

decide if they want to measure in metric, or should the Government establish compulsory metric measurement by legislation?" Those voting for voluntary—66.8 per cent; Government legislation making it mandatory—only 28.4 per cent.

The second question was "In general, which measurement do you personally prefer, the Imperial measurements such as quarts, pounds, miles, et cetera, or the metric measurements such as litres, kilograms and kilometres?" Imperials 64.8 per cent; metric 26.6 per cent. Most important, Madam Speaker, in the age bracket of 18 to 29 years of age the result was 73.3 per cent for voluntary; only 26.7 per cent for compulsory.

I strongly urge the people of Canada to write the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet), with copies to myself, pleading for a return to voluntary metric conversion similar to the process used in the United States and Great Britain.

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### STATUS OF WOMEN

#### WAGES EARNED BY WOMEN WORKERS—NEED FOR GOVERNMENT EXAMPLE

**Mrs. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East):** Madam Speaker, recent census data confirm that incomes of women continue to lag far behind those of men. More than 1.5 million women have joined the labour force since 1970, yet in ten years the wage gap has been reduced by only 4 per cent. Women still earn only 64 cents for every dollar earned by a man.

Thousands of Canadian women are underpaid and are raising children in poverty as a result of Government inaction. The Minister responsible for the status of women blames provincial Governments for the continuing low wages of women. Instead of passing the buck the federal Government must set an example. Her Government has repeatedly refused to implement mandatory affirmative action for public servants and contract compliance for firms that do business with the Government.

The Liberals guarantee continuing low wages for women through the six and five wage restraint, and have curtailed their bargaining rights. They have ignored the hard won rights of clerks and general service workers, most of whom are women.

The federal Government must set the example for Provinces to follow. It must ensure equal pay for work of equal value for all public servants, and insist on mandatory affirmative action in all sections of our country.

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### FISHERIES

#### RESTRUCTURING OF EAST COAST INDUSTRY—PLEA FOR ACTION

**Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Madam Speaker, the failure of the Government to act decisively and with a

### Oral Questions

sense of urgency concerning restructuring is doing serious and perhaps even permanent damage to the fragile economy of the Atlantic Provinces, especially Newfoundland, which is so dependent on the fishing industry which provides direct and indirect employment to over 80,000 people in the region. This industry is in the midst of the worst crisis in its history, a fact which did not even warrant mention in the budget brought down by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde).

The Cabinet has before it a number of proposals on restructuring, on fleet management and replacement, and its failure to act could seriously undermine our markets and is in fact playing into the hands of Canada's competitors. Yet six months after the report of the Kirby task force, the only response from the Minister of State for Economic Development (Mr. Johnston), who is responsible for restructuring, is that he has been given a mandate to negotiate and that these negotiations are ongoing.

Thousands of jobs are at stake, Madam Speaker, and I plead with the Government to act, and act now.

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### HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. ARTHUR MAGUGU, MINISTER OF FINANCE FOR KENYA

**Madam Speaker:** I would like to draw the attention of the House to the presence in our gallery of His Excellency, Mr. Arthur Magugu, the Minister of Finance for Kenya.

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

• (1415)

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

#### SUPPLY AND SERVICES

##### NATIONAL DEFENCE PATROL FRIGATES—AWARDING OF CONTRACT

**Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Supply and Services. The Cabinet will soon be making a decision on which of the two finalists in the patrol frigate competition, St. John Shipbuilding or Scan Marine, will win the contract. As the Minister is probably aware, the St. John Shipbuilding bid favours the approach which was taken by the Cabinet. Will the Minister assure the House that the contract will be awarded on the basis of defence requirements and not on the basis of political interest?

**Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services):** Madam Speaker, I can assure the hon. gentleman that the criteria will be the best ship, the best industrial benefits, and the best Canadian content.