

S.O. 21

● (1410)

[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to mention that the form of debate during question period has vastly improved, and you are to be congratulated.

However, as far as the substance is concerned, I would like to point out to Hon. Members that every day, Canadian voters across Canada are being offered a show that is mediocre in the extreme. What is the purpose of these questions? What are the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party trying to do?

The purpose of their questions is to emphasize the differences in how statements by Ministers and the Right Hon. Prime Minister are interpreted. Their questions are petty, repetitive and full of political rhetoric.

The Liberals ask the same questions as the New Democrats and the New Democrats the same questions as the Liberals. They each want to replace the other as the Official Opposition.

May I suggest to the House that Opposition Members act more responsibly before their constituents and the people of Canada? The role of Opposition Members consists in asking questions about legislation and administration. Let the Party Leaders set an example. Let them stop their childish emoting and show in their questions that they are intelligent and competent.

In fact, their responsibilities and their status as parliamentarians should not leave them any other choice.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SRI LANKA—CIVIL VIOLENCE

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, in the recent past there has been a flood of disturbing news of violence and killings in Sri Lanka, a friend and ally of Canada. Sri Lanka, since its independence from British rule, obtained in 1948, has throughout preserved the democratic process in its Government.

Recent events, reportedly brought about by a Tamil separatist group seeking to divide this small island, include brutal killings of innocent citizens of the country, and are threatening its very carefully preserved democracy. The Government has appealed for calm and urged the Sinhalese majority not to retaliate against innocent Tamils. The Government is struggling hard with meagre resources to bring about peace, and sustain law and order.

The democratically elected Government of this nation is highly vulnerable in this particular case. I call upon the Canadian Government to do everything possible to ensure that

law and order, peace and democracy are maintained in the country of Sri Lanka. I would like to know whether the Government is contemplating any steps to assist the Government of Sri Lanka, and what response the Canadian Department of External Affairs will give to try to preserve democracy in this fragile situation.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

ACID RAIN—TRIBUTE TO WORK OF MUSKOKA COMMITTEE

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to throw a bouquet to the acid rain committee which has been so active in the District Municipality of Muskoka. Since 1980 members of this regional government standing committee have been addressing the environmental hazards of acid rain from the grassroots level. Under the auspices of Sheila Hatch, Mayor of the Township of Muskoka Lakes, this committee serves as a shining example of the impact which can be achieved by municipal government bodies. A small annual budget of \$2,000 is used for travelling expenses and correspondence, much of which involves discussions with groups in the United States.

It stands to reason that an acid rain committee should be active in Muskoka. Each time councillors drive to a meeting, they bear witness to stands of hardwood showing ill health, and acidified lakes devoid of fish.

Mayor Hatch attended the meeting on auto emission standards in Ottawa earlier this month. She agrees with me that the technology already in place to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions should be used on Canadian automobiles to bring us up to standards set in the United States.

On their behalf, I challenge other municipalities affected by acid rain to pick up the torch at the grassroots. There can never be too many groups assessing the horrible blight of acid rain in Canada and around the world.

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THE ADMINISTRATION

CRITICISM OF MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Mr. John Parry (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, recent ministerial statements and actions are leading Canadians to lose faith in the veracity of their Government. When the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney) publicly confuses law and tradition, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) ascribe greatly different meanings to the word "universality", and their daily ration of vaudeville, diatribe, dogma and evasion, is described as answers, Canadians must wonder if the Government is deliberately trying to undermine our languages.

Confucius, when asked what would be the most important reform to better the human condition, replied after careful