

Oral Questions

It is also fully and completely consistent with our rights and obligations under Article 11 of GATT.

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ABORTION

SUPREME COURT DECISION—REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER
COMMUNICATE WITH B.C. PREMIER

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. He will know that women in the Province of British Columbia are being denied access to safe therapeutic abortions by a Premier imposing his own extreme anti-choice views on this sensitive issue.

Mr. Mantha: That is not true.

Mr. Robinson: Will the Prime Minister finally show leadership and communicate directly with his counterpart, Premier Vander Zalm, and tell him to stop displaying such contempt, both for the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, and for the women of British Columbia whose lives are being seriously threatened by this very dangerous Premier?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I have pointed out that my colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, very shortly after the Supreme Court decision came down, was directly in touch with all of his provincial counterparts. Even as we discuss this matter on the floor of the House he is involved in discussions and consultations with the provinces which, as the Hon. Member knows, have a significant constitutional responsibility for delivery of health services.

We are moving in this area. We are dealing with our provincial counterparts across the country. I have every confidence that my colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, will deal with this matter not only in the best interests of British Columbians but in the best interests of all Canadians.

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the Prime Minister himself will not show the kind of leadership he should be showing on this issue.

Some Hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Thacker: Where is your leadership?

[*Translation*]

INVOCATION OF *NON OBSTANTE* CLAUSE—GOVERNMENT
POSITION

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the Minister of Justice. On Friday, January 29, the Minister stated in the House that he had no intention of invoking the notwithstanding clause with respect to this matter. Is that still the position of the Government today?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, my answer is the same as the one I gave Friday after the Supreme Court ruling.

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[*English*]

INDIAN AFFAIRS

PEACE RIVER PULP MILL PROJECT—POSSIBLE EFFECT ON
LUBICON LAND CLAIM

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. He will know that his Minister of Indian Affairs recently announced the provision of sizeable aid, some \$9.5 million, from the Western Diversification Fund for the establishment of a Japanese owned pulp mill to be located in the Peace River district of northern Alberta. Be that as it may, the timber for use in this mill is to be cut from lands which are subject to the yet unsettled Lubicon Indian land claim.

● (1500)

How can it be reconciled that the Minister takes action of this kind as Minister responsible for the Western Diversification Fund at the same time as he has constitutional trust obligations to protect the interests of Indian bands? Is there not here a very classic case of conflict of interest?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the last part of the question is very directly no. There is a question as to whether the lands for which cutting rights have been received are even within the area claimed. The Hon. Member puts that as a fact in the preamble of his question and that is not necessarily agreed upon.

The Hon. Member knows that cutting rights and provincial jurisdiction flow from that as well. The judgment which he made in his concluding statement does not necessarily follow from the facts, and neither does it follow that the conclusion he drew is correct.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister takes much unto himself when he denies that there is any conflict. I think that is a very large constitutional question.

LUBICON INDIAN BAND LAND CLAIM—REQUEST THAT
MEDIATOR BE APPOINTED

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, has the Deputy Prime Minister been made aware that this morning in the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs a motion was agreed to by all Parties that the Government of Canada commence, without any further delay, bilateral negotiations with the Lubicon Indian Band and that the Hon. E. Davie Fulton be appointed as a mediator in that dispute?