

The age of sexual consent varies under the existing Criminal Code provisions, but this will be changed according to the sexual act involved and the sex of the participant.

Mr. Speaker, I see that my time is running out. I wanted to make these few remarks on the amendments and tell you that this Bill is one of the social justice measures unveiled by the Government in the Speech from the Throne delivered less than a month ago. I invite all Canadians to familiarize themselves with these new rules and abide by them. I urge all my colleagues in the House, regardless of their Party, to support this Government endeavour which goes a long way to meet the wishes of the members of the Badgley and Fraser committees, as well as those of Canadians and parents throughout this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If the Hon. Member is in the House, there will be time for questions and comments after the oral questions period.

• (1250)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PANEL OF CHAIRMEN

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I wish to advise the House at this time that, pursuant to Standing Order 92(5), the following Members have been appointed to the Panel of Chairmen: Robert Coates and Anthony Roman.

It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

ALGONQUIN RADIO OBSERVATORY

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in answer to my second question concerning the closure of the Algonquin Radio Observatory located in Algonquin Park in eastern Ontario, the Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Oberle) had the gall to say that I was an alarmist and that I was not being helpful to the morale of the employees. This is a new-found method of

diverting blame and responsibility from the Government. It is a cheap tactic.

If the Minister is genuinely concerned about the morale of the employees, why did the director in charge of the observatory visit the site one week ago today and tell the employees that they should submit their resumés so that they would have an opportunity to apply for other jobs? How does the Minister think that affected morale? Instead of blaming the Opposition for asking pertinent questions about this incredible Government, why does the Minister of State for Science and Technology not admit that it is the unconscionable financial restraints imposed by his own Government that have caused this entire mess? It is the Minister who is creating the alarm, not the members of the Opposition.

I visited the employees last Sunday and I can tell the Minister that there was absolutely—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I regret that the Hon. Member's time has expired.

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HOUSING

INCREASED RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that our residential building industry continues to boom. This is just one more sign that the economic objectives of the Government are right on track. As quoted in *The Globe and Mail* of today:

Residential construction across Canada continues to outpace even the most optimistic forecasts—

“The spectacular strength of new home building—is breath-taking—

Up to September of this year national housing starts number almost 125,000—a 26 per cent increase over the same period last year. The figures are equally impressive for the Province of Ontario where there is a 29 per cent increase over last year's starts. However, this building upsurge carries right across the country. For example, the Province of Nova Scotia is ahead by a spectacular 50 per cent.

In my riding of Niagara Falls and the surrounding area housing starts are 34 per cent ahead of last year. This is good news for Niagara Falls and good news for all of Canada.

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REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CALL FOR ACCELERATION OF MANITOBA PROJECTS

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, Manitobans of all political stripes feel that a great injustice has been committed against our province. In the days and weeks ahead the Government will have ample opportunity to