



*Statement by Sarmite Bulte, Member of Parliament,
Parkdale-High Park
to the House of Commons - February 24, 2004*



Estonia

Mr. Speaker, Canadians of Estonian heritage are today celebrating the 86th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of Estonia.

The Republic of Estonia was founded on February 24, 1918, when the Salvation Committee declared the independence of the Republic of Estonia. This date was celebrated as the date of independence until the Soviet occupation of Estonia in 1940. During the Soviet occupation, Independence Day was celebrated in Estonian communities around the world.

As the hope of restoring the nation's independence grew stronger in the late 1980s, the people already began to celebrate the day of independence publicly before the end of the Soviet occupation. On February 24, 1989, the red flag of Soviet Estonia was replaced by the blue-black-white Estonian national flag on Toompea. Since the restoration of independence on August 20, 1991, Independence Day continues to be a day of celebration and a day of reflection for the Estonian people.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to President R iitel, the Estonian Parliament, the people of Estonia and Canadians of Estonian descent on this momentous occasion. Elagu Eesti.



Sarmite D. Bulte

Sarmite D. Bulte, MP

