HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, December 11, 1985

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1405)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 22

[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

UNEMPLOYMENT IN CAPE BRETON

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my concern, indeed outrage, over the situation confronting my province, particularly the Island of Cape Breton. Yesterday we had an opportunity to debate a host of issues of particular importance to Atlantic Canadians. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) admitted in Question Period yesterday as well that the economic policies he put in place are not working in Atlantic Canada, particularly in my constituency of Cape Breton-East Richmond. One year ago there were approximately 14,000 people unemployed in that area. Today, as a result of Government policy, there are an additional 4,000 unemployed. The unemployment rate has risen to an all-time high of 24.2 per cent, surpassing, unfortunately, that of the Province of Newfoundland.

We continue to hear cabinet Ministers from Atlantic Canada saying yes, the economic policies of their Government which they have put in place will assist those of us who reside in Atlantic Canada, only to hear their Prime Minister disagree—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member's time has expired.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

DELAY IN ESTABLISHING NATIONAL TOBACCO MARKETING AGENCY

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, this week more than 900 tobacco farmers from Quebec, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia came to Parliament Hill to demonstrate in favour of a national tobacco marketing agency. The Conservative Government's failure to provide these farmers with the right to form a marketing agency is yet another broken election promise. After more than a year the Government continues to delay while the tobacco farmers' livelihood is threatened.

The Minister says he will ensure that the existing provincial boards will reach an agreement with the manufacturers. This is exactly what they had last year, and it is not good enough. These farmers need a national agency to bargain on their behalf, an agency with power to restrict production and to restrict imports of tobacco. They do not need to be locked in a room under the old rules until they give in to the manufacturers. They do not need to be threatened by the riot squad. This latest Conservative tactic is too reminiscent of South Africa.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Althouse: It also reminds us of how the military dictatorship of Argentina governed that country. Under the guise of maintaining normality they suppressed wage demands, removed most of the controls on foreign investment, and crushed public demonstrations with shows of military force. This is regretfully a type of action which our Government now appears to be embracing. These are not normal times for farmers, but they deserve a lot better than threats.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

DEFINITIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Guy Ricard (Laval): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was International Human Rights Day, as announced by the United Nations Organization.

The day before, I had the privilege of presenting a motion on behalf of the Government, expressing recognition for the efforts of Raoul Wallenberg to save hundreds of innocent Jews, men, women and children, from genocide during the Second World War.

Mr. Speaker, the meaning of the word "human rights" may vary, depending on the person who uses them. To some people, these terms are closely linked to the politics of an oppressive regime, of pseudo-liberation organizations which typically engage in violence, assassination attempts and crimes of all kinds. To others, they represent the basic freedoms, the freedom to be, to act, to speak and to worship.

To me, these words also mean the right to life, growth and self-determination.

Unfortunately, too many peoples are helpless to defend their rights and remain deprived of those rights. However, Mr. Speaker, the day will come when people of goodwill will force