

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

APPLICATION TO ABANDON COLLINGWOOD TO MEAFORD, ONT.
LINE

Mr. Gus Mitges (Grey-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, there is an application in place before the Canadian Transport Commission by the CNR to abandon the Collingwood to Meaford, Ontario, rail line located in the riding of Grey-Simcoe. The CNR claims that this section of the line has been a losing proposition as far as freight revenue and the cost of maintenance are concerned. However, what has not been realized by the CNR is that there is already a plan afoot to develop this portion of the line into a tourist railway operation to serve our four seasons tourist area, an area that depends heavily on tourism as a major part of its economy.

Therefore I call upon the CNR and the Government to withdraw this application and hold reconsideration of this decision in abeyance for some three years to give the area the necessary time to develop and to put into operation such a tourist railway oriented operation. This would be a shot in the arm which would not only benefit all aspects of the southern Georgian Bay area but other areas of the country as well.

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MULTICULTURALISM

UKRAINIAN CONGRESS—CONDEMNATION OF MINISTER'S
SPEECH

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on a serious matter today which primarily concerns Canadians of Ukrainian heritage but in many ways affects all Canadians concerned with the preservation and enhancement of the multi-ethnic and multicultural nature of the country.

The facts are that two Cabinet Ministers, who were scheduled to address the Fourteenth Ukrainian Canadian Congress in Winnipeg on October 8, cancelled their speaking engagement without an explanation. Their replacement to speak to the Congress, the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. MacLaren), would have done better to stay away. Instead, he delivered such an offensive address to the delegates of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress that it prompted 500 delegates to send a letter of complaint to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) describing the Minister's remarks as "inappropriate, condescending and . . . totally lacked perception of the nature and tone of this Congress". One delegate, reflecting the views of many, said that passages of the Minister's speech were "patronizing and playing on stereotypes".

Also he was quoted as saying about Ukrainian ancestors:

—stalwart peasant in a sheepskin coat, born on the soil, whose forefathers have been farmers for ten generations, with a stout wife and a half-dozen children—

We on this side of the House call on the Prime Minister to demand a total public retraction of those statements from the

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Minister concerned, and that the Minister of State for Finance be required to send a letter of apology to each delegate at the Canadian Ukrainian Congress for his discriminatory remarks.

More appropriate words would have been those of the Prime Minister in 1961, the late Right Hon. John Diefenbaker, when he said about multiculturalism:

—Canada is a garden . . . into which has been transplanted the hardiest and brightest flowers of many lands, each retaining in its new environment the best of the qualities for which it was loved and prized in its native lands.

That is the quote the Canadian Ukrainian Congress will hear when the Conservative Party and our new Leader form the next Government of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

TREATMENT OF NATIVE PEOPLE IN NORTH

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Madam Speaker, it is about time Parliament faced a few unpleasant facts about the administration of criminal justice in the two northern Territories. The proportion of the population in prison is two, three and four times as high in the Territories as in the South, yet we have no reason to believe that northerners are any more immoral or criminal than anyone else in Canada. In fact a recent report of the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan) indicated very clearly that crime in the Northwest Territories "refers mainly to disorderliness and minor anti-social behaviour", unlike the case for the South where there is more serious, premeditated crime.

The prison population in the Territories consists disproportionately of native people, yet again we have no reason to believe that native people are any more immoral or criminal than non-native people. Indeed, common sense and humanity suggest otherwise.

The criminal justice system in the North is overwhelmingly our responsibility, from policing through prosecutions, to the courts, unlike the case for the rest of Canada where the Provinces have prime responsibility. Thus I have asked the Justice Committee of the House to take up the issue of the administration of criminal justice in the North as a subject for study and resolution. We must explore with our colleagues in the territorial legislatures, native organizations, and the people who run the current system, better ways to adapt it to the needs of the North. Experiments in the involvement of native people and their justice councils have begun and should be further explored.