

S. O. 21

In these circumstances is a stable or lower population really practical? The time for decision is drawing near.

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● (1405)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

U.S.S.R.—VIOLATIONS OF UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION
REGULATIONS

Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, Canadians who are constantly worried about the welfare of friends and relatives living in eastern bloc countries must also live with the frustration of knowing that their efforts to keep in touch by mail can be disrupted by Soviet authorities who do not deliver letters and gift parcels, but merely return them to the Canadian senders without explanation.

This violates the Universal Postal Union Regulations. However, Canadian postal officials say that they cannot investigate unless the sender provides full details. My constituents say that to do so could expose a friend or relative to the risk of retaliation.

It is encouraging to know that the Government of Canada has raised the matter in bilateral meetings with the Soviets, as well as at meetings of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Under the terms of the Helsinki Accord, the 35 member states of the CSCE have a mutual obligation to maintain open lines of communication among their citizens. This obligation is not being met, and the Government of Canada should be doing all it can to see that the eastern bloc respects the integrity of postal and other forms of communication.

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[*Translation*]

AIR TRANSPORT

VAL-D'OR REGIONAL AIRPORT

Mr. Guy St. Julien (Abitibi): On June 5, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) I attended the official opening of the new Val-d'Or regional air terminal in Abitibi-Témiscamingue, a project which local residents had been waiting for for 14 years.

The new air terminal is a major component of the regional airport redevelopment project valued at more than \$10 million. The project got under way in late 1984 and I did appreciate the work of the airport director, Mr. Daniel Bleau, and of Transport Canada in this case.

With respect to air transport, the Val-d'Or regional airport is the turntable of the entire development of Abitibi-Témiscamingue, James Bay, and Northern Quebec. Indeed this is what prompted the Conservative Government of Canada and Transport Canada to invest \$10 million.

The main air carriers are: Air Canada, Canadian International, Nordair Metro, Quebecair Inter, Voyageur Airways, Are Creebec and Hélicoptères Abitibi.

Mr. Speaker, this new air terminal meets the needs and wishes expressed by the business circles and the traveling public of Abitibi-Témiscamingue and the northern regions of Quebec.

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[*English*]

THE CONSTITUTION

LINGUISTIC RIGHTS

Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, my Leader, the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent), today introduced a motion before the House that seeks to advance the rights of northerners and aboriginal peoples.

One, if not the most important, indicator of one's rights, is the ability to protect and enhance one's own language.

[*Translation*]

The people of Quebec were right to identify the language as being the true spirit which reflects a distinct society.

[*English*]

For the aboriginal people of Canada, the indicator is not only a matter of principle, it is one of necessity.

Of Canada's 53 indigenous languages, it has been estimated that only three have strong chances of survival into the next decade. The Museum of Man study found that eight languages are now facing extinction, 29 are in a state of deterioration, and 13 are moderately endangered.

The three languages given the best odds of survival are Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut.

The languages found to be in the most danger, measured by the rate of change in the number of speakers and the age of the speakers, are those in British Columbia. They include the Haida, Tlingit and Kootenay languages.

On behalf of my Party I call upon all Members of the House to support the motion presented today. For those of us fortunate enough to have our native language not only thrive, but also enjoy constitutional protection, we must make every effort to ensure that the aboriginal people of Canada will retain their languages for future generations.