

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 26, 1994

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

REGISTERED RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLANS

Mr. Janko Peric (Cambridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have received numerous letters from constituents concerned about the upcoming budget and whether they can expect to be taxed on their RRSPs.

These constituents believe that an understanding between government and Canadians has existed since the 1950s when RRSPs were first introduced. At that time the government rewarded Canadians who took responsibility for their own retirement by offering both an initial tax deduction as well as tax free accumulation.

Since then thousands of Canadians have assumed responsibility for their own retirement by taking advantage of RRSPs. They have done so in part because of strains on the Canada pension plan and old age security and their need for greater income security during retirement.

My constituents and I feel that any move on the part of the minister to change the ground rules by taxing RRSPs would be unfair and unwelcome. It is our sincere hope that the minister will listen to these concerns and not tax RRSPs.

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[Translation]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for several months now, the written press has reported numerous delays in the processing of immigrant files. Ever since the previous government decided to concentrate its operations in Vegreville, Alberta, there has been one problem after another.

All members of this House have been receiving legitimate complaints from their constituents with respect to Vegreville,

but the minister does not seem particularly concerned about this administrative catastrophe. Furthermore, services are offered almost exclusively in English. Immigrants and visitors who have all the documents required by the act thus find themselves in an illegal situation.

When will the minister stop insisting that he wants to see his immigration policy rigorously applied, when his department is clearly no longer able to keep up with the routine requests of the immigrants it is there to serve?

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[English]

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have received a petition signed by over 2,000 residents of southern Alberta.

I would like to associate myself with the prayer in the petition which reads:

Whereas there is no proven connection between gun control legislation and a decrease in the occurrence of criminal activity;

And whereas all handguns in Canada are required by law to be registered;

And whereas crimes involving the use of firearms already carry severe penalties under the Criminal Code;

And whereas criminals by definition feel no compulsion to abide by the law;

We the undersigned feel that implementing more restrictive firearms controls which will affect only law abiding citizens is an unjustifiable action and the proper course of action for responsible governments to follow is more effective prosecution and tougher sentencing of criminals.

I will be forwarding the petition to the Minister of Justice.

The Speaker: My colleagues, I have no problem with this kind of a statement in the House whatsoever. It is just that we do have a place for petitions themselves and you might want to consider that at a later time. I just make that comment in passing.

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CYCLING FOR A MIRACLE

Mrs. Anna Terrana (Vancouver East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the great honour and privilege to recognize the accomplishments of Suzanne MacLean of Vancouver. Suzanne demonstrated profound courage, remarkable strength and depth of humanity in her recent cross-Canada bicycle journey "Cycling for a Miracle".