

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, August 17, 1988

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 21

[*Translation*]

CHILDREN

RETURN OF GARBAGE PAIL KIDS CARDS—REQUEST THAT CRIMINAL CODE BE AMENDED

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to protest vigorously against the distribution of Garbage Pail Kids cards in Montreal. These cards, inserted in chewing gum packages, show absolutely disgusting and unacceptable pictures of children. For example, one card shows a baby with its elbow in its behind and its umbilical cord plugged into an electric outlet. Another shows a small boy scalding his hands under a hot water tap and the skin literally melting away. The cards also give reprehensible advice, such as eating until you vomit and watching what has happened to the food consumed.

Mr. Speaker, who has responsibility? According to a Montreal Urban Community police officer, nothing can be done about it. Unfortunately, the prosecutors he consulted told him that there is no legal recourse to stop the distribution of these cards.

Mr. Speaker, we are facing a serious problem. We must put on pressure to stop the distribution of these cards. It is true that children's education plays an important role, but if our laws are powerless to stop the social abuse I described, it is time to change them.

I ask the Conservative Government to investigate the possibility of amending the Criminal Code to prevent the distribution of such material, to stop the abuse of children's rights in the media and to put an end to such disgusting and abusive material.

[*English*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PAKISTAN—DEATH OF PRESIDENT IN PLANE CRASH

Mr. Reginald Stackhouse (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, word has been received that this morning the President of Pakistan, the United States Ambassador to Pakistan, and 35 other civilians died in a plane crash over Pakistan. Apart from any other consideration, the manner of their deaths must impress all Members of this House and law-abiding and peace loving citizens of this country. We must ask ourselves, in view of the possible assassination, what manner of world this is becoming when any person in a position of public leadership faces the risk that any leader faces today. It causes us to make note of the need for greater security for leaders and to value the peace that is part of this country.

I know that, apart from any political considerations, the sympathies of this country will go to the families concerned.

* * *

BANKRUPTCIES

BANK'S SEIZURE OF COMPANY ASSETS—LOSS OF WORKERS' WAGES

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago Best Outer Wear Limited in Spadina went out of business, stopped making ladies coats, and dismissed 20 workers, owing each an average of \$1,000 in back wages. The workers cannot collect their pay because the Bank of Montreal, being the secured creditor, has claimed the company's assets, leaving nothing to pay the workers. This is outrageous because this same Bank of Montreal in 1982 made \$239 million profit but paid no taxes at all. In fact, it received a \$22 million tax rebate.

This year, according to the Canadian Bankers' Association, none of our banks expects to pay tax. It is unconscionable that workers must pay taxes on their wages to subsidize banks that pay no taxes but the banks then have the power to seize the workers' wages. Canadian banks do the same to the peoples of Latin America where workers and peasants must watch their children suffer malnutrition and disease so that billions of dollars in external debt can be repaid to Canadian banks.

The people of Canada must organize to end these unjust Canadian laws made by the bankers' friends in the House of Commons and the Senate.