

Some Hon. Members: Now.

An Hon. Member: At the next sitting of the House.

Mr. Fretz: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In the absence of the Minister of State for Mines (Mr. Layton), I should like it clearly recorded that he would have voted with the Government had he been here.

Some Hon. Members: Shame, shame!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Ambition has no bounds. It being 1.15 p.m. I do now leave the chair until 2 p.m.

At 1.15 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[Translation]

CHARTER OF RIGHTS

AID TO LITIGANTS

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Four years ago, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Government gave Canada the Canadian Constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which express in legal terms the values we cherish, the values we want to protect and leave to our children and grandchildren.

[English]

Unfortunately, because the present Government does not have the political will to address discrimination forthrightly based on employment equity, reason of accommodation, equal opportunity, amongst other vital issues, ordinary Canadians will have to fight to equality in the courts and on the front pages of the newspapers.

We note that corporations have been the most successful users of the Charter in their own interests. They have the money to take the Government to court in lengthy, costly court challenges. While business can deduct the costs, individuals cannot. There are 55 cases waiting for financial help to start the process toward justice. The federal Government has set up a fund to help alleviate financial hardship for selected court challenges I ask—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Sixty seconds.

S.O. 21

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CANADA-UNITED STATES EXTRADITION TREATY—CASE OF LEONARD PELTIER

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago Leonard Peltier was extradited from Canada on the basis of information provided by the United States Government. The U.S. has now admitted that the information was false. This constitutes a treaty fraud between our nations, and should we sleep on this case we can surely expect a repetition in the future.

It is the responsibility of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) to remedy this through his counterpart in the United States, and of the Secretary of States for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) to do the same.

Leonard Peltier is an Ojibway Lakota Indian who sought political asylum in Canada. For 10 years he has been held in U.S. prisons serving two consecutive life sentences for crimes it now appears he did not commit.

The U.S. Congress has charged that evidence brought forward on the Peltier case clearly indicates "government abuse of the investigative process, suppression of evidence, and falsehood".

Religious leaders from around the world, four winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, 55 Members of Congress, and many others, have appealed for a new trial for Leonard Peltier. The least we can do as a House of Commons is call for a new and fair trial. As a nation we should also call for the return of Leonard Peltier. He was fraudulantly extradited—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Sixty seconds.

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ABORTION

PRACTICES OF APPROVAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Lawrence I. O'Neil (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Private Members' Business is now considering my Private Members' Bill C-254, an Act to provide legal counsel for unborn children. This legislation has become even more relevant with revelations this week of more evidence about the functioning of therapeutic abortion committees. Questions have been raised about whether applications are considered in fact or whether they are just rubber-stamped.

This issue is a difficult one for many Canadians. There are millions who occupy one side of the debate or the other. It is for precisely this reason that it must be addressed. The abortion approval process is a matter that requires clarification. Mothers, doctors, and child protection agencies must know the requirements of Canada's Criminal Code on this issue. It is clear that practices have developed which are well outside the spirit of the Criminal Code. Many doctors may be