

S. O. 21

German, Moslem and other cultural communities continue to feel as though they are on the fringe of the Russian majority, which accounts for only 51 per cent of the Soviet people.

Yesterday's *New York Times* reported demonstrations and strikes in the independent region of Nagorno-Karabakh: most resident of that region—80 per cent—are of Armenian descent and are making official representations to Moscow with a view to being linked with Armenia.

Mr. Speaker, international press correspondents also report that Armenian representatives are to meet with Secretary General Gorbachev to explain their situation and grievances, and hope they will be given a hearing.

At the same time, yesterday more than 100,000 people gathered in Erevan, the capital of the Soviet Republic of Armenia, seeking restitution to Armenia of that independent region which was annexed to Azerbaijan during the 1920s under the Stalin administration.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to echo the claims of Armenian people in the Soviet Union. I praise them for their courage and tenacity, and I express the wish that a fair and equitable solution be found.

* * *

[English]

HISTORIC EVENTS

LITHUANIA—INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION—INTERRUPTION BY SOVIET MILITIA

Mr. Jim Jepson (London East): Mr. Speaker, on February 16, 1988, Soviet occupied Lithuania celebrated the seventieth anniversary of the restoration of its independence.

This peaceful religious celebration was attended by over 15,000 Lithuanians during the evening of the sixteenth. Unfortunately, we here in the West were unable to see the results of the celebration because the press had been shuffled out of the territory during the afternoon.

This peaceful, nationalistic celebration was interrupted by a Soviet militia of over 10,000 men, many of them coming from other parts of the Soviet Union. These men brutally beat the celebrants and hospitalized over 160 Lithuanians. Leaders and clergy of the Lithuanians were put under house arrest for three days with no contact with the outside world. There was even one instance in which a Lithuanian celebrant was beaten, had his head shaved, and was held prisoner for three days without food. Certainly this type of dehumanization is not just. Mr. Gorbachev's glasnost was not implemented in this situation. Why was a peaceful demonstration broken up with such brutality in a country that claims glasnost as its new policy?

I urge the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) and the Government of Canada to pressure the Soviet Government and Mr. Gorbachev to live up to their policy of

glasnost and allow such peaceful demonstrations in the future. We all want peace, but not without freedom.

* * *

RAILWAYS

FUTURE OF NEWFOUNDLAND RAILWAY

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, once again Newfoundlanders are hearing that the federal and provincial Tory Governments are trying to close down the Newfoundland Railway.

One of the commitments when Newfoundland joined Confederation in 1949 was the maintenance of a rail link across the province. Until recently, Premier Peckford stood behind preserving that link. Today we have both the Premier and the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) trying to cut a deal which will do away with this constitutional arrangement.

It is absolutely essential that, before any decision is made, Newfoundlanders must see the studies upon which any decision is to be taken. What will happen to the 650 employees and the communities whose livelihood depends on the railway? Before any decision is taken, a definite special economic development program for any communities adversely affected must be put in place. If one transportation system is to be traded for another, there must be a perpetual commitment to the maintenance of that system.

It is time for both the federal and provincial Tories to be open and honest with Newfoundlanders and tell them what plans they have for the railway.

* * *

ABORTION

CALL FOR LEGISLATION TO PROTECT UNBORN CHILDREN

Mr. Gus Mitges (Grey—Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Advocates for Human Life, an association of lawyers across Canada, is pressing for legislation to provide protection for Canada's unborn children from abortion. They have added their weight to this crusade, as have the Knights of Columbus representing over 600,000 families, the Catholic Women's League of Canada with 128,000 members, Physicians for Life whose numbers are increasing daily, an increasing number of nurses, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops plus all pro life groups, as well as hundreds of thousands of Canadian citizens.

Never in the history of Canada have we seen such a large number of Canadians working together to stop the killing of unborn human beings. Thursday, January 28, 1988, will go down in history as Black Thursday, a day on which the Supreme Court sentenced countless unborn babies to death by