

direction because having a gun must be a privilege and not a right, and in order to obtain a gun surely people should be able to prove their fitness, should be able to comply with the fitness test, plus produce the recommendation of guarantors with regard to their fitness to have a gun. That is only right and proper.

The expansion of the registration of restricted weapons, which will include pistols, automatic guns, sawed off guns, and Saturday night specials, is welcome, and so is the requirement of a test. The test is the protection of life, but allows the lawful occupation, authorized target shooting, and bona fide collecting. I could not agree more with the expansion with regard to registered guns because it was pointed out very effectively by the hon. member for New Westminster yesterday that in Canada only 10 per cent of murders are committed with registered firearms, whereas in the United States where they do not have registration of firearms more than 50 per cent of all murders are committed with firearms.

I hope that the three year phasing in period concerning licensing, educational programs, and research programs can be stepped up so that all Canadians can become fully aware of the problem.

When I hear some hon. members speak about the unwieldy and bureaucratic procedures which may be adopted for licensing guns I am inclined to think that they are nit picking and failing to recognize that the main purpose of the legislation is to control the availability of guns and to impose responsibility upon the public with regard to firearms. I hope that the licensing provisions will bring with them the necessity of a competency test, because every hunting season there are senseless deaths because of the incompetence of people who have control of guns. This not only applies with regard to the hunting season but also with regard to the accidental deaths which occur in homes.

It seems to me that the Minister of Justice and the committee should study the approach which has been adopted in England where there are strict requirements concerning licensing and registration, because here in Canada there is a sharp difference between people who own guns in the city and people who own guns in the country. I am led to believe that in England people who have guns, live in cities, and belong to gun clubs, obtain their licenses, and their guns are kept at gun clubs. They are not permitted to be taken home and left in closets or other places in the home, something which increases the availability of guns and the possibility of their misuse. I think we should give that some study and give it a try. Mr. Speaker, may I call it ten o'clock?

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

Adjournment Debate

IMMIGRATION—ADMITTANCE OF MEMBERS OF PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION TO HABITAT CONFERENCE— GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Andras) said in the House of Commons on November 18, 1975, that members of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and I quote:

● (2200)

... who are not themselves known terrorists are not denied ministerial permits. They require them and they are granted when the person concerned is invited by a reputable Canadian organization and if the visit is to be a short and specific period.

In other words the policy of the government as stated by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration last November 18 was that PLO members who were known terrorists would not be granted ministerial permits to enter Canada for any reason or any purpose.

However, on December 22, 1975, Canada entered into an agreement with the United Nations regarding arrangements for Habitat, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, planned to take place in Vancouver later this year. Article II of the agreement says that "participation should be open to the following upon invitation or designation by the Secretary General". It goes on to list not only article II(A) "Representatives of States", but also article II(E) "Observers from national liberation movements and organizations entitled to participate in the conference". The latter would include the PLO.

Article XVII of that agreement states:

All participants referred to in article II above and all other persons performing functions in connection with the conference, who are not nationals of Canada, shall be granted visas and entry permits, where required, free of charge and as speedily as possible, so as to permit the applicant to participate in the conference without undue inconvenience.

There is no reservation whatsoever by Canada in this agreement of the right to exclude anyone listed in article II(E), even on the grounds that they are known terrorists and therefore clearly ineligible for entry into Canada under Canadian immigration law and the government's policy for its administration.

But what about Bill C-85 which the House approved some weeks ago? This bill gave the Minister of Manpower and Immigration the authority to refuse to allow visitors into the country without first having formal deportation proceedings and without giving reasons for such exclusion. This bill applies for the period ending next December. But the bill states that the minister "may" use this authority; he is not bound to do so. It is at his discretion.

The minister's use of this discretion will obviously be subject to and limited by the commitment the government made to the United Nations last December 22 when it signed the agreement to hold Habitat in Canada. The wording of that agreement is such that it obliges the government to admit even those the government considers to be known terrorists if they are invited or designated by the Secretary General of the United Nations to attend. The clear words of the agreement seem to clash with the answer given by the government House leader to my question in the House on March 1 when, as Acting Prime Minister on that date, he said: