

Oral Questions

problems, some of which have been in front of us for 11 long years?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I believe the Hon. Member was trying to ask a question. If we can decipher that morass of maritime bilge he has put forth, perhaps we can get to the point.

Mr. Epp: Careful.

Mr. Axworthy: This Government has taken action. We have committed ourselves to a major expansion program in the Coast Guard training system.

Mr. Forrestall: Improperly; improperly.

Mr. Axworthy: We have committed ourselves to a major purchase of a Coast Guard fleet. We have committed ourselves to a task force on a new deep sea fleet for the maritime area. It seems to me that the Hon. Member should go back and talk to his constituents about what they would like, rather than simply sort of festering around in his own sense of fantasy about what should be done. We are taking action. He is simply talking about it, and he is out of date.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS**DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN INDIAN ACT—REQUEST FOR EARLY AMENDMENT**

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. For years Indian women have heard the Government promise quick action to end Indian Act discrimination against them. Now, in spite of a Throne Speech promise, they hear the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development indicate that this is not one of his priorities. Why can the Government not now table legislation to end this discrimination so that the Standing Committee can study it and hear representatives of Indian bands and Indian women's organizations? Why can the Government not table it so that it will receive the study it needs, rather than attempt to push it through at the last minute?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member does not seem to know what he wants. He keeps talking about studies, and at the same time he is blaming us for not taking action and not tabling legislation right away. I would be very surprised if the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development actually said what the Hon. Member says he did, but I will check with my colleague as soon as he gets back to the House.

[English]

Mr. Manly: The Minister can check with her colleague, as well as the transcript of *Our Native Land* last Saturday night.

THRONE SPEECH ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands): Madam Speaker, again my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Considering the long history of discrimination and suffering of Indian women as a result of the Indian Act, will he make this promise in the Throne Speech a legislative priority of his Government, or is it just so much empty wind to keep people quiet for a while?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): It is a legislative priority, Madam Speaker.

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CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION**CANADIAN HOME OWNERSHIP STIMULATION PROGRAM—AUDITOR GENERAL'S FINDINGS**

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for CMHC. He will recall on December 17, 1982, dismissing a concern I expressed in the House about the illegality of payments made by the Government under the Canadian Home Ownership Stimulation Program. Is he aware that since December 17, when he gave those concerns the back of his hand, the financial statement for CMHC has been qualified by its auditor and, second, that the Auditor General sought and received a legal opinion on the legality of this over half a billion dollars worth of payments to the effect that "transactions of CHOSP are not within the powers of CMHC under the Act"? If so, when does the Minister intend to take action?

● (1440)

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, I have been absent from the House for three days. I have not been briefed on what the Auditor General's Report contains. Since I am not a lawyer, and as this is obviously a conflict of legal opinions, I will consult my lawyer before answering the Hon. Member's question.

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NATIONAL REVENUE**COLLECTION OF TAXES ON ILLEGAL BASIS**

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, if this Minister cannot answer for his Department, I will go to one of his colleagues about another Department, the Department of National Revenue. The Auditor General points out in his report today that, because of an error made by the Department of National Revenue, taxes have been collected on an illegal basis by the Department of National Revenue from some Canadians. What attempts are being made to identify those Canadians who have been double-taxed or unfairly assessed under this scheme? What efforts are being made by the Government to pay back any payments that were illegally demanded by the Department of National Revenue?