During the 1988 election, the PC Canada Fund received $2,000 from the Starr charity for dinner for the Prime Minister.

Does the Prime Minister consider himself to be a charity worthy of a $2,000 donation for a meal?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows, people buy tickets to events. If any moneys have come into the hands of the PC Canada Fund or Members of Parliament that are not rightfully there, they will be returned.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF JIM DINNING, ALBERTA MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to the attention of Hon. Members the presence in our gallery today of the Honourable Jim Dinning, Minister of Education of the Government of Alberta.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

[*Translation*]

PAROLE

CHANGES IN THE REGULATIONS CONCERNING SEXUAL DELINQUENTS

Hon. Bob Layton (Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Solicitor General.

According to an article which appeared this morning in the *Globe and Mail*, the National Parole Board Regulations will be changed to prevent the premature release of sexual offenders.

Could the Minister explain why these changes were not made before and how they will affect Bill C-67?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Solicitor General of Canada and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member said, this Government adopted Bill C-67 for the purpose of preventing dangerous criminals—this is a very important issue which affects all Canadians, Mr. Speaker.

Canadians are concerned about dangerous criminals and especially about the fact that they might be released before serving their full sentence. There was still one major point that my predecessor submitted to a task force, namely, the severe harm that might be caused.

I asked officials in my Department, the Deputy Minister responsible for the National Parole Board and Correctional Services, to come up with a more restrictive definition of severe harm, which we did quite recently. As a result, and Canadians will be pleased to hear this, now that we have tightened up the criteria for evaluating severe harm, our system will be able to offer better protection to all Canadians. I think that is good news.

* * *

[*English*]

FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

REMOVAL OF EXPORT TAX ON LUMBER

Mr. Bob Wood (Nipissing): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade, my question is for the Prime Minister. He will know that 1,300 employees at the G. W. Martin Lumber Ltd. are some of the latest victims of the Government's softwood lumber agreement which really has devastated the industry in northern Ontario.

The Minister for International Trade has said that he agrees that the export tax is unfair because of the increase in exchange rates and should be removed. Is the Prime Minister prepared to undertake that his Government will end this tax?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is involved in consultations that we hope will allow a regime to be put in place that would remove the necessity for that tax. I am not in a position to give details on the extent of those negotiations.

Mr. Wood: I certainly appreciate the Minister's answer.

ALLEGED DOUBLE STANDARD

Mr. Bob Wood (Nipissing): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Prime Minister.

The Minister for International Trade is willing to go to the GATT to have an unfair U.S. import tax on oil imports removed to help the energy sector, but he is unwilling to stand up to the Americans on the lumber issue where an unfair export tax which we are collecting is costing thousands of Canadians their jobs.