

took place, what they were monitoring, and just what was the total result as far as radioactive contamination in Canada was concerned as a consequence result of the Chernobyl accident?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, taking the Hon. Member's last question first, if I might, at the time of the Chernobyl accident and the days and weeks following, very full information along the lines mentioned by the Hon. Member was given. If he feels it would be helpful for the House and the country for an update to be given from that period onward, I would be willing to consider it and do it. In terms of the effect upon wildlife north of the sixtieth parallel, I have not had any notice of it. I will check it. In respect of other areas affected, all I can say at this stage is that the information I have received indicates that Canadians are not at risk. I will double-check it.

#### ABILITY TO MONITOR RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill):** Mr. Speaker, I think it would be very useful if the Minister would provide the House with an update on what information was gathered respecting radioactive contamination in Canada. I hope he will look into the problem north of the sixtieth parallel. It is on the CP wire, if he is looking for information.

Many serious questions have been raised in respect of Canada's ability to monitor, and what it monitors, in terms of radioactive contamination, as a result of the inquiry the Hon. Member for Vancouver—Kingsway and I have been conducting across the country. Will the Minister assure us that he will make a statement in the House respecting our ability to monitor, and provide an opportunity for Hon. Members to ask questions about this very important topic?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my first answer, I am willing to make the information available. With regard to what would be the best form and what would be the best approach in terms of discussing it with the Parties in the House, obviously I would leave that to the Deputy Prime Minister. However, I will be as open as possible.

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[Translation]

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

##### RETROACTIVE REIMBURSEMENT OF EARLY RETIREES— GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. For almost eleven months now early retirees throughout Canada have been waiting for an answer as to how they should fare under the unemployment insurance system. We know that the Forget report commissioned by the former and present Ministers will be tabled today. Should the Forget

#### Privilege—Ms. Copps

Commission recommend retroactive payments, apparently the Government will honour this commitment and pay up. The Minister said a moment ago that he would answer at three o'clock. It is now 3.05 p.m., and elderly Canadians want to know where they stand. Can the Minister live up to his promise to respond in time and forthwith tell the thousands of elderly who are waiting for his answer that indeed they will get a retroactive payment?

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I fail to see what my colleague is driving at. As I just said, I am about to table the report. I should like to correct his statement. The Hon. Member is saying that if the Forget Commission should recommend such or such a thing, the Government is committed to act on it. Not at all. The Government did undertake to seek the advice of the Forget Commission, and now we have the answer. All I can say to my colleague is that, if the Chair will allow me, I will table these documents in two or three minutes. Then I will respond to your questions.

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[English]

#### PRIVILEGE

**Mr. Speaker:** The Chair should like to advise the House that it has received notice of two questions of privilege, one from the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson) and one from the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps). The questions of privilege are on the same subject. The Chair proposes to hear both Hon. Members, one after the other. The Hon. Member for Hamilton East served notice just prior to the Hon. Member for Burnaby, so the Chair will recognize first the Hon. Member for Hamilton East.

##### COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS—ALLEGED COACHING OF WITNESSES

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Standing Committee on Human Rights met pursuant to Standing Order 104 to review the qualifications of seven recent appointees to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal panel. During the course of questioning it was revealed that at least three witnesses had attended a secret meeting earlier that same day in the Prime Minister's Office. Invitations were extended by a staff member from the Prime Minister's Office. In attendance at the meeting were officials of the office of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), the office of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Hnatyshyn), and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister.

Witnesses who attended the meeting informed the committee that during the meeting it was discussed what types of questions would be asked at the committee hearing and what personal characteristics the witnesses should promote in their