

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Willie Littlechild (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, during the break, I had the honour to participate as a member of a Canadian delegation in a portion of this year's session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The work of the United Nations in the field of human rights has been unduly neglected. Too many Canadians are not yet aware of the importance of the universal struggle for human rights or the important role played by Canada internationally in this quest.

At this year's session, there have been resolutions on a number of countries where the human rights situations are preoccupying. Canada has co-sponsored many of these texts, and has been active in ensuring that the commission treats each situation in a balanced, considered manner. The Canadian delegation has been one of the strongest teams in Geneva and due tribute should be paid to the Department of External Affairs and the minister. At another meeting, Canada was also complimented on its leadership with regard to refugee programs.

I want to emphasize today the importance of the breakthrough made this year at the commission, which has important ramifications for future work in the international human rights field. This breakthrough is the strengthening of bonds between countries of the western group, of which Canada is a member, and countries of the eastern group. Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary have played important roles this year at the commission, in some cases voting alongside western delegations on many resolutions.

I view this as a promising sign. Human rights issues should not be considered ideological or political matters. As the barriers hindering co-operation between west and east come down, I hope that greater co-operation can be effected among all countries, in order to ensure that the high standards—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please.

S. O. 31

"WE'RE AKIN TO IRELAND"

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, for 200 years, Irish immigrants and their descendants have played a vital role in shaping the culture, economy and character of Prince Edward Island.

In recognition of this great contribution, the Government of Prince Edward Island has proclaimed that in 1990 islanders will honour our Irish heritage by celebrating the theme "We're akin to Ireland".

The year-long celebration will affirm P.E.I. as the most Irish of Canadian provinces. "We're Akin to Ireland" will be marked by festivities and heritage events, with the central theme being that of music. Plans include concerts with P.E.I. talented Celtic musicians, theatrical performances, an Irish film festival and much more.

I congratulate the various Irish associations, the P.E.I. Museum and Heritage Foundation, and the public and private sector individuals who are working to make "We're Akin to Ireland" a great success.

I invite all of you, and all Canadians, to visit this beautiful island this summer, enjoy some wonderful Irish music and culture and do your share to keep P.E.I. green—spend money!

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[Translation]

ROYAL PARDON

Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Science and Technology)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of this House the tragic case of a woman in my riding. Since 1979, Mrs. Annette Proulx, who will soon turn 75, is serving a life sentence in the Maison Gomin of Quebec City for a murder she presumably committed in 1979. Although admitting to the crime and expressing sincere regret would help her obtain royal clemency, 11 years later, Mrs. Proulx still claims she is innocent.

Considering she has spent many years in prison and that Justice Yvan Migneault, who presided at her trial, as well as the Crown attorney assigned to her case and the Correctional Service of Canada feel that Mrs. Proulx is not a threat to society, I urge the Solicitor General and