

Government will run into a great number of skeptical Canadians. Canadians will no longer take the words of the Government at face value. They will not do that. They will be prepared to accept the promises of the Government, but they will be duly skeptical.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): When debate resumes at 3 p.m. the Hon. Member will have seven minutes left in which to conclude his remarks. That will be followed by a 10 minute period for questions and comments.

It now being 2 p.m. the House will proceed to Statements by Members pursuant to S. O. 21.

• (1400)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 21

[English]

ABORTION

RIGHTS OF UNBORN CHILDREN—CALL FOR INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, we now have the intolerable situation that there is no federal law in place to protect in any way the rights of the unborn.

Because the right to life is obviously the supreme and highest of all human rights, the recent decision by the Supreme Court of Canada places an urgent requirement, not only on the Government which has the lead responsibility, but also on each and every parliamentarian to see to it that good legislation is passed.

As Members of Parliament we now have at last a rare opportunity, at the invitation of the Supreme Court, to pass legislation to protect the life and the rights of the unborn fetus. I want to make it clear again that I personally am opposed to abortion. But while it is obvious to me that the process of life starts at conception, I am sure that the courts will continue to argue over the legal definition as to when a human life begins, and our legislation will have to anticipate this problem.

However, I am deeply concerned that the Government may decide not to act, or that it may delay. Even if it does bring in legislation, there are dangerous signs that it will imitate a number of other countries, by only limiting protection of the fetus until after a fixed time such as 20 weeks following conception. Such legal rigidity would be tragic because it would deny the full protection of the law to the fetus at an earlier stage. We cannot afford to delay as we are talking about the survival of human life. I call upon the Government to give us an immediate commitment to a timeframe for action.

S. O. 21

ABORTION

RIGHTS OF UNBORN CHILDREN—CALL FOR INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

Mr. Gerry St. Germain (Mission—Port Moody): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same subject which is an issue of urgent and pressing necessity. Since the recent Supreme Court decision striking down the abortion law, Canada has become the only civilized nation in the world which has no legislation protecting the unborn child.

Yet a recent Gallup poll of Canadians revealed that 53 per cent of Canadians want some legislation to protect the fetus. They are looking to the federal Government for leadership on this emotional issue.

I recognize and support the current Government on the process of consultation with the provinces prior to the introduction of legislation. Let us move with speed and deliberation. Let us take the lead and demonstrate to Canadians and to the world that we, as a nation, have the courage to balance the rights of women with the protection of human life. No group has unlimited rights.

Every civilized nation will ultimately be measured by how it treats its most vulnerable, those who cannot speak for themselves and who ask for nothing but a chance. I urge the Government to act with courage and compassion.

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ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

CALL FOR MINISTER'S RESIGNATION

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to insist on the resignation of the Minister responsible for aboriginal affairs. The Minister has broken the trust relationship with Canada's first citizens.

The 1973 ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada on the Nishga case brought Canada into negotiations on the comprehensive claim to the Nass Valley. The Minister has now crushed those negotiations and refuses to act in good faith.

Since 1940 the Lubicon Band has sought the respect and assistance of the federal Crown for the historic lands of the Lubicon people. The Minister has chosen to fund the Daisi-shawa Corporation to log the very lands that the Lubicon seek, in contravention of Cabinet requirements for an impact evaluation. This is bad faith.

Since 1985 the Lytton and Mount Currie Bands have sought to meet with the Minister for assistance in preparing their case on the Stein Valley. Even today they are here in Ottawa and the Minister has refused to see them. This is bad faith.

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia has encouraged aboriginal people in British Columbia to stand up for their rights. The first citizens of Canada cannot put