

*S. O. 31*

● (1410)

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate our athletes and their coaches, parents and families, and all those who helped train our Olympic team.

Let us celebrate and wish them the best of luck.

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[English]

**THRONE SPEECH DEBATE**

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to raise an issue of concern to millions of Canadians regarding the activities in this House yesterday.

Much to my disappointment the focus of the affairs of this place yesterday was on the constitutional future of Quebec. The three parties in this House each said during the recent election that the economy and getting Canada back to work would be the number one item on the agenda of this Parliament.

As a member from the province of Ontario, I would remind hon. members that the time will come when the Quebec-Canada issue will rise on the agenda. Until that time on behalf of Canadians in all provinces, the unemployed and those faced with uncertain futures, this House must concentrate on economic and social issues.

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**AGRICULTURE**

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Middlesex):** Mr. Speaker, the single largest industry in my riding of Lambton—Middlesex is agriculture, producing nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars worth of product in 1991.

Since the conclusion of the Uruguay round of GATT negotiations last December I have received numerous inquiries from concerned constituents who have expressed reservations about the continued state of health of Canada's supply management system. This system has benefited farmers and has provided consumers with a constant supply of high quality food.

Canada's tariff offers for agricultural products were tabled recently in Geneva. I am deeply concerned about reports that Canada's original tariff proposals for ice cream and yogurt may be lowered.

I would like to urge the Minister of Agriculture to ensure that the tariff levels and the mechanisms to enforce them provide effective controls for agricultural products.

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**VIOLENCE**

**Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin—St. George's):** Mr. Speaker, we are told in the throne speech that steps are going to be taken

to deal with violence against women and children. It is about time. The figures are absolutely terrifying.

One out of every two Canadian women have known violence firsthand. In four out of five cases it first happened when they were children. Six out of ten women in Canada fear for their safety and their lives if they walk alone in their own neighbourhood after dark.

Freedom of movement is a marvellous democratic ideal. However for millions of Canadian women it is not yet a reality. We can do better than that. We must. In this Year of the Family let us see to it by starting to put an end to violence against women and children.

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[Translation]

**ÎLE D'ORLÉANS POTATOES**

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans):** Mr. Speaker, potato producers in the magnificent riding of Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans have suffered enormous losses in 1991 due to a virus. These losses amounted to about \$546,000 for potatoes stored on the farm and close to \$468,000 for potatoes stored at the wholesale level, which means more than a million dollars altogether.

Producers from Île d'Orléans have forwarded to the former Minister of Agriculture a complete file on the causes of these losses, on the amounts of money involved and on the compensation requested. The present Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food has received a copy of this file.

In the past, compensation was paid to Maritime producers who suffered similar losses. The uneven way Maritime producers and Quebec producers are treated is unacceptable. We demand that this issue be given the attention it requires and that potato producers in the Île d'Orléans be properly and promptly compensated.

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**AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT**

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General can table only one report a year. This report on the strategic and operational management of the federal government is of extreme importance.

● (1415)

As do many Canadians, I believe that the time has come—to better understand what deficits and debt mean, to better manage department and agency budgets; to better inform Canadians on federal programs and their efficiency; to better amend our laws to make them more easily understandable—to seriously contemplate amending the Auditor General Act, to enable him to prepare not only one yearly report, but ad hoc reports which