

S. O. 31

think it has. We notice that when people are polled between elections they like the NDP but when they actually have to decide if they are going to give the socialist philosophy their votes only one in five ever come to that decision.

I am privileged to speak on this matter. I would like to refer to Conclusion C which states: "Broadcasting committees would relieve some of the pressure that is presently put on Question Period and would permit the public to better understand the roles played by members".

I do not think there is any solution to the Question Period. Question Period is very important in our society in terms of being able to hold the Cabinet accountable. I know it is a raucous period and all of that. It not being a congressional forum we do not have real solid journalists who are well educated and penetrating in their investigative journalism. We do not have that. The National Press Gallery in this country really does not measure up to a professional—

Mr. Dick: It's a joke.

Mr. Thacker: It is a joke, as my colleague says. It is a real tragedy in the nation. It is one, I suppose, that will only be solved over time with better education.

In the meantime we need to have Question Period. It is going to be partisan because politics is a quest for power. Whoever has it wants to hang onto it. Whoever does not have it wants to get it.

I do not apologize to my constituents when they say that Question Period is childish and raucous. I just explain to them that yes, it is a battle for the late night journal, and it is too bad, but they have a responsibility as a citizen to be able to appreciate it. It is 45 minutes. You have the responsibility as a citizen to put it into proper perspective and to see it for what it is. When there is a stupid question followed by a stupid answer, people should realize that, yes, it is a stupid question and a stupid answer.

[Translation]

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being 1 p.m., I do now leave the chair until two o'clock.

At 1 p.m., the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[Translation]

ABITIBI INTERNATIONAL BICYCLE TOUR

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, the cyclists' federation of the Soviet Union will send a junior team to the Tour cycliste international de l'Abitibi, from July 24 to July 29. The 22nd Tour de l'Abitibi, in which all races will start and finish in Amos, will be presided over by the honorary chairman, reporter Léandre Normand.

The Amos organizing committee is ready to receive teams from France, Czechoslovakia, the United States, Canada, Quebec and several provincial teams.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Marie-Claude Audet will be honorary chairwoman.

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[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, Amnesty International has just released a shocking report showing that Brazilian authorities are implicated in the torture and murder of Brazilian street children.

In a news release, Amnesty states that police officers in Brazil are torturing and killing suspects in and out of custody, including youth, secure in the knowledge that they will not be punished. Off-duty police officers are running many of the growing number of death squads—vigilante groups acting as judge, jury and executioner—and many of its victims are vulnerable, destitute street children. Indeed, death squad killings accounted for one-third of the violent deaths of children.

Brazilian authorities are overlooking these gross violations by not punishing those committing these atrocities. Few effective investigations or prosecutions are carried out for serious abuses such as torture and extra-judicial executions. Canada must call on the Brazilian authorities to stop these gross human rights violations.

The situation in Brazil further demonstrates the urgent need to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This convention is a standard by which all nations will be judged.