

S.O. 21

[Translation]

INCOME TAX

EMPLOYEES RECEIVING GRATUITIES—ELIGIBILITY FOR SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a representation to the Government, on behalf of all employees receiving gratuities in the Province of Quebec. These employees will now be obliged to enter on their income tax returns both their income and the total amount of gratuities received. It also seems this will create a very unfair situation when their income tax returns are processed by the Department of National Revenue. These employees are being required to declare their income from gratuities on their income tax returns and to pay tax on this income which is not, however, recognised as insurable earnings for social security programs such as unemployment insurance. In the circumstances, since the Quebec National Assembly has passed legislation, I would like to ask the Minister responsible to adjust, if necessary, the regulations of the Department of National Revenue to the legislation passed in Quebec, and if no amendment is necessary, I would appreciate it if the Minister would give employees who receive gratuities the assurance that their total earnings will be insurable for the purposes of social security programs, especially unemployment insurance.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CENTRAL AMERICA—CANADIAN SUPPORT URGED FOR CONTADORA GROUP'S INITIATIVE

Mr. Bob Ogle (Saskatoon East): Mr. Speaker, Central America is still poised on the brink of regional war. Unfortunately we are not getting much clear news these days. Nevertheless, I understand that the American forces continue to carry out a non-stop operation under the title of Big Pine III. There is now the possibility of direct military intervention against El Salvador, as well as the continuing intervention against Nicaragua.

The Kissinger Report, unfortunately, did not speak about a negotiated settlement, but put in a high place the question of a military settlement. It also talks about aid. I am happy to know that Canada has released \$13 million to go to aid to Nicaragua. It is a good kind of aid which will buy cattle, dairy equipment, and dairy machinery.

The Contadora Group, however, made up of Venezuela, Mexico, Panama, and Colombia are having difficulty bringing about a negotiated settlement. The President of Argentina, Raul Alfonsin, with the most difficult country in Latin America to handle at this time, has indicated that he believes the situation in Central America is so serious that he is prepared to send his Foreign Minister, Dante Caputo, to visit the region. I call upon the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) once again, as the best friend and ally of the

United States, to visit the region so that Canada can have its own independent support policy for the Contadora Group.

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THE CENSUS

CONSEQUENCES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA COURT DECISION

Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta): Mr. Speaker, I have learned that the Minister of Justice (Mr. MacGuigan) now intends to appeal last month's B.C. court decision in the Otto case. The House will recall that a homemaker in my riding, Mrs. Mary Otto, was charged and taken to court by the Department of Justice because she refused to answer the detailed, personal questions contained in the 1981 census long form, questions dealing with such things as race, religion, colour, ethnic background, and even the number of bathrooms in her home. Mrs. Otto fought the Department of Justice without the benefit of a lawyer, and she won. It was a David and Goliath story that heartened many people across Canada, especially the hundreds of others facing similar charges.

When one reads Judge Govan's decision, it is obvious that the ruling is clear cut, with virtually no grounds for appeal. Judge Govan found that the definition of a census as set out in the Statistics Act means just that, a head count of population. It does not include randomly sampled survey information. It does not give "Big Brother", the right to enter anyone's home or business and demand a wide range of personal information.

I had hoped that the Government's response to this ruling would be an abandonment of its police state methods, and an acceptance of the judge's decision. However, if the Minister of Justice insists, as he has, on grinding Mrs. Otto into the ground through the long appeal process, the Government should at least suspend legal action in the other cases, as it did in the case of a similar ruling on the metric issue.

Mr. Speaker: I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member, but his time has expired.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE ECONOMY

FORECASTS FOR 1984

Mr. Brian Mulroney (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. In Toronto yesterday the Minister delivered another of his Pollyanna views on the situation of the Canadian economy. In his speech he stated: "In 1984, Canada will move in terms of economic growth and improvement from recovery to a period of expansion." This morning, however, the Conference Board of Canada, a widely respected forecasting agency, gave an