

● (1410)

SOCIAL SECURITY

DIFFERENCE IN TREATMENT OF ELDERLY SINGLE PEOPLE

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie): Last February 7, Mr. Speaker, I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) to explain the situation of three women in my riding. All three are the same age, 62, all three pay the same monthly rent, \$250, and all three get the same monthly welfare allowance, \$427.

The only difference between those three women is that the first has been a widow for five years, the second has been separated for five years, and the third is single. I asked on the basis of what social justice the Prime Minister decided that the woman separated for five years and the single woman did not have similar needs and did not deserve assistance under Bill C-26.

Mr. Speaker, if that is the approach of the Prime Minister, I can understand why he did not reply, for he is behaving like a master of ceremonies everywhere in Canada and he has forgotten his responsibilities. I urge all Hon. Members to bring pressure to bear on the Prime Minister to convince him to change Bill C-26 and set \$250 million aside for the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) rather than waste \$610 million on armament.

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[English]

STEVEN FONYO

COURAGE OF ONE-LEGGED RUNNER

Mr. Vince Dantzer (Okanagan North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention, and to the attention of Members of this House, the exploits of Steven Fonyo of Vernon, British Columbia.

This committed and dedicated young man, who lost a leg to cancer, has undertaken to run across this great country on his "Journey for Lives", in order to raise funds for cancer research.

Starting in St. John's, Newfoundland, he has steadily worked his way across the country in an awesome effort which has few equals. He has continued to run in the coldest and most difficult weather, even against the advice of his doctors and supporters.

Steven Fonyo has already succeeded in raising a great deal of money. But he has done much more. Through his determination and courage he has provided a great example to millions of Canadians, particularly young Canadians.

We live in difficult times. Young people, and even middle-aged people, are finding it difficult to find employment and to acquire a place in our society. The example of Steve's personal commitment and courage in the face of insurmountable odds has become an inspiration for all of Canada.

Oral Questions

As Steve Fonyo leaves Saskatchewan and runs into Alberta to attain his goal on the Pacific coast, I am certain the Members of this House will wish him Godspeed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

TWO-WEEK LAYOFF NOTICES

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, perhaps one of the reasons the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) finds that consensus on economic problems is so elusive is because the things which the Government continues to allow to happen belie the rhetoric which is in vogue these days about co-operation, consultation, and the new era of labour-management relations.

The House will recall that last week I raised the matter of the layoffs at CN and the fact that hundreds of people were being laid off while the company and the unions were in conciliation on a no layoff contract. At that time I also mentioned that those workers were given a two-week notice. The CNR is hiding behind a regulation in the Canada Labour Code which allows it to waive the normal period of notice if workers are receiving supplementary benefits of any kind. The fact of the matter is that most of the people who are to be laid off have not worked for the company for the required two-year period and, therefore, will receive no supplementary unemployment benefits.

In my view, and in the view of anyone who takes a good look at it, the CNR is being allowed to violate the spirit and the letter of the Canada Labour Code, insofar as there will be workers who will only receive two weeks' notice about their layoff but who will not receive supplementary benefits. Those workers should have had the notice which is required under the Canada Labour Code.

If the Government is serious about its rhetoric it will tell the CNR to smarten up and give those people the notice that they should have received, or, for that matter, it should cancel the layoffs altogether.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

NATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, after the economic summit which ended on Saturday after-