

Oral Questions

“religious activities” have been confirmed and restricted to a certain extent by the decision of Canadian courts. The interpretation bulletins prepared for organizations which want to avail themselves of legislative provisions regarding charitable organizations are based on the act itself, of course, and on court decisions which restrict the meaning to be given to the word “charity”. That is the basis of our interpretation bulletins.

[English]

CHURCHES' OPPOSITION TO DIVORCE LEGISLATION

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister regard churches which are bringing forward strong pressure in opposition to divorce legislation as legitimate in trying to implement or change legislation, or does he read that as a violation of the terms under which they were registered as charities?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I would rather not make an overall judgment since I am not aware of this case. I would urge the Hon. Member—

An Hon. Member: He is not listening, he is not interested!

Mr. Bussières: Indeed, Mr. Speaker, Members opposite never seem to be interested in the answers. The Hon. Member ought to re-examine the interpretation bulletin, as I said, so as to understand better and make his own judgment. I will be pleased to consider any specific case he wants to bring to my attention. If he does not agree with the interpretation bulletin, he should admit it openly and say that, in his opinion, the Government should disregard the Income Tax Act and the interpretations of the courts, and apply the law blindly according to circumstances and as it sees fit.

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[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS

DISMISSAL OF WOMAN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER—
WITHHOLDING OF DEPARTMENTAL FINDINGS

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport and concerns a case widely reported on the weekend, where the Public Service Commission Appeal Board ruled that Ginette Roncali was unjustly dismissed from her job in non-traditional employment as an air traffic controller. Why did the Minister's Department withhold from the Appeal Board the findings of its own internal inquiry which indicated this woman had been made a scapegoat for the errors of others in the Department?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think the case itself is a matter of some concern. On the specific issue of the Appeal Board, there is a clause in the Air

Traffic Controllers' collective agreement which specifically prohibits that kind of evidence being passed on to appeal hearings. Unfortunately, at the same time the supervisor was ill and so could not present the evidence personally. In this case Mrs. Roncali has been reinstated and assigned to the Waterloo area to go through a retraining period so she can resume duties.

● (1500)

DEMOTION OF EMPLOYEE

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, what concerns me about cases such as this is that a woman has to go through the whole process of an appeal board before she can be reinstated to a job which is considered to be in a non traditional employment area. Though Mrs. Roncali has now been reinstated, why was she demoted at the outset from her job as air traffic controller, to that of a clerk?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, in this particular case the matter was not one of male versus female. There was a question of the performance of duties, and that is why the action was taken. Mrs. Roncali then followed the proper procedure, which was to go to an appeal board which found in her favour. This demonstrates there are procedures there to ensure there are not injustices committed. If there are further aspects of the case which would reflect any form of discrimination, I would be quite prepared to undertake to look into them to make sure they did not happen again.

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PETITION

MR. OGLE—TESTING OF U.S. NUCLEAR DEVICES

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Saskatoon East (Mr. Ogle) on Friday, March 16, 1984 meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

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Mr. Paproski: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We are just about to lose a lottery, a \$33 million 1979 agreement between the federal Government and the provinces. The Minister has been trying to indicate—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member could possibly bring this to the attention of the House by a statement pursuant to Standing Order 21. In terms of the Standing Orders of the House, he is hardly raising a point of order.