

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 21, 1973

The House met at 11 a.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

CHRISTMAS ADJOURNMENT

On the order: Motions.

December 19, 1973—The Minister of Transport:

That, when the House adjourns on Friday, December 21, 1973 it shall stand adjourned until Wednesday, December 26, 1973; and

That the hours of sitting on Wednesday, December 26, 1973 shall be 7.00 o'clock p.m. to 10.30 o'clock p.m.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order in connection with this motion having to do with the adjournment of the House. As hon. members may realize, certain discussions have been taking place among representatives of the parties as to an alternative method of dealing with this question. These discussions are still under way and probably will not be completed until some time this afternoon. Therefore I recommend that it would be in the interests of the House and of these discussions if we agreed to defer the calling of this motion to later today. If we fail in our efforts, we will call the motion at that time.

Mr. Bell: We agree.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed and so ordered?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

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INDUSTRY

TABLING OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENT ON A SECTOR STRATEGY FOR FOOTWEAR AND TANNING INDUSTRIES

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 41(2), I should like to table a background document in both official languages on a sector strategy for Canada's footwear and tanning industries.

TABLING OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENT ON ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FOOTWEAR AND TANNING INDUSTRIES

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 41(2) I should like to table copies of a background document in both official lang-

uages on the adjustment assistance program for the footwear and tanning industries.

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IMMIGRATION

STATEMENT ON PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS BY CHILEAN REFUGEES TO COME TO CANADA

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I announced on November 30 in the House that the Canadian government would apply the provisions of Canada's ongoing refugee program to those people who wish to settle in Canada as a result of the situation in Chile. I would like to report on the results of the program to date.

Applications respecting approximately 1,400 persons have been received. One hundred and eighty-four visas have been issued and up to 213 additional visas could be issued once applicants respond to our request that they come forward for their medical examinations. They have had other screenings, so they have been in contact with us. Many of these have indicated that they do not wish to come to Canada until next spring.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Why wait for spring?

Mr. Bell: They are waiting for a change in the government.

Mr. Andras: We will have to get the snowplows out for them. An additional 369 persons only require successful completion of background checks before being issued visas. Normally these checks would take about six months but under our accelerated program these have been reduced to one to four weeks on Chilean nationals and two months' duration for others. All applications received to date should be completed by January 31, with many being completed before the end of December. These figures will indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, the results of my statement of November 30 that accelerated immigration processing would take place but that medical and background checks would be carried out.

We are endeavouring to ascertain the number of persons who have been delayed by the lack of transportation. Contingency transportation arrangements are being planned for implementation when and if necessary.

In respect of adjustment and settlement arrangements, a number of groups have come forward with offers of assistance, and I am assured that the situation is well in hand.