

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, October 25, 1985

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 22

[Translation]

SOCIAL SECURITY

INQUIRY IF CERTAIN BUDGETARY CUTBACKS WILL SERVE TO REDUCE DEFICIT

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, on October 23, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) officially announced that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Conservative Government had misled Canadians when the Government tabled its consultation paper on child and elderly benefits, a paper that was tabled in January by the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) and which says clearly on page 6, and I quote: "Any savings which may result from program changes will not be applied to a reduction of the deficit."

Mr. Speaker, on October 23, 1985, in answer to a question, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) stated the following, as reported in *Hansard* of that day, and I quote: "The reason behind the decision to reduce the growth rate of the family allowance is the deficit, Mr. Speaker."

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that despite thousands of signatures expressing the support of people from all Conservative ridings, despite the demonstration held by mothers with children on Parliament Hill, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and all Conservative Members would rather take \$22 from every mother with two children and spend it on changing the colour of our military uniforms.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of social injustice, with the co-operation and support of all female Progressive Conservative Members, would rather take away—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the Hon. Member, but his time has expired. The Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis).

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

COSTA RICA—ARREST OF CANADIAN CITIZEN

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Wayne McCannon, a Canadian citizen from British Columbia, is being held in Costa Rica on bail awaiting extradition to Guatemala within the next few days. The reason for his arrest is that he stopped payment on a cheque to a hotel in Guatemala City where he had arranged accommodation for a number of travellers. When the hotel's standards were found to be completely unacceptable, he stopped payment on a cheque to cover the costs of the accommodation, but agreed to meet with representatives of the hotel in neighbouring Costa Rica to arrange a satisfactory settlement. When he arrived in Costa Rica, he was arrested and thrown into jail for 120 days. He is presently out on bail under constant surveillance and forced to remain in Costa Rica.

He soon will be extradited to Guatemala where he, and others, believe he will face certain death once confined in a Guatemalan jail. All this is over a disputed cheque for \$8,500.

I urge the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) to intervene with the utmost haste to assist this Canadian citizen who will face the harshest of repercussions if action is not taken immediately.

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ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

REQUEST FOR REGIONAL EQUITY IN RECRUITMENT

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, one of the most sought after careers for young men and women, especially in western and northern Canada, is in joining the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. However, the RCMP recruiting policy, which seems to be a hangover from the previous regime, deliberately discriminates against English-speaking Canadians and, as a consequence, against westerners and northerners.

Most members of the Force are stationed in the contract provinces, and surely there ought to be a rough relationship between the number of members serving in a particular province or territory and the number of recruits being accepted from that jurisdiction. This is manifestly not the case.

In the Northwest Territories where the RCMP are held in such high esteem, there has not been a single recruit accepted for over five years despite a "G" Division strength of about 280 members. Employment equity seems to be a very popular