

Government with a view to finding an arrangement agreeable to both language communities.

Today, Canadians are both proud of and pleased with an agreement whose effect will be to make the Province of Manitoba officially bilingual. Basically, the agreement recognizes both English and French as official languages in Manitoba and states that it is binding on the Manitoba Legislature to print and publish its statutes, regulations and other official documents in both official languages.

As a Franco-Ontarian, I wish to conclude by congratulating Franco-Manitobans, and I also wish to reiterate my invitation to the Province of Ontario to follow Manitoba's example by generously offering the same constitutional guarantees to its official language minority.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CYPRUS—CALL FOR REASSESSMENT OF CANADIAN POSITION

Mr. Gus Mitges (Grey-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, in December, 1982, when it came to a purely humanitarian vote at the United Nations Third Committee on Human Rights dealing with Cypriot missing persons, Canada abstained on the excuse that it participates in the peace-keeping forces in Cyprus despite the fact that the greater majority of other peace-keeping participants in Cyprus, such as Austria, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Ireland, voted in favour.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) has reaffirmed, in a letter dated March 8, 1983, that Canada does indeed recognize only the administration headed by President Spyros Kyprianou as the sole legitimate authority for Cyprus, and does not recognize the self proclaimed Turkish federated state of Kibris which occupies almost 40 per cent of Cyprus seized by Turkey in 1974.

I believe, Madam Speaker, the time has come for Canada to stand on its own two feet, get off the fence and reassess its stand on the issue of Cyprus.

Canada's actions and voting pattern should clearly differentiate between the victim, Cyprus, and the aggressor, Turkey, in this dispute. Moreover, Canada should stop pussyfooting and exert strong pressures within NATO to convince Turkey to withdraw its occupation forces from Cyprus so that Greek and Turkish Cypriots can negotiate freely concerning their future rather than under the threat of a gun.

S.O. 21

CANADA POST CORPORATION

REMOVAL OF ASBESTOS FROM OTTAWA TERMINAL—RISKS TO HEALTH OF EMPLOYEES

Mr. Lyle S. Kristiansen (Kootenay West): Madam Speaker, next Thursday the long awaited removal of asbestos materials from throughout the main Ottawa post office terminal will begin. Work was to commence today, but in the face of union pressure and threats of employee job action, Canada Post retreated under fire and postponed action for one more week. The hazardous work of removal, with its consequent loosening and dispersal of cancer inducing asbestos fibres within the work environment, will continue for approximately one year and, despite the protests of postal workers and their unions, this work must take place while 1,100 to 1,200 employees stay on the job within the building.

Despite assurances from management, this insensitive action by Canada Post, operating within the inflexible restraints of Government policy, cannot help but pose additional and unnecessary risks to the health and life of hundreds of public employees.

About a year ago these employees were promised a new building, free of asbestos. This pledge was broken. This promise was then replaced by a commitment to relocate the bulk of the postal terminal activities to other buildings during the period of asbestos removal. Now this promise, too, has been scrapped. The employees and their union have simply been told that "business as usual is the bottom line", and that jerry built partitions, air pressure, and monitoring of hazard levels will be the only protective measures taken, a totally unacceptable response to such a dangerous risk to workers' lives and health.

I urge the Government to intervene and relocate the Post Office's operations during removal.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

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THE CONSTITUTION

ABSENCE OF CRITERIA FOR CREATING NEW PROVINCES

Mr. Bill Yurko (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, I want to put forth for a second time a matter that I believe is urgent. Under the new Canadian Constitution new Provinces can only be formed and provincial boundaries can only be extended with the approval of seven Provinces having 50 per cent of the Canadian population. Any Province can accept or veto any changes to its boundaries under Section 43 so that the land base and resources of any particular Province can be protected. However, there exist no criteria for creating new Provinces or for changing the boundaries of any Province. Parliament should therefore appoint a Royal Commission or a joint federal-provincial committee at the earliest opportunity to recommend basic criteria for such changes.