

S. O. 31

[English]

JUSTICE

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley): Mr. Speaker, both the Minister of Justice and the Solicitor General have indicated that they believe the criminal justice system is working well and requires only minor changes.

Members of the government and the media have referred to a recent Statistics Canada poll that indicated the level of crime had not increased over the past five years. However nobody in the government or in the media seems horrified that the poll also showed that one out of every four Canadians is a victim of crime every year.

It is because of this fact that so many Canadians are afraid to walk the streets. It is because of this fact that so many Canadians have their homes and cars wired with alarms. It is because of this fact that our insurance rates and deductibles are going up every year.

If the criminal justice system is indeed working, why are there so many examples of it having gone wrong? Unfortunately flaws in the criminal justice system are all too often fatal flaws.

Canadians do not agree with the ministers. They believe the justice system is crumbling and they are demanding change.

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MEDALS OF BRAVERY

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Russell Snudden and Jason David Srigley, two constituents from my riding of Victoria—Haliburton who received the medal of bravery at a ceremony at Rideau Hall with the Governor General on Friday, June 17.

Both men received the medal for risking their lives attempting to save three people from a burning house in Pontypool, Ontario, on April 27, 1993.

They are volunteer firemen and during that cool spring evening they searched a living room that was completely engulfed in flames. The heat was so intense that their equipment started to melt. These gentlemen are true Canadian heroes who have risked their lives to save others. I ask all members to applaud their heroic act.

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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY WEEK

Ms. Maria Minna (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge that this week is Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Week.

Having worked with injured workers in Ontario for many years, I know of the hardship and suffering caused by workplace

injuries. The sad reality is that every 12 working hours of the year one Canadian worker is killed on the job.

In 1992, 714 workers died in the course of their duties; over 864,000 workers were injured; and more than 19 million working days were lost. This is not only a terrible human waste; it is also an economic waste. When we add up the direct and indirect costs of workplace accidents over \$10 billion are wasted annually.

During Occupational Health and Safety Week one message to Canadians will be that increased training, education and information are needed to combat this problem. Another message is that occupational health and safety are directly related to the economic health of Canadian business.

• (1410)

I urge all members of the House to join with business and with labour in ending this tragic and unnecessary waste of human and economic resources.

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FOLK ARTS

Mr. Walt Lastewka (St. Catharines): Mr. Speaker, last month St. Catharines celebrated its 26th Annual Folk Arts Festival.

Some 35 local ethnic organizations participated in the festivities held in the last two weeks of May. The folk arts festival welcomes visitors to see the world from its doorstep. Indeed the organizations that participated in the festival's activities brought the food, the culture and the multitude of ethnic festivities and activities from around the world to the city of St. Catharines.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the organizers of the folk arts festival, the president, Ann Stavina, and all those who participated. Their tireless efforts ensured the success of the festival this year.

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[Translation]

INTEREST RATES

Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie): Mr. Speaker, for a number of days the Liberal government has tried in every possible way to divert attention from the real causes that are helping to maintain interest rates at high levels. Government voices keep blaming the uncertainty caused by the question of Quebec's sovereignty. Why was Canada's and not Quebec's credit rating for Canadian debt in foreign currency downgraded by Moody's?

The facts are all there. Canada's finances are in poor shape mainly because of the incompetence of the present government, which did not have the nerve to bring down a budget that generates confidence among foreign investors. Let the federal