

Oral Questions

Liberals in their campaigns. The quote is: "They helped us, we help them. A Liberal is a Liberal is a Liberal." I am sure Lyn McLeod is saying to herself this morning, "With friends like this, who needs enemies?"

Since the voters of Ontario totally rejected the Liberal concept of employment equity, will the minister listen to the voters and back down on the government's own employment equity plans, its plans to expand employment equity, or is it going to take a federal election defeat for the Liberals before they listen to the people and understand that employment equity is not wanted?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Unlike the Reform Party, we actually believe in employment equity, and unlike the Reform Party, we actually believe in political democracy.

Unlike the Reform Party, we did not put the jackboots to provincial Reformers who wanted to run in the Ontario provincial election. We allow and encourage everybody to become members of the Liberal Party because we are not afraid of a little competition at the provincial level.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

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[Translation]

BOVINE SOMATOTROPIN

Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval-Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is Friday, everyone is a bit on edge.

My question is for the Minister of Health.

Although the studies on the impact of somatotropin on human and animal health are not yet complete, Quebec and Canadian consumers are finding this hormone in dairy products they purchase, since, despite the Health Canada prohibition, certain producers are not afraid to use it, particularly since the Minister of Agriculture seems in no hurry to do a serious investigation.

Would the Minister of Health tell us what measures she has taken to ensure that somatotropin, the sale of which is prohibited by her department, is not found in dairy products?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, so long as this hormone remains unapproved, it is illegal to use it. We will do all we have to, not only at the Department of Health, but at customs and at the Department of Agriculture.

• (1140)

As my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, has just said, it is early yet to really assess the situation and lay any charges. If you have any information that can help us, please let us know, because we are interested.

Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval-Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if I have understood the minister's response, she is counting on her colleague in agriculture to do the investigating. What the Minister of Agriculture has told us, unless I misunderstood him, is that he was not exactly sure where he was going.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health whether she can explain why she is letting the Minister of Agriculture carry out the investigation all by himself, when she is responsible for prohibiting the use and sale of the hormone somatotropin in Canada?

[English]

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in reply to the earlier question, the issue that has been raised relates to the jurisdictional responsibilities of several ministers, including the Minister of Health, the Minister of National Revenue, with his responsibility for customs, and agriculture with its obvious interest in the dairy industry. All of us are endeavouring to be as vigilant as we can to ensure that the laws of Canada are fully and faithfully respected.

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ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment.

It is very important that the government lead by example in all things, including environmental matters. One of the most visible symbols of government is the national capital region. Our national capital is beautiful at this time of year, but I ask the Minister of the Environment what she is doing to ensure that it is and remains truly green.

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the intention of the Government of Canada is to ensure that every part of Canada is green. Obviously one of those very important parts is the national capital region.

We believe that some of the recently announced policies on issues like the Commission for Sustainable Development and also the very excellent initiative of Bill S-7 by Senator Colin Kenny, which will begin to create a market for alternative fuels in this country, will get smog out of the air and keep those tulips growing and make sure that all urban areas of the country also benefit from a cleaner environment, which is something we owe our kids.

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GUN CONTROL

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the justice minister first claimed that his gun control legislation would cost