

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, September 25, 1985

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1405)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 22

[English]

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

MITEL CORPORATION—DANGER OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise today with regard to the situation concerning Mitel and the subsequent infusion of some \$300 million into that corporation which is located here in the Ottawa region. I must say that we are very concerned about all the issues surrounding this particular bid by British Telecommunications and the amount of money that it is going to be putting into that company.

There have been many, many lay-offs, both in Kanata and in Quebec, in regard to this particular company. At the same time as workers are being laid off we read in the newspapers where substantial salary raises have gone to senior members of the management of Mitel Corporation. Yet when we question the Minister of State for Small Businesses (Mr. Bissonnette) regarding the agreement between Mitel and the Government of Canada with regard to the transfer of technology we are not given any assurances that that particular agreement will be in place after the takeover takes place.

As a Member of Parliament I am very concerned that if that commitment, which was negotiated by the previous Government and the management of Mitel, is not continued, that the transfer of technology will take place and it will leave Canada, thereby causing further and greater job losses to this particular community here in the Ottawa region. We don't have any answers—

Mr. Speaker: I advise the Hon. Member that his time has expired.

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AUTHORS' ROYALTIES

PAYMENT FOR PUBLIC USE OF LIBRARY BOOKS

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the announcement of the Minister of Communications (Mr. Masse) of an agreement with the provinces for a plan for payment for public use of library books. This has long

been a demand of authors, as a means of compensation for the loss of royalties that they would otherwise receive from book sales.

The federal Government will be providing \$2.5 million a year for this plan, assuming cabinet approval. The announcement constitutes a moral victory for the artists and their lobbying organizations.

Economically, however, this proposal is far from making up the \$100 million lost to the arts and cultural community in budget cuts. Even if 5,000 writers benefit from this plan, that is only \$500 a year on average. Yet the CBC cuts alone took \$75 million, costing these same writers jobs, free lance contracts, and professional opportunities. Thus I join with the artists attending a conference on culture in Halifax this past weekend in calling for the full restoration of arts funding and, let me be perfectly clear, to the independent arts agencies.

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THE LATE VACLAV PIVRNEC

DEATH IN CZECHOSLOVAKIAN JAIL

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, I regret to inform the House of the death of Vaclav Pivrnec who died in a cell in a Czechoslovakian jail.

Mr. Pivrnec was the manager of Omni Trade activities in Canada until he was forced to return to Czechoslovakia. When he returned to Czechoslovakia his wife Jana and their two children declared and were granted refugee status here.

Mr. Pivrnec attempted to return to Canada, but was prevented by the Czech Government from doing so. Indeed, he was convicted by the Czechoslovakian state of the offence of trying to join his wife and children in Canada, and has, in fact, been separated from them for nearly four years.

The House will recall that a petition bearing nearly 500 names of Canadians was presented last Wednesday to the House calling upon the Czechoslovakian Government to release Mr. Pivrnec. Unknown to me and to this House, Mr. Pivrnec was arrested again by security forces as a result of protests made on his behalf, and was under an inquisition from September 15 until he died last Friday.

His plight and his concerns have been the subject of our Government's many representations to the Czechoslovakian Government. Czechoslovakia refuses to abide by the Helsinki Accords and refuses to treat its citizens with any sense of humanity. I call upon the Government to curtail immediately the activities of Omni Trade and other Czechoslovakian companies doing business in Canada as these companies are essen-