

S. O. 31

The parliamentary secretary also referred to discussions which occurred between the parties early this week and he seems to have forgotten the actual course of events.

Mrs. Finestone: Maybe he distorted them.

Mrs. Catterall: I would not suggest, as my colleague behind me did, that he might have distorted them. I would not say that for a moment. He has been in the House of Commons since at least 1978, so perhaps it is just that his memory is failing somewhat since Monday and Tuesday.

He accused my colleague, the member for Dartmouth, of being responsible for not achieving wage parity for the ships' crews workers. I want to remind the member opposite and I want to make sure that this is clearly on the record, that in fact it is the member for Dartmouth who, earlier this week, was able to get a commitment from the President of the Treasury Board that parity for east and west coast workers would be effective the date an agreement was signed; that it would not be something that needed to be negotiated at the bargaining table. I will have more to say about those discussions later.

An Hon. Member: Time.

Mrs. Catterall: I have no intention of concluding before 1.16 p.m., so we are into a continuing situation here, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Finestone: It is up to the Chair to call it.

Mrs. Catterall: The member for Dartmouth has admirably represented his constituents. We will—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brightwell): I regret to interrupt the member. She will indeed have time after the lunch break.

It being 1.16 p.m., I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1.16 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, this government is becoming skilful at recycling, particularly when it comes to old promises. Take for instance putting into law an environmental assessment process. It was first promised in the 1984 election, then in the 1988 election, and most recently in the throne speech last April.

We learn now that Cabinet has put this proposal on hold. Apparently it is their opinion that an environmental assessment law is not an urgent step. To make matters worse, it is reported today that when and if an environmental assessment law is ever approved, the Export Development Corporation would be exempted. Why? Does Canada plan to export polluting practices?

From day care to universality of pensions, from public consultation to foreign aid, from fisheries to sustainable development, increasingly this government's decisions fly in the face of its own promises.

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PUBLIC SERVICE ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, the unfair treatment by this government of veterans' hospital and other federal workers under Bill C-49, the back to work legislation, is just another sign that this government is no longer listening.

The employees of veterans' hospitals work very hard. They treat our worthy veterans with care, compassion and give more energy to the comfort of their patients than most of us will ever know. Families of these patients want an end to the labour dispute, but they also want these workers fairly compensated for their unending, unselfish and dedicated efforts.

Instead the government is trying to resolve this dispute using a hammer, rather than an approach of fairness and honesty. The government should stop playing with figures in distorting the truth. It must accept the fact that these people deserve equitable wage settlements for the work they do.