

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 19, 1983

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1405)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS

PRO-LIFE RALLY IN TORONTO

Mr. Garnet M. Bloomfield (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, so often this House hears about the discouraged, underprivileged, the mistreated, and the very negative side of life. I would like to bring to the attention of the House a very positive occasion, that being a peaceful, non violent rally, as reported by the Canadian Press, of 40,000 Ontario Canadians on behalf of human life. The Metro Toronto Police have stated that this was the largest rally ever held in that city.

These women, men, and children came together to express their deep concern over the many thousands of human beings who have been lost in Canada through abortions every year for the last several years. This show of life support in Canada is in sharp contrast to that of the anti-life group which, notwithstanding the fact that it had been organizing many months for rallies to be held at the same time across the country, was only able to muster less than a thousand people in all of Canada. This lack of attendance at the anti-life rallies points out very dramatically the absence of support for their cause in Canada in 1983.

The anti-life individuals have also attempted to gloss over the fact that they are in support of ending the life of a human being, by stating that they are only for freedom of choice. But their freedom of choice costs a defenceless unborn human being his or her life. Some choice! We, as parliamentarians, would do well to ensure the protection of all Canadians, born and unborn.

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STATUS OF WOMEN

APPOINTMENTS TO SENATE URGED

Mrs. Jennifer Cossitt (Leeds-Grenville): Madam Speaker, yesterday marked the anniversary of the landmark decision on October 18, 1929, which ruled upon the petition of the indomitable Emily Murphy that women were indeed persons under

the BNA Act and, as a consequence, could be appointed to the Senate.

In the 54 years since then women have made great strides toward full legal, social, and economic equality. The struggle to achieve that equality has not ended with the provision for women's rights contained in the Constitution and the Charter passed last year, however. Much yet remains to be done before women can be considered equal in fact as well as in theory.

Women, and their families' dependence upon many of them, remain at a disadvantage in terms of income, social and employment benefits, and pensions. Sexual harassment and violence against women remain commonplace, and women remain under-represented at all levels of government, not the least of which is in this Chamber.

It is to be hoped that in the coming years many more women will stand and be successful candidates in the House of Commons. In the meantime, however, many successful Canadian women from all walks of life continue to make important contributions to our society. On this noteworthy anniversary I urge the Government to give these persons strong consideration in future appointments to fill existing vacancies in the Senate. Emily Murphy would not have accepted that today, 54 years after her victory, only seven out of a possible 104 seats in the Senate are held by women. Nor should we.

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THE JUDICIARY

RECOMMENDED INCREASES IN JUDGES' SALARIES

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, the other day Mr. Otto Lang, a defeated Liberal Cabinet Minister and a judicial hopeful, reported on judges' salaries. He points out that the average Superior Court judge receives only \$85,000 per year. The figure for Supreme Court justices is \$98,000. With salaries like these, Otto Lang has displayed his social conscience. He says:

For some judges, particularly those in large urban areas and in areas with a high cost of living, cash flow is an increasing problem.

He therefore recommends that salaries should be significantly increased. He recommends increases ranging from a low of \$22,000 to a high of \$31,000 per year. These are increases of 26 per cent to 30 per cent. The proposed increases are not six and five; they are six times five. Mr. Lang is saying that judges should be above the law of six and five. That vicious legislation has been used to roll back signed collective agreements, to force office clerks back down below the poverty line, and to ensure that pensioners never even approach it.