

S. O. 31

The U.S. government and Congress have imposed an illegal and immoral blockade in Cuba. Now U.S. Senator Jesse Helms, chair of the foreign relations committee, is trying to target foreigners, including Canadians, who invest in Cuba, barring entry to the U.S. and cutting off preferential trade rights.

I call upon the Government of Canada to strongly condemn and lobby against this bill which would have a particularly grave impact on sugar product exports to the U.S. and investment projects in Cuba.

The Helms bill has been referred to as the Canada bashing act of 1995 by Cuban expert Jorge Dominguez of Harvard University.

Finally, the leader of the Reform Party may wish to raise this issue with his political soulmate Newt Gingrich during this love-in in Washington today.

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[Translation]

QUEBEC SOVEREIGNTY

Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in a study by the highly reputable firm of Rogers and Wells of New York, commissioned by the Government of Quebec, lawyers David Bernstein and William Silverman concluded that Canadian-American trade rules would not change with Quebec sovereignty.

According to these experts, the United States would renew Canadian-American treaties with Quebec, including the free trade agreement, in order to protect their economic interests.

Therefore, the rest of Canada will have nothing to say about trade between Quebec and the United States and even less effect on preventing Quebec from enjoying the benefits of the free trade agreement.

In other words, the day after sovereignty in Quebec, it will be business as usual.

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[English]

CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr. Jake E. Hooppner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in this House today to congratulate a fellow Manitoban on a great performance.

Manitoba's skip, Kerry Burtnyk, led his team to victory at the Canadian men's curling championships in Halifax over the weekend. The Manitoba team, which also includes Keith Fenton, Rob Meakin and Jeff Ryan, persevered through some tough competition to give Manitoba the Canadian men's curling championship.

This victory also solidifies Manitoba's claim to curling excellence. We now enjoy the men's and women's titles as well as the junior women's and men's titles.

Best of luck to the Manitoba squad at the upcoming world curling championships in Brandon starting April 8.

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REFORM PARTY

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party has sent its boss to Washington to try and impress Republican leader Newt Gingrich with its brand of politics. This gives a whole new meaning to the expression "a meeting of the minds".

Let us read today's agenda for these public officials: Republican whip meeting, closed to the public; meeting with the undersecretary of state, no photo op; briefing with officials of the secretary of defence, no photo op; Concord Coalition briefing, closed; Progress and Freedom Foundation briefing, in camera. Finally, the leader of the Reform Party is enjoying a Heritage Foundation private luncheon and you guessed it, it is private.

We cannot understand why the leader of the third party prefers to have closed meetings. Yesterday, Washington reporters paid him the ultimate compliment by saying he was a Liberal.

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[Translation]

PREMIER OF QUEBEC

Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during a press conference held at the end of the first day of the Parti Québécois' caucus meeting, the Quebec premier stated that what the Martin budget says is that we will be pretty nice to you this year and that way we can be sure that you will be gullible enough to vote no. This statement is totally unacceptable.

By expressing himself in this way, Quebec's premier really shows how much he respects those who do not share his opinion. This deplorable comment is but one in a slew of pitiful and bigoted things that many separatist spokespersons have been saying recently.

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After spending millions of dollars to give Quebecers a say in their future, with that statement alone, the premier totally negated the process's basis.

We are therefore obliged to state that separatists in Quebec only respect people who agree with them.