

S.O. 21

[Translation]

HEALTH

USE OF HEROIN MEDICINALLY

Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval): Madam Speaker, during my three years as Chairman of the Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs, I have received a number of representations, and I would like to draw the attention of my hon. colleagues to a situation in our hospitals, where thousands of chronically ill patients and especially cancer patients, could be helped by alleviating their pain through the controlled administration of heroin. I would like to ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) to consider the medical use of heroin for a trial period and as part of a specific policy within specialized hospitals, as it is now being used in about thirty countries, including Great Britain. It is a pain killer that has been proved to be effective, the standards for its use could be determined by the authorities of the Department of National Health and Welfare and its use could be recommended within a relatively short time, particularly since this practice already exists in some thirty countries.

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● (1410)

[English]

FISHERIES

ALLOCATION OF SPECIAL RECOVERY PROJECT FUNDS

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Madam Speaker, I want for a moment to protest the cynical manner in which the Government is playing political games with capital funds allocated under the budget and the recovery program. The budget provided for a special fund of \$2.4 billion, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans received \$140 million of it. However, it now appears that the Cabinet has instructed that almost all of that money be spent in constituencies represented by Liberals and Liberals alone. In the case of Nova Scotia this means that fishermen who live in ridings such as the one I have the honour to represent are being discriminated against by public taxpayers' dollars even though their needs are the most acute.

On the behalf of those people, I ask the Government why it refuses to allocate a single dollar of that special fund for desperately needed wharves, breakwaters, and other harbour facilities, in Dartmouth-Halifax East, when a \$52 million office building in the Minister's riding of Halifax has been announced? Why did the Government allocate to a region which has only 6 per cent of all fishermen in Canada and also provides only 6 per cent of the fish catch, \$96.4 million of that \$140 million? I think that the answer is obvious to the people of Canada. The way the Government is playing with people's lives and trying to buy support with public money in a feeble attempt to save its own political life makes a mockery of democracy.

THE FRANCHISE

ABSENTEE BALLOTING

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Madam Speaker, through you I wish to call to the attention of the House a rather unfair provision in the Canada Elections Act that disenfranchises tens of thousands of Canadians. It is my hope that the Government, through the Minister responsible, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard), will call this matter to the attention of the Chief Electoral Officer who would be requested to put in his forthcoming report to Parliament a proposal to provide an absentee balloting process in place of the proxy system that is currently contained in the Elections Act.

The proxy procedure disenfranchises patients in acute care hospitals, loggers, people living outside Canada, miners and fishermen, and in fact it can be demonstrated quite successfully, I think, that the disenfranchisement of many Canadians at election time has in fact altered the outcome a number of elections.

It is noted that the Constitution provides every Canadian the opportunity to vote, and the present provisions of the Elections Act do in fact take that opportunity away from a number of Canadians on a discriminatory basis. It is my hope that the Government, through the responsible Minister, will make this point known to the Chief Electoral Officer so that he will in fact report to us on a proposal for an absentee balloting system in the forthcoming amendments to the Elections Act.

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POLITICAL PARTIES

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP CANDIDATE'S
STATEMENT ON MEDICARE

Mr. David Smith (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, we all smile at the degree of political license taken from time to time by our Conservative colleagues who are in pursuit of the Tory leadership. However, on occasion their utterings exceed well-intentioned enthusiasm and are more properly characterized as distorted attempts to rewrite history. When this happens we must set the record straight.

Such was the case last weekend when, according to Monday's *Toronto Star*, my good friend and former colleague from Toronto city politics, the Hon. Member for Rosedale (Mr. Crombie), described the Progressive Conservatives as a Party of social justice that brought social programs like medicare to Canadians, and he referred to medicare as the finest program this country has ever seen.

While we on this side of the House welcome the compliment paid to medicare, Madam Speaker, we cannot let the suggestion that the Tories brought Canadians medicare go unchallenged. The facts are that the Medical Care Act was passed in