

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, June 5, 1987

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 21

[English]

THE CONSTITUTION

MEECH LAKE ACCORD—DISTINCT SOCIETY CLAUSE

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, following the Meech Lake Accord one begins to wonder whether the distinct society clause could mean that a Canadian moving to Hull, for instance, might become more distinct than one moving to Ottawa. He or she would enjoy lower electricity rates, pay higher taxes, and refer to the Premier as Prime Minister.

Here in the House of Commons some interesting reflections emerge. For instance, would the Hon. Member for Montréal—Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) be more distinguished than the Hon. Member for York South—Weston (Mr. Nunziata)? Or would the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand) be more distinguished than the Hon. Member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia)?

● (1105)

Not to overlook the other place, would we have to conclude that a Senator from Montreal, by virtue of being more distinguished, becomes more honourable than a Senator from Saskatoon?

A new nobility might be created in the country. Before retreating into the greyness of my indistinctiveness, this being World Environment Day, may every Canadian make every day Environment Day.

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HISTORIC EVENTS

WORLD WAR II—D-DAY ANNIVERSARY

Mr. Reginald Stackhouse (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow will mark the forty-third anniversary of D-Day, June 6, 1944, when the Third Canadian Infantry Division

and the Second Canadian Armoured Brigade went ashore on Juno Beach to participate in the invasion which would achieve the liberation of western Europe from Nazi tyranny.

Relative to the populations of Canada, Britain, and the United States, these forces were proportionately the largest national component in that invasion force. It marks one of the high points of Canadian military tradition.

This is not only an occasion for nostalgia. It is a day for advance, for there can be no better way to recognize this anniversary than today, the sitting day of the House closest to the anniversary of D-Day, being the occasion when the White Paper on national defence will be announced, expressing the resolve of the Government and of the country to re-establishing our defence capability after years of neglect under the previous Government.

This is not a military country. We all recognize that to be a sovereign nation we must be capable of defending ourselves.

This week there have been two events of great national significance. The Meech Lake Accord means that this is a more united Canada; the White Paper today means that we will be a more independent Canada.

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REFUGEES

CRITICISM OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, thousands of Canadians have petitioned the Government to bring in a fair refugee law. According to *The Star* poll of June 3, 75 per cent want legitimate political refugees accepted in Canada. Yet the Government has brought in a law which does the very opposite in spite of the Ministers' claims.

Bill C-55, in Clauses 48.1(1)(b) and 48.1(4), says that a real refugee would not be eligible to have his claim heard if he has come from a third country that Canada considers safe, or if he is fleeing a country that Canada considers would not make him a refugee.

All experienced lawyers in private practice have condemned Bill C-55 through the Canadian Bar Association.

I call upon the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Bouchard) to withdraw this flawed Bill and to introduce one that follows the unanimous advice of the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration.