

S. O. 21

What more do we need, what kind of evidence must be submitted when we know that the facts which were corroborated are the same as those which are accepted in cases of sexual abuse of children by adults?

So when will justice prevail in cases of sexual abuse against women, and what more do we need to make judges fully aware of this approach?

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[English]

HOUSING

PLIGHT OF THE HOMELESS

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Conference to Observe the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless ended its deliberations in Ottawa yesterday. This conference heard firsthand about the crisis of homelessness here in Canada and, indeed, around the world.

In 1982, when the United Nations designated 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, one of the objectives was to have every country achieve a measure of improvement in the actual living conditions of those who are at the low end of the income scale. Today, there is every indication that in Canada conditions are even worse than they were in 1982.

There is no doubt at all that homelessness and the risk of being homeless are affecting a greater number of Canadians today than at any time since the Great Depression. The crisis crosses all segments of our society and impacts most heavily on women, natives, young people and the poor.

The Government's obligation to this international year did not end when the conference concluded. The problem was known to it before it was highlighted by this conference. What is needed now is action and the political will to ensure that homes for the homeless become a right and not simply a commodity on which a profit can be made.

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NATIONAL DRUG STRATEGY

CALL FOR SUPPORT

Mr. Andrew Witer (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, drug abuse is a growing problem in Canada, a problem which affects all segments of society. RCMP drug intelligence reports that the number of major cocaine traffickers is increasing and that the use of potent cocaine derivatives and combinations with other substances is becoming more prevalent, while domestic production of cannabis and chemical drugs is on the rise.

Law enforcement officers have faced a task of tremendous proportions in their efforts to crack down on the drug trade. The National Drug Strategy and, in particular, the new legislation to confiscate the proceeds of crime have at last provided Canadian enforcement officers with the resources and tools to confront and to overcome the growing danger that drug abuse poses to society. New initiatives in public education, treatment and rehabilitation, law enforcement and research, will provide an effective and comprehensive offensive against drug abuse.

I call upon all Canadians and all Members of the House to put aside partisan politics and support the Government in the fight against drugs.

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HOUSING

PLIGHT OF THE HOMELESS

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, a couple of days ago over 500 people converged on Parliament Hill to protest the lack of shelter that 12,000 or more Canadians face every night. In this the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless we must try to come to terms with this national tragedy.

The plight of the homeless and the poor goes to the core of the issue of human dignity and the right to the basics of life. Deprived of acceptable lodging and adequate food, how can the poor feel that they are an integral part of a developed and humanitarian society?

Soup kitchens, churches and charitable organizations have been left with the burden of helping the needy in our society. It is time that all Canadians and, in particular, all Governments, especially the national Government of Canada, help out and take part in ending what has become a national disgrace.

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● (1405)

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

SIGNING OF INTERNATIONAL PROTOCOL ON MEASURES TO PROTECT OZONE LAYER

Mr. Lee Clark (Brandon—Souris): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan), and the representatives of 43 other countries who drafted an international agreement yesterday. This agreement will help to preserve the earth's ozone layer, the protective layer of gases which shields the earth from the harmful rays of the sun.