

*Oral Questions*

tions they were entitled to. Following this dispute which was settled thanks to the understanding of the President of the Treasury Board, haphazard and erratic disciplinary action has just been taken against many workers, including 38 of the 50 employees of the Canada Manpower Centre in Jonquière. Can the Minister give us the assurance that he has assessed the situation and considered all the circumstances before this action was taken, and that the employees in Jonquière or in Quebec, who seem to have been hit harder than those elsewhere in the country, have not been discriminated against?

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Jonquière for his question. The Quebec clerks have not been dealt with more severely than those in other provinces. I can give this assurance to my colleague and to other members of the House.

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[English]

**STATUS OF WOMEN**

## REVIEW OF COMPOSITION OF ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for the status of women. As the minister will know, the council announced that it is ready to conduct an internal review of its operations, having failed to recognize that the capacity and the credibility of the council to review itself have been radically undermined by the resignation of its president and then five board members, by the loss of much of its excellent research staff, and by the launching of a \$1.3 million lawsuit. In light of this evidence, and in light of the ongoing public discussion, will the minister agree to appeal again to his cabinet colleagues for an independent and external review of the advisory council?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, if the hon. member examines his statement he will realize that he is in danger of coming down with an acute case of hypercontradiction. On the one hand he previously suggested and argued that the advisory council should be allowed to maintain its independent status. Now he is asking whether we should try to interfere in the decisions of the council. He cannot have it both ways.

**An hon. Member:** Why not? You can.

**Mr. Axworthy:** We are trying to stay consistent on our position that the advisory council is an independent body.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Axworthy:** It decides its own opinions on its own judgment, and we respect this.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McLean:** Madam Speaker, where I come from if a doctor is sick he usually does not prescribe for himself; he gets another doctor to look at his illness.

I have a supplementary question for the minister. If he is not prepared to recognize the sickness surrounding the council at the moment, in light of the fact that six appointments were made to the advisory council last week, with very little consultation, and six more appointments will be made by June, will the minister assure the House that future nominations will be widely sought and that the review the council will do of itself will be made public before these three-year appointments are made?

**Mr. Axworthy:** Madam Speaker, again I suggest to the hon. member that if he is talking about sickness perhaps the worst problem is some of those people, including himself, who are surrounding this particular council with their own form of doomsaying and not letting it get on with its job to represent the points of view of women in this country—

**Mr. Clark:** And the point of view of the Liberal Party.

**Mr. Axworthy:**—and to deal with the substance of issues. The real heart of the matter is better equality for women. That council has had appointed to it some of the outstanding women of this country who are prepared to sit on that council at the present time.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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**NATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM**

## QUERY RESPECTING INTRODUCTION OF RATIONING

**Mr. G. M. Gurbín (Bruce-Grey):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. It is with regard to the impact of the National Energy Program on Canadian oil production. Is the minister aware of the fact that by the end of April there will be 120 fewer oil rigs in Canada, that investment in Canadian oil production will be 30 per cent less than last year, and that in January and February of this year there was a 15 per cent increase in the amount of oil imports? According to the Canadian Petroleum Association this will amount to something like \$182 billion extra over the next ten years to Canadian consumers. Does the minister understand the collision course the government is on, with the need of Canadians for oil? Does he have a rationing program in place now to take care of those needs, and how quickly can he implement it?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, as the hon. member knows, one of the main reasons for the increase in imports recently has been the cutback by the government of Alberta—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!