

ABORTION

FREE VOTE ADVOCATED ON ISSUE

Mr. Don Ravis (Saskatoon East): Mr. Speaker, since the Supreme Court decision overturned the abortion law Canada has become the only civilized nation in the world without legislation protecting the unborn child. The question of abortion is a moral issue, not a political issue, and should be treated accordingly. For this reason a free vote should be held to allow Members of Parliament to follow their consciences and express their personal views by choosing the option they believe is proper.

A recent poll shows that 60 per cent of Canadians believe that restrictions should be placed on abortion. That is a 7 per cent increase since February. Clearly, the Canadian people find the present situation unacceptable and expect this House to pass a law which is fair and responsible to both the mother and the unborn child.

We as parliamentarians must have the strength to face this issue and not seek to hide behind the guise of party politics. The question of rights for the unborn is far too important to be treated irresponsibly.

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MARINE SAFETY

EPIRBs—CALL FOR INSTALLATION ON VESSELS 10 METRES AND OVER

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands): Mr. Speaker, on May 31, 1989, the Department of Transport will make it mandatory for all vessels over 20 metres to be fitted with an EPIRB or electronic beeping device. But why not all vessels over 10 metres as it planned to do last year?

The change in vessel length means that a large percentage of vessels will not have this protection for their crews. Pressure was brought on the Minister because of the cost in dollars, neglecting the cost in human life.

EPIRBs should be mandatory on all commercial vessels. It has been estimated that the cost of the search for the *Scotia Cape*, at approximately \$10 million, could have placed EPIRBs on all West Coast commercial vessels.

A Victoria company, Modern Products Inc., has developed a 406 megahertz system for EPIRBs. The company was given a guarantee that they would be mandatory on vessels 10 metres and up and had planned its production accordingly. It feels that this is one more case of a small Canadian company, which is a world innovator, getting the shaft. The Government should revert to its original plan and have EPIRBs mandatory on all vessels 10 metres and over.

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THE ADMINISTRATION

RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. William G. Lesick (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, in 1984 the Progressive Conservative Party's election platform was based on four major pillars; national reconciliation, economic renewal, social reform, and renewed internationalism. Have we delivered? The answer is a resounding yes with the Meech Lake Accord, various regional diversification initiatives, the lowest unemployment and interest rates in years, day care, capital punishment, abortion, a better than ever defence policy, and over 220 individual pieces of legislation passed.

The Government has delivered in the areas that it promised it would. Now, with the free trade agreement, prosperity for all Canadians is at hand.

As we near the next federal election, Mr. Speaker, I ask Canadians to compare this record of accomplishments with that of the previous Government or, for that matter, any previous Canadian Government.

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FERRIES

SERVICE FOR PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—CONSTRUCTION OF TWO VESSELS URGED

Mr. George Henderson (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of the House today a serious situation which is developing in the line of transportation to and from Prince Edward Island.

Three years ago, when the present Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) was Minister of Transport, he announced that they were very close to making a final announcement with regard to two new ferry vessels for Northumberland ferries to travel between Wood Island, P.E.I., and Caribou, Nova Scotia.

The next Minister of Transport, the present Hon. Minister for International Trade (Mr. Crosbie), stated a year and a half ago that construction of these ferries would proceed in a matter of days.

● (1405)

This is May, 1988, and there is still no construction. I ask the current Minister of Transport (Mr. Bouchard) to proceed with the announcement of the construction of two new vessels for Northumberland ferries. We rely totally on agriculture, fishing, and tourism in the Province of Prince Edward Island.

The Northumberland ferries now in place at Wood Island and Caribou are over 30 years old. If they are not replaced within the next year, they will have to be decommissioned. It is urgent, and I ask the Government and the Minister to make this announcement immediately.