

*S. O. 31*

people of Armenia who are experiencing one of the worst disasters of this century.

I would also like to commend those thousands of Canadians who have devoted their time, energy, and resources to collecting and sending relief supplies to the troubled areas.

Unfortunately, however, it appears that the co-ordination of the Canadian response could have been better handled. Some volunteers with needed skills were not even able to get a few supplies such as tents and blankets so that they could fly to the scene of the tragedy. Other questions have been raised with respect to the lack of communication between Emergency Preparedness Canada and External Affairs. I hope the Minister will look into this and report back to the House.

In the meantime, I hope that the quake will have done one thing useful. I hope that it brings home to us that the people in the Soviet Union are real human beings. If we can be moved as we have been by their suffering in this instance we should also be moved to eliminate nuclear weapons which would visit upon the people of the Soviet Union and all the people of the earth a disaster that would make even the events in Armenia look like a picnic.

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### THE FRANCHISE

#### REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park):** Mr. Speaker, Zoya Stevenson, Nancy Jacobi, and thousands of other Canadians in Parkdale—High Park and across Canada were disenfranchised in the federal election of November 21 because of our inefficient enumeration process.

During every election we hear horror stories of residents of entire streets and whole apartment buildings not being enumerated. Many voters were omitted because they were travelling or working odd shifts during the enumeration period. Others did not discover the omission of their names until they arrived at the polls on election day.

I urge Parliament to give speedy approval to the following recommendations.

1. Develop a registration process to establish a permanent voters list.

2. Approve election day voters registration in urban areas, the same right as given to rural voters.

The implementation of the these two recommendations would prevent discrimination against urban voters, and would guarantee Canadian voters their citizenship rights. It is our duty as parliamentarians to make it easier for citizens to vote, not place obstacles in their way.

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● (1405)

[*Translation*]

### FREE TRADE

#### GOVERNMENT'S MANDATE

**Mr. Michel Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for External Relations):** Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank the people of the riding of Champlain for putting their trust in me for a second consecutive mandate. Of course, I promise to keep on working for every man and woman of my constituency in order to improve our quality of life, attract significant investments and make the Canadian economy and that of my region work as well as in the past four years.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind both opposition parties that on the night they were defeated they solemnly committed themselves to let the Free Trade Agreement pass without objection or unjustified pressure. As we can see the session has no sooner begun that both parties have already reneged on their promise and simply seek to obstruct the Government in its action to prevent what Canadians decided on November 21 with their vote for free trade, for the economic development of Canada and against the regression of both opposition parties.

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[*English*]

### DISASTERS

#### ARMENIAN EARTHQUAKE—CANADIAN RESPONSE

**Ms. Barbara Greene (Don Valley North):** Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, December 7 last, the worst natural disaster to befall the Soviet Union in this century took place in Soviet Armenia.