

of calling. Under our House rules, these motions will drop the next time they are called.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Item No. 4 in the name of the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. Francis); shall the item stand?

Mr. Herbert: No, sir.

An hon. Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Stand at the request of the government.

Item No. 11 in the name of the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Gillies); shall the item stand?

Mr. Herbert: No.

An hon. Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Stand at the request of the government.

● (1702)

Item 21; shall the item stand?

An hon. Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Stand at the request of the government.

Item No. 24; shall the item stand?

An hon. Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Stand at the request of the government.

Item No. 26 in the name of the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall); shall the item stand?

An hon. Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Stand at the request of the government.

I call item No. 27.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

FREE ACCESS FOR BIBLES SENT TO U.S.S.R.

Mr. Bob Wenman (Fraser Valley West) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Canadian delegation at the Belgrade Conference on the Helsinki Accords should gain guarantees from the Government of the U.S.S.R. that individuals be permitted to send or personally bring with them bibles and other religious publications when visiting friends or relatives in the U.S.S.R.

He said: During the past four years I have often expressed my constituents' concerns on material matters such as inflation, unemployment, and the economy. I have supported, opposed, and proposed programs that sought to provide the

Bibles

basic life support structures of food, clothing and shelter; programs and structures that have in fact met all of our basic needs and, in fact, most of our materialistic greeds, but all for what vain purpose? Surely this House, this parliament, is preoccupied with materialism, and too seldom do we turn our attention to man's inner spiritual being.

Today the subject I should like to deal with is that of religious liberty. Christian religious liberty is biblically rooted firstly in God's nature and secondly in His dealings with persons. Freedom is represented as a gift of God through grace extended to man throughout the New Testament. Freedom is in fact rooted in God. God gives man the capacity to receive and experience the inner peace of freedom. For a man to be truly free is for a man to be at one with God, for freedom is where God is present.

Paul wrote:

Where the spirit of the Lord is present there is freedom . . . Freedom is what we have—Christ has set us free.

By Christian definition persons reconciled to God are therefore free persons. Christians have therefore demonstrated throughout history that even in the face of persecution, prison, and martyrdom, a Christian can be free and at peace through God's love and the commitment of Jesus Christ for eternal life.

God's revelation of Himself to man is made on the basis of freedom. Jesus Christ came not with wordly majesty and power to force and subjugate man to His will. He came and chose to make Himself known instead freely through love. God's approach is, "Listen, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his house and eat with him and he will eat with me." The freedom which God has given in Christ implies a free response to God's love.

For faith to be faith it must be a voluntary personal and free act born out of freedom. God does not compel faith, for faith itself is a gift of God and is by its very nature a free and voluntary act.

Though this inner Christian freedom does not require an external civil or political freedom, civil and political freedom is desirable primarily for creating the kind of environment that will allow an unhindered expression of religious faith and commitment without civil political advantages or disadvantages. It is this environment that allows the free flow of religious information and free flow of bibles throughout the entire world that is of concern, because it is this inner Christian life that is the basis of external or social religious liberty. This external freedom is thereby the outward expression of that inner freedom with which God set us free. By its very nature external force or interference in religious matters is a denial of religious liberty and thus God's purpose for man. The human right to religious liberty, is therefore, first of all the right to give outward expression to or manifestation of the inner freedom one has found in God.

While the exercise of one's conscience must be limited by the protection of another's rights and the maintenance of a just social order, even these limits must not be imposed arbitrarily