

The FBDB has the potential to assist in fostering economic growth in this country, particularly in Atlantic Canada where the chartered banks are taking a hard line in terms of extending small business loans.

It is clear, however, that a number of internal changes are going to have to be made within the FBDB to make the institution more responsive to the needs of the small business community. If this cannot be done, then perhaps it is time that the Government of Canada took a serious look at disbanding this bank of last resort.

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[*Translation*]

MILITARY EQUIPMENT

Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, in 1990 communities near Montreal were literally taken hostage. A few people who had acquired military equipment and weapons terrorized members of these communities. This tragedy created tensions within our society and, furthermore, these events have been used to cast aspersions on Quebec's reputation.

Today it seems that a number of people from Akwesasne have in their possession military equipment from the United States. This is very disturbing.

That is why I want to ask the federal government to notify the U.S. administration of this fact and to its duty and guarantee the security of the people in this area.

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[*English*]

CROSS-BORDER SHOPPING

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, the role and operations of Canada Customs is vital to our efforts to address the problem of cross-border shopping.

To be successful, we must have the universal collection of all applicable duties and taxes at the border. Governments can impose all the taxes and promote all the innovative ideas we want, but our situation is not going to improve if we do not have them enforced and collected on a consistent basis.

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I recognize that the collection of duties and taxes can be influenced by a number of factors, like the physical constraints at a border crossing, traffic patterns and the adequacy of customs personnel.

What I am saying to the government is that we must have the adequate customs personnel to do the job. This is particularly true at border crossings where the physical constraints are being removed.

Our border communities, like Sarnia—Lambton, can compete with our U.S. neighbours. Yet to do so, we need a level playing field. One prerequisite, whether we get tax harmonization or not, is the consistent collection of all duties and taxes at the border.

To me, this is only right, fair and just.

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NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, today across Canada, at 11 a.m. at the Workers' Monument at Vincent Massey Park and at noon before Parliament Hill, hundreds of workers gathered to pay their respects and to mourn the many thousands of their fellow workers, men and women, who die or are injured on the job in Canada each year.

Today marks the first anniversary of the first official observance by the Parliament of Canada of the official day of mourning, established as a result of passage of a private members' bill introduced by my NDP colleague, the hon. member for Churchill.

On this occasion, I wish to ask the government to join issue with us on two particular matters affecting the lives and health of Canadian working people. One is to plead with them to end their continual cuts to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety which is resulting in a slow death for that agency.

It particularly attempts to end the inquiry service. The second is to pay increasing attention to the issue of violence in the workplace. The chief cause of death among women in North American on the job last year was homicide. That is a devastating statistic and it is one that all Canadians and this government should pay increasing attention to.