

S.O. 21

Perhaps the Liberal leadership candidates, who are so eager to criticize the record of the Leader—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member's time unfortunately has expired.

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[*Translation*]

PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION

SENATE COMMITTEE DECISION TO HEAR WITNESS

Mr. David Berger (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, it is with great regret that I heard about the recent decision of the Senate Committee to hear as a witness the PLO's official observer at the United Nations. This terrorist organization has never done anything to advance the cause of peace and has constantly resorted to terrorism and violence to further its objectives. Since 1968, thousands of moderate Palestinians who were prepared to talk with Israel have been assassinated by the PLO. In fact, to date, the PLO has killed more Palestinians than Israelis. We were all shocked by the senseless attack on forty-eight civilians in Jerusalem earlier this week. Responsibility for the attack was claimed by the Democratic Palestine Liberation Front, one of the component organizations of the PLO, and which was not condemned by the PLO.

The witness the Senate will hear tomorrow belongs to the same organization. It is an insult to the democratic traditions and institutions of our country to be having talks with representatives of a terrorist organization.

[*English*]

When I was elected to Parliament, I thought that it was to serve the law and not terrorism and violence.

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MEDICAL CARE

TRAVELLING COSTS OF SICK PEOPLE IN REMOTE REGIONS

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a health care problem experienced by thousands of Canadians living in remote regions of the country, notably the high cost of travelling to an urban area for medical care that is unavailable in isolated communities.

In recent days I have received hundreds of messages from the Thunder Bay area alone, pointing out the magnitude of this problem in the Lakehead region where some 1,000 residents a year must travel to Toronto and Winnipeg to get specialized treatment. For the period 1976 to 1982, this represents a 50 per cent increase in patients going to Toronto, and a 98 per cent increase in patients going to Winnipeg. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, many of these people must pay out of their own pockets for medically necessary trips to large urban centres or, worse, they are forced to rely on charity.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, such a situation does not represent reasonable access as defined in the Canada Health Act, nor does it meet the Act's universality requirement that insured services be provided to all residents on uniform terms and conditions.

● (1410)

The accessibility problem I am referring to, Mr. Speaker, is by no means peculiar to the Lakehead region of Ontario. Similar problems exist throughout Canada. I call on the Government to live up to the spirit of the new Canada Health Act and co-operate with the provinces to ensure that all Canadians, in both urban and rural areas, have truly reasonable and universal access to quality health care.

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[*Translation*]

INDUSTRY

FOOTWEAR QUOTAS

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond-Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, in November this year, import quotas on footwear will be lifted. Since the Canadian footwear industry employs nearly 20,000 workers, I think it is essential that our Government should support this industry. To do so, we absolutely must extend the quotas, otherwise thousands of jobs will be lost, especially in regions where the unemployment rate is extremely high, including my riding.

In 1981, this Government took the excellent initiative of setting up a remarkable program referred to as the CIRB Program. A specific portion of this program was designed for the footwear industry. Several dynamic businesses, including H.H. Brown Shoes in Richmond, took advantage of substantial grants under the program. These businesses wish to continue the trend towards modernization and are prepared to invest in order to protect existing jobs and create new ones. We must react positively to the request being made by the manufacturers, a request that is both realistic and reasonable. They want a five-year quota extension and fifty per cent of the Canadian market. Fifty per cent of the market and five additional years would consolidate existing jobs and create hundreds more. Contrary to certain claims, the interests of the Canadian consumer would be protected in such a way that they would benefit, since consumers have always benefited from a competitive market.

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[*English*]

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

TORONTO SICK CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL INQUIRY— CROSS-EXAMINATION OF WITNESSES

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to register my deepest sense of concern and unease