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## EDUCATION

**Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham):** Mr. Speaker, I have discovered in my riding that our public school system is in desperate need of overhaul.

While education is a provincial jurisdiction, I believe that federal government funding of unemployment insurance and a portion of post-secondary education makes us partners with the provinces in working toward an improved educational environment.

Forced passing of students with poor reading and other academic skills is not in the best interests of Canada. Poor discipline has led to a situation where many teachers fear for their safety.

Different programs in different provinces are retarding our growth as one nation. We should immediately undertake a national forum on education in order to fulfil all government commitments to provide for an educated and motivated generation of new Canadians who will have to deal with the changes demanded by the 21st century.

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## VICTIMS' RIGHTS

**Mr. John Finlay (Oxford):** Mr. Speaker, a woman in the riding of Oxford recently collected over 500 names on a petition asking for changes to the Young Offenders Act. These petitioners are asking the government to create a law that will protect the victims rather than the offender.

The justice minister has done a great deal to advance the cause of victims' rights by proposing legislation which is now before the justice committee to ban the distribution of serial killer board games and trading cards. I believe the changes proposed to the Young Offenders Act will assure the Canadian people that youths must take responsibility for their actions.

I would like to thank these petitioners for informing me of their concerns and for taking it upon themselves to try to improve our justice system.

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[Translation]

## QUEBEC SOVEREIGNTY

**Mr. Bernard Deshaies (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, the Governor of Vermont stated clearly yesterday at the meeting of New England governors and Eastern Canadian premiers that he was prepared to maintain good business relations with a sovereign Quebec. Not surprisingly, our neighbours to the south are proving to be the most receptive of all to our democratic plans for sovereignty.

The Governor of Vermont rightfully pointed out that the business community in his state has no qualms about a sovereign Quebec government. Vermont has understood that it is in its best interests to respect the democratic choice of Quebecers and not to engage in a debate about the province's future. There is no question that the New England states will maintain their sound economic relations with a sovereign Quebec, just as all of Quebec's other trading partners will.

The federal government's fear-mongering is simply not working.

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[English]

## GRAND RABBI OF LUBAVITCH

**Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today, somewhat belatedly but with no less sincerity, to pay tribute and to mourn the passing of Rabbi Menachem Schneerson who served as the Grand Rabbi of Lubavitch for four decades.

Rabbi Schneerson's devotion to his community and to society as a whole is demonstrated in his legacy of achievements which includes the establishment of drug rehabilitation centres, prisoner outreach programs, non-profit loan organizations, day schools and Education Day U.S.A. The world is a poorer place with the passing of Rabbi Schneerson.

I would ask all members of the House, and indeed all Canadians, to join with me in honouring the memory of the Rabbi and I would ask members to join with me in extending our deepest sympathies to the Lubavitch community at this most difficult time.

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## BLOOD FRACTIONATION PLANT

**Mr. Roger Gallaway (Sarnia—Lambton):** Mr. Speaker, as a member from Ontario, I would like to express my support for the immediate construction of the blood fractionation plant. This is a vital initiative for the health and safety of Canadians.

The Department of Health established a blue ribbon panel composed of independent experts in this field to review the issue of blood fractionation. I welcome their report which concluded that blood fractionation should begin immediately in Canada. It was last fall that Halifax was chosen, after an extensive site selection process conducted by the Canadian Red Cross Society, as the best location in the country for this project.

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This issue is far too important for petty regional politics. We need a fractionation plant and we need it now. This is not just good news for Nova Scotia, this is great news for all Canadians.