

*Adjournment Debate*

would be triggered in any way by those who merely disagree with their party even on some important issues.

If it did result in a rupturing of the party relationship for that member, the people of that member's district would have a right to pass judgment. They can pass judgment in favour or against the member.

I think that is a contribution to the accountability of members of Parliament against the arrogance that assumes we only know what is best for our electors in this place.

• (1800 )

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

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## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River):** Madam Speaker, on February 21 of this year, following a working visit to India's Punjab state, I asked a question in relation to Canada's position on human rights issues there.

That visit to India by three parliamentarians of this House, one of whom was myself, had three purposes. One of those purposes was a review of human rights issues in the context of the political conflict in the Punjab. The full report of that visit will be made public tomorrow, but the principal findings of that visit are that the political conflict there has generated extreme violence. For example, in the last year over 4,500 people have been killed and over the last 10 years, over 15,000 people have been killed. There is also evidence of torture of detainees by the police in that area.

In the context of that violence, there is a failure by the government of India to assure to all of its citizens the human rights set out in the international conventions to

which both Canada and India are signatories. I note that the government of India specifically excludes Amnesty International and other human rights monitoring organizations from India and consequently, we do not have internationally an objective standard of review of precisely what is happening there in very difficult circumstances.

I also would acknowledge that in that working visit the Government of India was most co-operative and helpful and did not impede our review of any of the circumstances.

My question for the Prime Minister at that time was answered by the minister for external relations. Asked whether or not Canada had made human rights part of its bilateral relations agenda with India, the minister replied that it does take human rights into consideration, both in terms of foreign aid and in terms of general policy. She did not answer specifically for the India situation or provide particulars.

The problem of convention human rights abuses in the political conflict in Punjab state bears relevance to Canadians in three ways. The first is Canada's foreign aid decisions. The second is whether or not the political circumstances there can generate large or larger numbers of political convention refugees. Third, is the right of Canadians to engage in political advocacy and dissent here without fear of unwarranted surveillance under section 2 of the CSIS act.

I asked whether the minister would agree to submit this issue of human rights accordance in India to the external affairs subcommittee on development and human rights. She did not provide an answer to that; I believe she should have. I believe that is precisely where this issue can and should be dealt with and I commend that to this House.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for External Relations and Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague has raised a question of universal concern. As we all know, the Prime Minister has shown bold leadership, putting the sensitive issue of human rights on the agenda in such forums as the Commonwealth and La Francophonie. Progress has been made, and we can hope to see much more in the future.