

Oral Questions

Canadians, is discriminatory, highly insensitive, and infringes on the privacy of Canadians, women in particular. Question 37 requires women who have ever been married to state, under the threat of three months' imprisonment or a \$500 fine, the number of children born to them. It contradicts the confidentiality given to Canadian women when they give children up for adoption. In light of this contradiction and violation, will the minister immediately announce that question 37 need not be answered on June 3?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, it is not my intention to offer that direction. I will review the question very thoroughly, as has been done in the past. That question was arrived at after very thorough and complete consultation between all interested parties. It is an essential question which will provide us with information relating to our population make-up and the rate of births within the country, which it is essential for us to ascertain with regard to the nature of our society at this time.

CONSULTATIONS WITH MINISTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR STATUS OF WOMEN

Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is to the minister responsible for the status of women. In light of the answer given by the Minister of Supply and Services, that his departmental officials had been consulted before the questions were approved, will the minister tell the House if the consultations with himself and his departmental officials responsible for the status of women led to concurrence on this question which violates the rights of women?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I will talk to my officials to see what kind of discussions did take place.

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LAW OF THE SEA

CANADIAN POSITION ON INTERNATIONAL TREATY

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): My question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I am sure the minister appreciates that Canada has been a world leader in the negotiations on the Law of the Sea for the past 13 years. This common multilateral approach of some 160 nations is in the interests not only of world peace and security but in a meaningful way is a move toward a new global economic order. Is it the position of the minister and the government that Canada will be a signatory this year to the multilateral treaty on the Law of the Sea?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the fundamental point inherent in the hon. member's question is whether there will be a treaty this year to which we could affix our signature. I have been holding extensive consultations on this subject with other

countries, most recently with the foreign minister of Norway, a very like-minded country in this respect. We have all been doing our best to urge upon the United States the advisability of proceeding in the normal manner with the completion of the treaty and the signatures. I certainly am not in a position to tell the hon. member, unfortunately, that there will be a treaty at this point to which we could be a signatory.

COMPOSITION OF INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Madam Speaker, I certainly hope, and I am sure all members of this House hope, that if a multilateral treaty is proceeded with this year, Canada will be a signatory. My supplementary is with regard to the April 29 resolution which came from the United States Senate for binding arbitration on Canada's Georges Bank, or Gulf of Maine boundary, to the International Court of Justice. I am sure the minister appreciates, certainly the maritime members appreciate, that we are talking about billions of dollars worth of resources, in scallops alone \$85 million a year. In light of the announcement to be made shortly by the Government of Canada regarding the reference to the ICJ and on the make-up of the tribunal to review the Georges Bank treaty, will the minister see to it, in the interests not only of the resources but of all Canadians, that a Canadian judge will be considered, and all appropriate resources will be made available to see that Canada's position, should we go to the ICJ, is upheld?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the appropriate government action with respect to that treaty is now under consideration. The hon. member has also raised the issue of national judges under the arbitral tribunal which might be set up under that treaty. That is one possibility, that both sides would have national judges as members of the deciding tribunal. However, it would perhaps be more in accord with international precedent and would have many reasons to commend it if there were no national judges on the tribunal and decisions were made by a panel of judges, all fully independent.

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THE CENSUS

MANDATORY ANSWERING OF QUESTIONS

Mr. Robert Wenman (Fraser Valley West): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Supply and Services. It is with regard to the census forms mailed out last week to my constituents, which will probably arrive sometime in the next month or two. When they arrive there will be considerable concern about the compulsory aspects of the census. Last year in the House of Commons a direction was intended, and Bill C-56, passed January 22, provided for the minister to be able to authorize the obtaining of statistical information on a voluntary basis. Will the minister consider having the long form, which calls for less significant information, answered on