

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. MacGuigan:** It is an effective rhetorical device for him and I welcome it, but the question should be put on the table. We welcome the assurances which we have received from his Party. We would wish to have similar assurances from the Official Opposition so that the Bill could indeed be passed before Christmas without debate.

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**CORPORATE SHAREHOLDING LIMITATION ACT**

## REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT WITHDRAW BILL S-31

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, my question which relates to a Bill that has been introduced since the presentation of the list of the Government's legislation, namely, Bill S-31, is directed to either the Acting Prime Minister or the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs who will know that the Senate has now raised several constitutional and other objections to the Bill. Will the Minister or the Acting Prime Minister tell us, in light of those objections, whether the Government will now freeze discussion on that Bill or withdraw the Bill, one or the other, until there has been the opportunity for full and formal consultation between the federal and provincial Governments?

[Translation]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition ought to know that the report tabled in the other House was a committee report, and that consideration of the second reading stage of the bill is expected to take place next week. Consequently, the conclusions drawn by the Leader of the Opposition are probably premature. As for consultations with the Provinces, these have started, since I have already met with the Minister from Alberta. During the next few weeks I shall be meeting as well with the Ministers from other Provinces with an interest in the bill.

[English]

**Mr. Clark:** The Provinces which he has consulted so far have told the Minister to withdraw the Bill or freeze it. I would certainly urge that action upon the Minister. I am encouraged that he says it is premature for him to give that commitment. I trust he will give that commitment soon.

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**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

## GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Let me ask the Acting Prime Minister a question, concerning House business. If the Government is worried about its House business agenda, why is it prepared to introduce a Bill which threatens federal-provincial relations yet refuses to table a Bill which respects human rights?

[Translation]

**Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council):** Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is referring to the business of the House, a subject for which I have an abiding concern. Obviously, if he had not let the bells ring for a whole day this week, and if he had not allowed his Members to raise futile points of order the next day, of course we could have accomplished a lot more in the House than what we shall probably be able to do now before Christmas. As regards Bill S-31 to which he is referring, he knows perfectly well that the Bill was not introduced in the House of Commons but in the other House, and I fail to see why he is bringing up the point he just raised, because up to now, at least thirty-one bills have been introduced in the Senate and it is an entirely normal procedure. So when we say Bill S-31, this presupposes that before this bill, thirty other bills were introduced in the Senate, and that is why this bill is numbered 31.

Under our parliamentary procedure, the Senate is perfectly capable of being the first authority to examine a bill, and the Leader of the Opposition ought to know that once it has approved the bill, it cannot receive royal assent but must first be considered by the House of Commons as well. If we look at the Commons Order Paper, we see that the bills listed under the heading: Government Bills (Senate) are those bills which have the letter S- plus a number. Madam Speaker—

● (1200)

[English]

**Madam Speaker:** The Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT TABLE BILL AFFECTING  
HANDICAPPED AND WOMEN

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Well, we are all encouraged to know that the Government House Leader can count to 31.

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

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

**Mr. Clark:** I would ask him not to blame me for the stupidity of the Minister of Agriculture.

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

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, earlier this week the Minister of Agriculture introduced the practice which, in effect, meant that the House of Commons was not allowed to debate legislation. Now we have the Minister of Justice introducing the idea that we cannot see legislation before it is adopted. Let me ask the Minister of Justice, who has disappeared—

**An Hon. Member:** He is right there!

**Mr. Clark:** Has he resigned?

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