

Oral Questions

various alternatives to ensure the population is not penalized by the present situation in Ethiopia.

QUERY CONCERNING MEASURES NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE
CEASE-FIRE

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what the Minister said, but she herself must admit that despite all the efforts and all the good will of Canadians who have responded very eagerly and with exemplary charity, food aid is not going where it should. And the reason the famine is raging again is the war, this unspeakable war that is continuing. Can the Minister tell us on behalf of the Canadian government what Canada can do concretely to work for a ceasefire as soon as possible in that country?

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister of External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to tell my colleague that so far, until a few weeks ago, food reached the affected populations. I was able myself to observe the delivery of food in northern Eritrea and Tigré. Now, I agree with the Hon. Member that the new situation, namely the state of war, that exists of course threatens the delivery of food to the affected populations. As I was just telling you, the multilateral agencies and donor countries are now consulting each other and we are now, to begin with, of course putting pressure on the Ethiopian Government to ensure that international agencies can return to the northern part of the country and supply food.

Also, the United Nations Under Secretary General's mission is now in Ethiopia. We are counting a great deal on this mission and hope that it will result in a more favourable situation and commitments from the governments involved.

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[English]

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR GREATER POWERS

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice. Max Yalden, the Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, in his recent annual report called upon the Government to give the Commission greater powers to enable it to play a more active investigatory and regulatory role on pay equity for women. He also wants tougher powers to deal with discrimination against the disabled and visible minorities, instead of responding on a complaint by complaint basis.

Will the Minister of Justice respond positively to these important recommendations in the very near future in order to promote full equality for Canadian women and for Canadian minorities?

• (1500)

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to receive the first report of the commission under its new Commissioner, Mr. Yalden, for whom I have, the very greatest of respect, and this view is shared by the Government. I wish him well in the performance of his responsibilities.

I can only say that I am waiting for the detailed recommendations with respect to the matters raised in the report. I will give them the attention that they obviously require. When I receive these matters I will have a chance to respond to the House at the earliest possible date.

REQUEST THAT ATLANTIC CANADA BE REPRESENTED ON
COMMISSION

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same Minister. The Minister says that he will wait. For nearly six months there has been no representative whatsoever from Atlantic Canada on this important national commission, despite repeated pleas by Max Yalden for the Government to move finally to fill that vacancy. In fact, there is no one on the commission from east of Montreal.

When will the Minister finally move to fill this vacancy? How much longer will he wait before ending this insult to the people of Atlantic Canada?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I have to give the Hon. Member marks for originality. That is the same question he asked me in committee two weeks ago.

Mr. Robinson: That's right.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: The fact of the matter is that I responded to him at that time to point out that the vacancy on the commission was as a result of the transfer of Mr. Fairweather, who represented that area very effectively, of course, as the commissioner at the time. I am looking now at a list of very important and impressive candidates. I will make sure that this position is filled—

Mr. Mulroney: The Hon. Member may be a candidate.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: The Hon. Member would not qualify on a number of counts. One is that he does not come from that area.

I will make sure that we get a good candidate. I will want the support of the Hon. Member when I make the announcement.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Algoma on a single question.