

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, December 6, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe you would find unanimous consent, when the House gets to Government Orders today, for the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women to put the following motion:

That this House take note of the anniversary of the murder of 14 young women at l'École polytechnique on December 6, 1989 and the continuing urgent need for action to eliminate the threat of violence in society, including the threat of violence to women.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 23 petitions.

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COMMUNITY STORIES

Hon. Sheila Finestone (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table in the House, in both official languages, a document entitled "Community Stories: Taking Action on Violence Against Women". The document contains the personal stories and history of the women applying for safety in their communities.

Today I will be moving: "That this House take note of the anniversary of the murder of 14 young women at l'École polytechnique on December 6, 1989 and the continuing urgent

need for action to eliminate the threat of violence in society, including the threat of violence to women".

The Speaker: I understand that this will be the first order of the day when we get through the routine business, and it is taken as such.

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[Translation]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Hon. Sheila Finestone (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, December 6, is the day that all parties in the House have unanimously proclaimed national day of remembrance and action on violence against women.

[English]

These young women were smart, ambitious and hardworking. They had much to contribute to their families and to their country. All this was stolen from them in a burst of gunfire.

Today, 14 red roses have been placed at the entrance of the Chamber. Each rose represents the life of a young woman, a life full of promise, a life full of dreams, a life cut short by a horrifying act of violence by a man who voiced the old hidden belief that women do not have the right to equal status in a man's world.

The tragedy was a catalyst for action and the rose has become a symbol in memory of the women who died. It appears on the YWCA buttons sold each year as part of its campaign to address violence against women. It appears on the Canadian Labour Congress lapel pin as part of its new campaign.

[Translation]

Every year, since 1989, increasing numbers of individuals and organizations have joined forces with women's groups and other community organizations in order to bring about social change. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the Quebec women's federation—many people are trying to make a difference in their community.

[English]

Our government is also a partner for change. Last week the Minister of Justice announced the government's intention to ban the type of gun that was used in Montreal. Firearms control is a life and death issue for women. In the new proposals anyone