

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, November 16, 1984

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[Translation]

SOCIAL SECURITY

INQUIRY ON WHY PENSION MODIFICATION CONFINED TO WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, the throne speech pronounced on November 5 of this year contained a number of glowing and vague promises, but the likelihood of their ever being kept became more than uncertain when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) made his economic statement three days later.

Let me give an example. In the Speech from the Throne the following was said, and I quote:

My government is determined to ensure that social justice in Canada keeps pace with the changing needs and circumstances of our people.

In the economic statement, however, the Conservative Government announced that it would extend the allowance program to spouses between ages 60 and 64, but only to widows and widowers.

One may well ask why only widows and widowers. What about separated and single individuals who are in need?

If we look at the figures published by Statistics Canada in 1981, widows and widowers constitute only 4.7 per cent of the Canadian population, while people who are separated, divorced or single make up 36.9 per cent.

The Government will have to revise its position and take into consideration the groups it has overlooked. Apparently, the Conservative Government does not have all the facts.

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[English]

POLITICAL PARTIES

LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA—ELECTION AFTERMATH

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, the dog fights and recriminations between members of the decimated Liberal Party are wondrous to behold. Having been justly turfed out of office by the Canadian electorate, they now

seem bent on destroying what remains of that Party by internal bickering and in-house squabbles such as that between the former Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the present Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) over which of the two were more directly culpable for their crushing defeat.

All of this would be rather humorous were it not for the fact that the parliamentary system of government requires a responsible Opposition, something which we, unfortunately, do not have at the present time. In all likelihood the Liberal Party will, over the next few years, disappear as a political force with which to be reckoned. Those few remaining Liberals, however, can find some solace. They will all go down in the history books as the last living fossils of a species which has outlived its usefulness.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NICARAGUA—CANADIAN POSITION

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, a *New York Times* story exposes the falsity of Canada's policy toward Nicaragua. It reported that a Canadian naval ship is taking part in a 19-day exercise in the Caribbean, with 25 U.S. naval ships, infantry, airborne and helicopter troops of the United States, as well as two Dutch, one German, and one British ship.

Canada professes neutralism, objectivity, and support of the Contadora peace negotiations. Yet Canada is silent about Reagan's flights over Managua, Reagan's invasion of Nicaraguan territorial waters, Reagan's funding of the Contras, and Reagan's lying story about the alleged MIGS.

Against their protests, Canada directs Canadians living in Nicaragua to register with the U.S. embassy, the embassy of the country which will invade Nicaragua. Canada sends a Canadian warship to join in manoeuvres in the Caribbean to intimidate Nicaragua, or to help prepare for the invasion by Reagan. Shame on Canada's two-faced foreign policy!

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ENERGY

CONVERSION OF MOTOR VEHICLES TO PROPANE FUEL USE

Mr. Allan Pietz (Welland): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address the House today on a matter which I feel is of importance to consumers as well as producers of sources of energy. That subject is alternate fuels. I, like many Canadians, was encouraged by the tone and direction set out by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) in last week's economic statement.