

ment, will finally be refloated. This is good news for the residents of the Magdalen Islands and P.E.I.

The witnesses heard by the Gagnon-Easter committee were able, for the first time, to express their fear to me and to Wayne Easter, the hon. member for Malpeque. They were unanimous in saying that it was time to act, and our government listened to them.

In conclusion, I want to congratulate all those who worked relentlessly for that happy ending in the case of the *Irving Whale*. All of Eastern Canada is very grateful for that outcome.

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[English]

CHRIS HODSON

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Chris Hodson, the newest member of the Ontario legislature who won a provincial byelection in Victoria—Haliburton on St. Patrick's Day.

He has been described as a political newcomer, however after closer examination his family name has a long history, including this very chamber. His grandfather, Clayton Wesley Hodson, was the member of Parliament for Victoria from 1945 to 1963. His uncle, Glen Hodson, was the member of the provincial parliament for Victoria—Haliburton from 1963 to 1975.

Once again I want to congratulate Chris on his victory. I look forward to working with him to provide excellent representation for the constituents of Victoria—Haliburton.

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[Translation]

DEMOCRACY IN MEXICO

Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all Bloc Quebecois members, I want to condemn the assassination of Mr. Colosio, the institutional revolutionary party candidate for the Mexican presidential election.

Mr. Colosio was primarily known here as a key player in reform and modernization of the institutional revolutionary party and, since the beginning of the crisis in the state of Chiapas, in January of this year, an advocate of the Mexican election process reform.

Without in any way interfering in Mexican domestic politics, I want to express the general feeling of reprobation among Quebecers in light of this violation of the democratic process of a friendly nation.

[English]

S. O. 31

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, people often remark about grain farm subsidies, usually not in a very positive manner. What most people are not aware of is the problems faced by grain farmers which are beyond their control.

Since the 1970s provincial and federal governments and the Wheat Board of Canada have supplied 18,000 hopper cars to railways.

● (1410)

In spite of this, some Manitoba elevators have not seen a rail car in over two months. Most elevators are full to capacity and April 1 road restrictions in Manitoba will restrict the movement of grain by farmers.

There are currently 30 ships in Vancouver harbour awaiting grain. These ships get up to \$20,000 a day in demurrage charges and this comes out of the farmers' pockets. Some ships have left empty after collecting as much as \$350,000 in demurrage charges.

Since the Vancouver port shutdown, western grain farmers have lost approximately \$200 million in grain sales and demurrage charges. Canadian farmers cannot afford this and neither can the Canadian economy.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Derek Wells (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, the commentary surrounding the recent cuts to the defence budget centres around the closure of four Canadian bases across Canada.

As a member whose riding is losing its two Canadian forces stations, I have to say that the South Shore's loss is just as devastating if not more so when the economic state of the area is taken into consideration.

However, the communities of Mill Cove and Shelburne have begun the process of adjusting to their losses. Steering committees have been formed in both areas to encourage and co-ordinate redevelopment plans.

Right now these communities are concerned that assets from the stations will be transferred elsewhere. This must not be allowed to happen. It is impossible to make plans if the resources available are constantly changing. These committees have taken on a very difficult task. They should not be forced to operate in an atmosphere of further uncertainty.

I therefore urge the Minister of National Defence to freeze all assets at CFS Mill Cove and CFS Shelburne until such time as proposals can be formalized.