

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

SOCIAL SECURITY

ECONOMIC PLIGHT OF SINGLE WOMEN BETWEEN AGES 60 AND 65 YEARS

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I am particularly concerned about senior citizens, and especially single women seniors. This one group in particular over a long period of time has been in desperate need. Six out of every ten single seniors live below the poverty level.

In Canada today we have assistance for those over 65, and we have the Canada Pension for the disabled under the age of 65. But the remaining and nagging problem remains for thousands of women between the ages of 60 and 65. For these needy Canadians there is very little.

I care about these needy women as many of them live in my riding and I personally know many of them. These women are often too old to find decent jobs but not old enough to qualify for the federal guaranteed supplement or spouses' allowance. A quick alternative must be found to remove these needy Canadians from the indignity of welfare rolls.

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[Translation]

HUMAN RIGHTS

THE LEGAL SYSTEM—NECESSITY TO REVIEW CERTAIN POLICIES

Mr. Pierre Deniger (La Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I should like to draw the attention of the House to what seems to me to be a major shortcoming of our legal system. Recently, I was in touch with an inmate who had decided to apply to the National Parole Board. However, for reasons which I cannot explain and which fall within the exclusive jurisdiction of the board, the inmate was denied parole because of a document to which he does not have and will never have access, and the contents and the authors of which he will never know. In my humble opinion, such provisions in the act are tantamount to a serious breach of the right to information. And what is more, in the case of inmates, confidentiality and secrecy requirements deprive them of any opportunity to defend themselves and restrict their basic right to know why they are denied their freedom.

On the day after the 35th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it might be necessary to review certain policies which raise some doubts about the respect for the principles underlying human rights.

S.O. 21

[English]

CURRENCY

PLASTIC BANK NOTES—MANX EXPERIMENT

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, paper banknotes have many disadvantages. They wear out quickly, tear, fade, burn, and are damaged by contact with water. According to recent press releases—and I know this has to be true because it was a CP wire story in *The Toronto Star*—the Isle of Man has solved many of these problems by issuing plastic banknotes. Although Manx banknotes cost the same to manufacture as regular paper ones, they are said to be virtually indestructible, with an average life expectancy of some five years in comparison with only a few months for paper. Perhaps the Bank of Canada should study the Manx experience with a view to implementing the issuance of plastic banknotes in Canada if they are found suitable for use in Canadian climatic conditions.

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[Translation]

SHOE INDUSTRY

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENTAL MEASURES

Mr. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, now that the economic indicators are more encouraging, that interest rates have gone down to less alarming levels and that we have succeeded in controlling inflation, the one problem which still troubles all of us is unemployment which unfortunately remains at completely unacceptable levels. The work ethic is an extremely important concept for Canadians, and as we know, idleness can cause social and human tragedies. No one is insured against lay-offs and everyone tries to avoid them. It is in this spirit that the workers of the J.A. Blais company urge the government not to make an *ad hoc* decision about the next shoe quotas.

In principle, I am a proponent of free trade and a free market, but my concern for people overrides my idealistic view of international trade. I therefore ask that the issue of quotas for the shoe industry be examined without delay to give a clear and specific signal to an industry desirous to retool and to workers who feel insecure facing the prospect of their quotas being abolished. If we could offer alternative jobs to those who work in these less competitive sectors, I would say: Long live free enterprise and let the rules of free competition apply. However, when we know that for every position hundreds of unemployed line-up to apply for it, our labour adjustment programs are too often only stop gaps both in theory and in practice at the present time.