

courage to answer about his own government's conflict of interest guidelines. How can the Prime Minister defend his transport minister, who was a former Minister of Justice, in promoting a cosy, closed door review by a law firm which will end up reporting to the same minister? Why does the Prime Minister not stand in his place and do the—

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

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that the hon. member would wish to allow the issue of innocent until proven guilty—

**Mr. Marchi:** His interests are served in the public too.

**Mr. McKnight:** Mr. Speaker, again I can only quote to the hon. member, who has much more experience, I presume, in the law than I, the statement in the Ontario Supreme Court ruling which said that a public commission is not the place to conduct these investigations because people's reputations are at risk and they have no recourse to reply and respond. I am sure the hon. member, being a fair-minded member, would like the individual involved to have the right of reply.

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#### PETRO-CANADA

**Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East):** Mr. Speaker, this is a question for the Minister of State for Privatization. When the government privatized Air Canada, it paid RBC Dominion Securities and Wood Gundy Incorporated over \$30 million to tout the stock. Now, ostensibly to sell Canadians an oil company they already own, the government will spend up to \$175 million, or more, money that will go straight into the pockets of hot shot brokers and agents. Free of the GST, too, thank you very much.

• (1450)

From where is the minister taking that \$175 million? Is it from the \$155 million cut from the Canada Assistance Plan? Is it from the \$35 million cut from programs for Canadian veterans? Is it from the \$1.2 million cut from women's programs and the \$9.7 million cut from native Canadians? Where is the money for all those stockbrokers coming from?

#### Oral Questions

**Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)):** Mr. Speaker, I find it passing strange that the hon. member has these figures when there has not even been a price set for the stocks of Petro-Canada.

Once again, the NDP is manufacturing things to make it look spectacular on the floor of the House of Commons.

**Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East):** Mr. Speaker, it is not the NDP that is manufacturing figures. It is Ian Doig and other noted market analysts. We are just sort of feeding it to the House.

Assuming for a moment that the \$175 million figure is correct and that the government is going to turn the \$500 to \$700 million generated by the first 15 per cent issue back into the company, is it the case then, that in its frenzied desire to strip the Canadian people of assets they now own, the government is prepared to give away somewhere around three-quarters of a billion dollars of taxpayers' money to big time oil company shareholders and stock touts? Is that what the government means by restraint and fighting the deficit?

**Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot answer the question on that substance.

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#### EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for Statistics Canada.

In February of this year, the minister will remember that I asked him whether or not there would be a question dealing with the disabled and employment equity targets on the 1991 census. He answered the House that it was being discussed.

Today, I would like to ask the minister what the outcome of these discussions were.

**Hon. William C. Winegard (Minister for Science):** Mr. Speaker, I do not have the answer to that specific question at the moment. I will get back to the hon. member.