

*Oral Questions*

Friends will be friends. Greed will be greed. Tories are always the same.

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**ISRAEL**

**Mr. Bill Attewell (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville):** Mr. Speaker, today over 200 students from across Canada representing the Jewish Students' Network and NAHON are in Ottawa for their annual lobby day.

The group led by Joey Felsen, Batia Tobin and Marla Silverberg are meeting with members of the House of Commons. Today, there is an urgent call for action due to the housing crisis already facing Israel and the large amount of damage caused by the Scud missile attacks.

The Government of Canada just recently confirmed its intention to extend humanitarian aid to Iraq. In a similar spirit the government should extend such aid to Israel, which has been an innocent victim throughout this war.

The Government of Canada has always supported the cause of Soviet Jewry and, as chairman of the Canadian Parliamentary Group for Soviet Jewry, along with all members of the House, we urge the Government of Canada to aid the people of Israel in rebuilding homes destroyed by the unprovoked attack by Iraq and, in addition, to build additional housing for the newly arrived Soviet Jews.

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**FISHERIES**

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has published a booklet entitled *Sustainable Development and the Northwest Atlantic Fishery*.

The Law of the Sea is invoked to argue the case for restraint in catches. The Law of the Sea was designed to avoid crises in fisheries by affirming the responsibility of all nations to co-operate in conserving and managing fishery resources in the high seas.

The government hopes that the principles of the Law of the Sea will become "ingrained in the strategies of the world's fishing industries" so that ultimately "destructive overfishing will become as rare as it is unconscionable".

This is a great statement, but it is hollow because this government has not yet ratified the Law of the Sea. If the government wishes to be taken seriously on environmental issues, it should at last ratify the Law of the Sea and make sure that Canada does not become the laughing stock of the international community.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[English]

**THE CONSTITUTION**

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Yesterday the Prime Minister denied that there is a private committee of senior bureaucrats working on constitutional change behind closed doors.

Does he deny a front-page story in *The Globe and Mail* of January 31, and I quote: "Teams of Deputy Ministers Work on new plan for Canada"?

Does he also deny the statement of his own minister of federal-provincial relations, Senator Lowell Murray, who said: "We're working in the federal government on our own constitutional program"?

Does he deny this statement of his own minister?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend began by saying that I denied the existence of a private committee. I did no such thing. I denied the existence of a secret committee.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Mulroney:** There is no secret committee. The best evidence of that is the newspaper quotes that my hon. friend has just cited. It is not secret. It is public—

**Ms. Copps:** It is a private committee.

**Mr. Mulroney:** —and it is legitimate work being done by the Government of Canada to—

**An hon. member:** Bravo.

**Mrs. Marleau:** Unbelievable.

**Mr. Mulroney:** Only a Liberal would want deputy ministers not to work. We put them to work in the interests of Canada.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.