

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION

INQUIRY CONCERNING SIX SOVIET PRISONERS DETAINED IN AFGHANISTAN

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The Minister is of course aware that six Soviet prisoners being held by the Afghan authorities are probably about to be executed, following a decision made by her department and the Department of External Affairs. These prisoners were about to be granted asylum by Canada as a result of representations by a Toronto lawyer. However, the Government has now reversed its decision and, today, is refusing unconditionally to grant them asylum. Could the Minister justify before the House a decision that could cost the lives of six people?

[English]

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I can inform the Hon. Member that no application was ever made for those people.

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MEDICAL CARE

COSTS OF TRANSPORTATION TO SECURE HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The Canada Health Act states that all Canadians should have reasonable access to health services without undue financial barriers, yet thousands of Canadians are denied access to the specialized treatment they require because they live in areas which are outside the major metropolitan centres and cannot afford the transportation costs to those centres. In light of the Prime Minister's recent reaffirmation of the universality of health care, would the Minister commit himself and his Government to eliminating this long-standing inequality by changing the regulations that currently prevent federal health funds from being spent on medically-necessary travel?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member relates a concern which is outside the agreements on the so-called insured services that is, services which are agreed to be cost-shared between the provinces and the federal Government. I can tell the Hon. Member that I have had one meeting with my provincial counterparts. We did not explore that issue, but in general terms we have agreed to sit down and take a look at the best manner in which we can preserve not only the present health care system but also future considerations.

REQUEST THAT MINISTERS DISCUSS ISSUE

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, would the Minister agree to place the subject of medically

Point of Order—Mr. Deans

necessary travel on the agenda for the next meeting with his provincial counterparts?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I will give that suggestion consideration. I would also point out to the Member that the delivery of health care is within the purview of the provinces, and we will give full consideration when looking at that issue.

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PETITIONS

TABLING OF REPORTS OF CLERK OF PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petitions, with the exception of one, presented by Hon. Members on November 13, 1984, meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

CPR LEVEL CROSSING IN OSHAWA, ONT.

Mr. Speaker: I regret to inform the House that the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) does not meet the Standing Orders as to form.

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● (1500)

POINT OF ORDER

ALLEGED CITATION OF REPORT BY MR. WILSON (ETOBICOKE CENTRE)—RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: I am now ready to rule on the point of order raised by the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) on November 13. The Hon. Member alleged that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), in answering a question from the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent), quoted from an official document and therefore had an obligation to table that document.

Having carefully examined the exchanges which took place between the Hon. Member for Oshawa and the Minister of Finance, it is evident to me that the Minister, while referring to a departmental memorandum, did not in fact quote from it. He stated that the memorandum was "statistically insignificant", and added that it indicated a marginal positive increase in employment for 1985 and a marginal negative impact on unemployment for 1986. This, I submit, may be a reference or a paraphrase, but it does not constitute a quotation. Therefore, the Minister is under no obligation to table it as is made clear in Citation 327(3) of Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, which states:

A public document referred to, but not cited or quoted by a Minister, need not be tabled.

Citation 327(5) adds:

To be cited, a document must be quoted or specifically used to influence debate.