

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, January 21, 1983

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS

NECESSITY FOR COMMITMENT TO OBSERVANCE

Mr. Jesse P. Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I wish to make a statement pursuant to Standing Order 21. Presently the Conference on Security and Co-Operation in Europe has recessed and will resume in Madrid in February this year. At this time it is perhaps important to re-examine Canada's commitment to the principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

When the Final Act was signed in Helsinki in 1975, the 39 participating states agreed to uphold the basic principles outlined in the Final Act, principles which addressed co-operation in economic, technological, scientific and humanitarian fields.

In view of the tense international situation and the gross violations of human rights practised by many of the signatories of the Final Act, it is important that the concluding document of the Conference contain a balance between all spheres of the Final Act. Scientific, technological and economic co-operation cannot be achieved without government observance of human rights. One precludes the other. The enshrinement in our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, of human rights and rights to fundamental freedoms defines our commitment to this cause. Thus, when the concluding document is drafted, Canada should insist that human rights be one of the major foci of the document.

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AGRICULTURE

CALL FOR REMOVAL OF FARM FUEL TAX

Mr. Len Gustafson (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, I rise on an urgent matter pertaining to agricultural production in Canada. Income from agricultural production has dropped significantly in the past year. Some farm experts have projected that 1983 agricultural income will drop 28 per cent to 32 per cent while the cost of production continues to rise at the same time.

The federal Government's tax on farm fuel, amounting to over 60 cents a gallon, in my opinion is a very heavy-handed

tax on the part of the federal Government and is having a counterproductive effect on agricultural production. I would therefore call on the Government and the Cabinet to remove the federal tax on farm fuels immediately.

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[Translation]

COMMUNICATIONS

FIRST CHOICE PAY TV—TELEVISION OF PORNOGRAPHIC FILMS

Mr. Marcel Dionne (Chicoutimi): Madam Speaker, I am grateful to you for giving me the floor so that I may express my views on the screening of pornographic films on Pay TV.

First of all, I should like to commend the Minister of Communications (Mr. Fox) who has threatened to cancel First Choice's broadcasting permit if that company does not reconsider its decision to show pornographic films. I think of myself as being broadminded, yet I think that the company is insulting Canadians when it suggests that people are eager to watch pornographic TV. In my opinion also, CRTC Chairman John Meisel should have prohibited the telecasting of pornographic films by First Choice. I felt singled out when, in his latest report, the CRTC Chairman criticized Members who encourage groups or individuals who broadcast programs received via satellites. If Mr. Meisel can threaten to take legal action against people who do not comply with a given section of the legislation, can he not invoke the same legislation to ban pornographic TV? The CRTC has no qualms about discriminating against remote areas where TV and radio signals are extremely weak, and yet it shows every respect for pornographers. Women, the Canadian bishops, parents and Members of Parliament have come down openly against pornographic films on Pay TV and their opinion should be respected.

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[English]

INCOME TAX

CONDEMNATION OF PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE SPOUSAL DEDUCTION

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Madam Speaker, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women has questioned the contribution to society of a childless woman who stays at home. My constituents in Simcoe North have asked me to enlighten the Minister. These women contribute a great deal to