

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 15, 1985

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O.21

[English]

DISASTERS

ANNIVERSARY OF *OCEAN RANGER* SINKING

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, today marks the third anniversary of the sinking of the *Ocean Ranger*. This tragedy, which occurred on February 15, 1982, shocked our nation and brought great grief to the people of Canada, and more directly to the families of the 84 men lost at sea. The suffering of the relatives and friends of the dead, and the continuing trauma of the survivors, bring to mind the price paid by working people.

It is worth remembering, especially during the afterglow of the recently signed Atlantic Accord, that the lives of our workers must be considered before we rush into any activity. The health and safety of the riggers and seamen are as much the responsibility of our Government as the negotiating of transfer payments and energy revenues.

Let us remember the 84 men who lost their lives on February 15, 1982, when we rise to discuss labour code amendments and changes to our legislation. It is through our actions in the House and actions by the Government that future tragedies such as the *Ocean Ranger* can be avoided.

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[Translation]

THE CANADIAN FLAG

A MEMORABLE DATE—FEBRUARY 15, 1965

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, at 1:30 a.m. on December 15, 1964, with 163 in favour and 78 against, Canada was given its own distinctive flag. We owe this to the courage and determination of a great Canadian, the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson, Leader of the Liberal Party and Prime Minister of Canada from 1963 to 1968.

On February 15, 1965, twenty years ago today—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, I am prepared to let the Member finish his statement. I am not prepared to allow displays in the House of Commons because it is against the rules.

Mr. Gauthier: You have a flag.

Mr. Speaker: I am not prepared to allow the displays. I apologize. It is against the rules. I am prepared to let the Member finish his statement.

Mr. Prud'homme: You will understand why I am so proud, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

On February 15, 1965, twenty years ago today, this symbol of Canadian unity and pride was raised above all federal buildings and property, and elsewhere across Canada. The resistance of certain politicians was swept away by the enthusiasm of Canadians for their own distinctive flag.

In fact, Mr. Maxime Guitard, one of the clerks at the Table who was committee clerk at the time, could give us the exact details of this story. Nine Members sitting in the House of Commons at the time are still sitting in the House today.

I take particular pride in recalling this event because it was the most important day in my twenty-one years in politics. Five of the nine who voted in favour were Liberals, and they were Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra), Mr. Gray (Windsor-West) and Mr. Chrétien, and my good friend Ms. Pauline Jewett, who was a Liberal at the time, and myself. Four of the nine who are still sitting today voted against and belong to the Progressive Conservative Party. They included, I am sorry to say, the Deputy Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Nielsen).

For us, Mr. Speaker, as it is for all Canadians, for our young people and for all new Canadians, this is one of the most memorable days of our lives.

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CULTURAL AFFAIRS

BUDGETARY CUTBACKS

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, the arts community and our cultural organizations have been forced to concentrate their efforts on defending themselves against the Government's budget-cutting attacks. As a result, they have not had a chance to develop proposals for improving cultural life in Canada.