

S. O. 31

Last night the fisheries minister said that with the proposed UI bill "it seems that everyone quitting their jobs today have been sexually harassed".

To gales of laughter from others from the tar sands, the minister went on to say that if he had been sexually harassed he would want everyone to know that he had been "so favoured".

This is an outrageous statement. Yet again the minister has shown his gross insensitivity to the issues affecting Canadian women. Yet again we see how flawed the interpretation of the new UI legislation will be.

The minister of fisheries owes an apology to every victim of sexual harassment for making light of such a serious issue. With the exception of the Newfoundland Chamber of Commerce, it is no longer even amusing that the *Crosbisaurus* roams about without a leash and a gag.

* * *

• (1110)

LIBERAL PARTY

Mr. Walter Van De Walle (St. Albert): Madam Speaker, another flip-flop for the Liberals. Last week the Liberal leader said he had a plan to scrap the GST. It was reported in the media as the Grits' sleaze tax. Hidden and unfair, it would tax food.

However this week the Liberal leader, speaking at the Toronto Empire Club, admitted that it would be up to 12 months after the next election before the details would be made public. Canadians are demanding that the Liberals come clean with the public; stop waffling.

The Conservative government has a clear economic plan. It has removed the manufacturing tax and replaced it with the GST to make Canada more competitive in the world market.

The Liberals have no plan. Canadians have a right to know where political parties stand.

[*Translation*]

CITY OF MONTREAL

Hon. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Hélène Drapeau, assistant clerk of the city of Montreal, kindly sent me a copy of a resolution passed by the executive committee of the city of Montreal on December 22, concerning the unfortunate freeze on grants in-lieu-of-taxes which will put the city in a very difficult position because, as it says in the resolution, the decision was made without prior consultation with the municipalities.

I wish to inform hon. members that next Monday we will meet the mayor of Montreal the executive committee and everyone who is concerned about a decision that will create tremendous problems for Montreal which stands to lose \$10 million without having been consulted. The entire Quebec caucus—yesterday, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce put a question on the subject to my good friend, the Minister of Finance—understands the financial situation but our point is that there was no consultation and this puts tremendous pressure on the finances of the city of Montreal.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member's time is up. The hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

* * *

[*English*]

SMALL BUSINESSES LOANS ACT

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Madam Speaker, as a small business person, I am fully supportive of the review of the Small Businesses Loans Act. Amendments to the act are indeed long overdue.

In particular, I have had a major concern that our small businesses did not have adequate access to readily available capital. A number of entrepreneurs in Sarnia—Lambton have reinforced this concern.

Today I still have some reservations that the current amendments to the act will correct this problem. Improvements rely on a firm and unwavering commitment by our financial institutions to better utilize the program, to maximize access and to be moderate in their demands for collateral on a personal guarantee. I question whether current amendments to the Small Businesses Loans Act will guarantee this commitment.