

Madam Speaker: Such a motion requires the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

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PENSIONS

REQUEST FOR LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE PENSIONS FOR ALL AT AGE SIXTY—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Madam Speaker, I rise, under the provisions of Standing Order 43, on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity.

One of my constituents recently has been informed that she will not be eligible for a spouse's allowance. Her husband died just four months before she reached the age of 60. He was 68 years old at the time of his death. She is now expected to live on a widow's pension of some \$127 per month. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That this House condemns the unjust pension law that relegates my constituent and many other Canadians to a life of extreme hardship and poverty, and that this House urges the government to implement immediately legislation making every Canadian, regardless of marital status, eligible for a pension at the age of 60.

Madam Speaker: Such a motion requires the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

● (1115)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

IMMIGRATION

MINISTERIAL PERMIT ISSUED TO GIUSEPPE CALAMUSA

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Immigration and Employment. It pertains to the ministerial permit issued last month to Giuseppe Calamusa.

Armed with the knowledge that Mr. Calamusa had been convicted on three occasions in Italy of serious criminal offences between 1961 to 1965, aware of the fact that Mr. Calamusa came to Canada illegally in 1968 and has been deported on five occasions, aware of the fact that in 1975 he was charged with counterfeiting in Toronto, that in 1976 he skipped bail and that in 1977 he was convicted and imprisoned, my question to the minister is this: how can he exercise

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his discretion in such an unjustifiable way, especially in light of the fact that the trial judge recommended his deportation?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: He was tap-dancing.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, he does not even tap-dance.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Paproski: In your hotels?

Mr. Axworthy: If hon. members would like an answer to the question, as the hon. member knows, under section 19(2) of the act there is, and always has been, an opportunity for those who have had records to be admitted to this country. In Mr. Calamusa's case he was deported, as the act provided. We did provide a permit for him to return to the country, based on compassionate grounds, namely, there would have been a split in the family because three of his children are Canadian citizens and one of them was very seriously ill.

Those, I think, were proper grounds to allow the gentleman to come back into the country until his affairs could be established and an opportunity given to him to prove whether he was prepared to rehabilitate himself. Those were the grounds upon which the decision was made.

Mr. Speyer: Madam Speaker, I am certainly aware of the illness to which the minister has referred with respect to one of the children. But I ask the minister, what hard evidence did he take into consideration in deciding that the medical treatment this young man could have received in Italy was not as effective as it could be in, say, Winnipeg where he now resides?

Mr. Axworthy: Madam Speaker, in this case we took into account all kinds of evidence. To repeat, I would say the evidence demonstrated that in terms of the position of the family, to maintain the unity of the family and to provide an opportunity for that family to establish itself in this country, based upon the claims and representations made by many people on behalf of the Calamusas who had spoken on their behalf, including the city council for the city of Niagara Falls, we felt that on balance the family deserved a chance.

Mr. Calamusa did adhere to the requirements of the law, and was deported. There is a permit but if there is any indiscretion beyond that, then he would be asked to leave. But in this case, I erred on the side of compassion and judgment.

Mr. Speyer: Madam Speaker, I am glad that the minister took the point of representations made, because I would like to ask the minister what representations were made by Mr. Joseph Bova, a campaign worker for the minister, on behalf of this particular person, and did Mr. Bova know this Mr. Calamusa prior to the time that he moved to Winnipeg in June of this year?