

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, November 23, 1984

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. David Berger (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to hear that this Government, following the example of its predecessor, has decided to further reduce immigration levels for 1985. It is a tragedy for our country as a whole and for the thousands of people who would like to settle in Canada.

The present act and the immigration levels set each year are based on the false assumption that immigration ought to depend on the state of the economy. This is merely a pretext to close the gates. We are trying to stimulate the economy in every possible way, and Canadians should know that immigrants create jobs. They bring with them a very special genius which is their determination to succeed. They want to show that their adopted country was right to admit them. Since 1982, we have in effect closed our doors to independent immigrants who do not have pre-arranged employment and are not entrepreneurs. These people often have relatives in Canada but may not enter the country because they are over 20 or 21.

I hope the day will come when the Minister of Employment and Immigration will be worthy of her title and stop acting like a border guard.

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[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS

CHILE—PLIGHT OF PSYCHIATRIST, DR. FANNY POLLAROLO

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile held its 11th anniversary in September, celebrating the blood-bath in which it drowned half a century of constitutional democratic government in Chile. Canada's ambassador joined in the celebrations, thus making Canada party to the vicious repression that Pinochet has renewed during the last three weeks of government terror.

Over 1,100 people have been arrested, and 467 people have been exiled internally. That means that they have been banished to isolated towns where they lack family, means of livelihood, and medical care. In other words, that is a sentence of slow death. Police have ignored habeas corpus orders made by the courts, have apparently killed one prisoner by beating, and have arrested 11 civil rights lawyers. Dr. Fanny Pollarolo, an internationally-known psychiatrist, was seized from a taxi and disappeared. In addition, 8,000 people have been arrested in police raids on the poor districts.

I call on the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) to censure Canada's ambassador for implicitly endorsing such systematic terror and violation of human rights, and to demand information as to the whereabouts and well-being of Dr. Fanny Pollarolo.

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[Translation]

TRANSPORT

LIFTBRIDGE MALFUNCTION AT VALLEYFIELD, P.Q.

Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw to the attention of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) and the House a serious incident that occurred in my riding a few days ago.

The liftbridge over the St. Lawrence Seaway at Valleyfield is now stuck half-way.

According to the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, the bridge cannot be made operational again before the middle of December.

As a result, road traffic between the two shores of the Seaway is blocked as well as all traffic on a waterway that is extremely important to the Canadian economy.

Mr. Speaker, the economic repercussions are obvious.

However, there is also the social impact, because for all practical purposes, most of my riding is now cut off from the services it usually depends on, and especially the Valleyfield hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the Minister that this problem is not a recent one. The bridge has been out of commission in the past, for more or less extended periods, and I am sure that unless the Minister intervenes this time, there will be another recurrence.