

S. O. 31

There are 11 language families, 53 languages and over 200 dialects which embody our unique relationship to the Creator, reflect our traditions and our values.

We ask all peoples to use March 31 as a day to celebrate our survival as a peoples and to promote and preserve our aboriginal languages so aboriginal children in generations to come may proudly speak of their culture in their mother tongue.

[*Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.*]

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GYPSY MOTH

Mr. Dave Worthy (Cariboo—Chilcotin): Mr. Speaker, Canada is facing a potential crisis because of the arrival on its shores of the gypsy moth. This moth is normally native to eastern Asia and has been transported to our shores by freighters. Although localized right now, it can spread swiftly throughout B.C. and possibly other parts of Canada.

We have been working in co-operation with the U.S. to find a solution. They have taken action to deal with their problem. We have yet to deal with ours. The objective is to prevent further infestation.

The Department of Agriculture is planning aerial spraying in Vancouver next month. It is imperative that we proceed. If left unchecked, this infestation will have a devastating effect on Canada, economically as well as environmentally.

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POVERTY

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, while it should not come as a surprise, doctors are now stating publicly that Canadian children are dying from malnutrition, dying because they are poor.

Canada's 377 food banks are unable to meet the demands of the hungry and social assistance rates across the country are inadequate to meet the nutritional needs of Canada's poor.

The Minister of National Health and Welfare recently told a Vancouver audience that child poverty has been on

the decline. This is an appalling error on the part of the minister responsible for children. In fact child poverty is on the rise in Canada.

Less than two years ago the Prime Minister told heads of state that "funding is important but it is not, in the end, the decisive factor in the war on child suffering. Political will is".

I challenge the Prime Minister to exercise political will and ensure that all Canadian children are properly fed. It is time he stopped listening to John Crow and started listening to Canada's hungry children. What Canada needs is not zero inflation but zero child poverty.

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TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, the government has been subjected to opposition harassment that we are off-loading. A decline in the increase in transfer payments is not off-loading.

I am deeply concerned for the taxpayers in my home province of Saskatchewan. Just last week the Saskatchewan NDP announced a 15 per cent cut in transfer payments to municipalities, a 5.5 per cent cut to hospitals, and a 4 per cent cut to education. These actions are absolutely unprecedented and unacceptable.

These actions are off-loading in spades.

The people of Saskatchewan have begun to ask if the harmonized tax system begun by the previous government was all that bad after all.

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JOEY SMALLWOOD

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, 43 years ago today Newfoundland and Canada became one nation. Let me note the occasion by saluting the memory of the man who was most responsible.

A bit of each of us died with Joey Smallwood last December. He embodied our stubborn will to hang on to our way of life while improving our lot. Much of Joey lives on with us. His crusade to smash the curse of isolation transformed a thousand pockets of population into a closely knit community whose culture is intact.