firearm, they would realize that the new gun control legislation is nothing more than an expensive publicity campaign designed to appear as if the government is fighting crime. We, the people, need education about firearms, not gun laws that attack honest gun owners and leave the criminals at the status quo.

I agree with my constituents. We do not need any more firearms legislation.

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[Translation]

MEMBER FOR LONGUEUIL

Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday the hon. member for Longueuil asserted in the House that it is ridiculous to think that Canada ranks among the best countries in the world in respect of standard of living because, according to him, Canada is considered to be like a Third World country because of the size of its debt. He even claimed that we were trying to deceive people.

The comparison made by the Bloc Quebecois member is crude and his reasoning very unsound. Here are the facts. The UN world report on human development for 1992 and 1994 ranks Canada as the best country in which to live.

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The only ones trying to deceive people, and in particular the population of Quebec, are the Bloc Quebecois members. It is very easy to be a separatist if the effect of the worst scenario they can imagine, that is losing the referendum, would be for them to continue living in the best country in the world.

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[English]

TRADE

Mr. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on February 2 the United States formally notified the federal government that it considers our move toward tariffication of supply managed commodities to be a violation of the NAFTA.

Let me state clearly that our tariffication is what was agreed to at the GATT, including by the Americans. In reality our good neighbour to the south is playing big bully games against the very principles agreed to at the GATT.

On February 14 the Minister of International Trade made it clear he will not make any concessions to the Americans on this issue. I support that position. This government cannot make any concessions on the supply managed commodities. Our legal position is sound and the GATT takes precedence over the NAFTA.

I would expect, therefore, that consultations with the Americans will be short and the message will be clear: no concessions on the tariff issue.

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PROJECT READ

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has already been five years since the United Nations designated 1990 as the international year of literacy. It is the UN's goal to liberate nearly a quarter of the world's population from the bonds of illiteracy by the year 2000 and much of this work starts at home.

It is estimated that 1.2 million adults in Ontario are functionally illiterate. In my own riding of Parkdale—High Park, librarian Rita Cox and the Parkdale Project Read are beating the odds. Just ask two of Project Read's recent graduates, Jerry Lee Miller and Ed Anable. They are individual success stories and are shining examples that together we can break the cycle of illiteracy.

I congratulate the minister responsible for literacy for doing an excellent job in this field.