

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, September 9, 1987

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 21

[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

CALL FOR STRICTER LAW ENFORCEMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, in 1985 Environment Canada laid 18 charges for violations under Section 33 of the Fisheries Act. There were nine successful prosecutions for a total of \$33,800 in fines. In 1986 there were 18 charges, 12 prosecutions and \$93,950 in fines. The record of other federal Departments which administer environmental legislation is equally uninspiring. Fines are miniscule. Threat of prosecution is unlikely. Environmental charges are just seen by some as another way of doing business.

This trend must be reversed. Fines for violators of the law must be raised. In addition, the federal Government must make an effort to educate potential violators. It must provide funds for adequate inspectors, enforcers and field personnel, and demonstrate a will to prosecute offenders.

Environment Canada and the Minister have to move with strict enforcement and tougher laws to protect human health and our natural resources.

* * *

[Translation]

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL

LITERACY PROGRAM IN PENITENTIARIES

Mrs. Carole Jacques (Montreal—Mercier): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was World Literacy Day. Illiteracy is a serious problem, even here in Canada. In our society, one out of five adults has to face that problem.

In Canadian penitentiaries, half of the inmate population cannot read nor write, a problem to which Solicitor General Kelleher is giving very serious consideration. In an attempt to resolve the problem, he has launched a comprehensive literacy program in penitentiaries. By participating in this program,

inmates increase their chances of successfully reintegrating society. They take every available means to learn how to read employment offers, how to answer questionnaires, and how to meet such simple requirements as knowing how to read instructions concerning a job.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, allow me to emphasize the early success of Mr. Kelleher's initiative, as mentioned in last Friday's *Globe and Mail*: the number of inmates who were awarded a diploma during the first three months of 1987 exceeds the total number of those who graduated during the twelve months of 1986.

This excellent initiative of the Government deserves recognition, and I take this opportunity to commend the Solicitor General for his interest in this issue.

* * *

• (1405)

[English]

HORTICULTURE

PLIGHT OF PRAIRIE BEEKEEPERS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to report that things have not been improving for the Canadian beekeeper. Last fall, Health and Welfare Canada introduced a standard of one part per million for the commonly used anti-biotic sulfathiazole. This applies to shipments within Canada and to Europe.

Meanwhile the Province of Quebec has its own limit of just 0.2 parts per million. In early July the standard for U.S. exports was changed to match that in Quebec.

Producers are confused by all these different tolerance levels. They are also confounded by the different laboratory reports coming out of Portage, Calgary, and Ottawa. Prairie beekeepers have been virtually shut out of the U.S. market because of American subsidies. Much of their 1986 honey crop remains unsold. Since it was produced under the old rules much of it cannot meet the new U.S. and Quebec standards. Saskatchewan beekeepers, particularly those in the Nipawin area, seem to be the hardest hit.

I call upon the Government to straighten things out in the industry, while reminding it of the industry's previous request for funding to offset American subsidies.