

S. O. 31

### PRESIDENT OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax):** Mr. Speaker, as a Canadian woman of Irish descent, it is with great pride that I salute the election of Mary Robinson, the first woman President of the Irish Republic.

Winning the post with 52 per cent of the vote, the 46 year old lawyer, in her own words, rocked the system instead of the cradle.

At 25, Mary Robinson was Ireland's youngest law professor. At 26, she was the youngest member of her country's Senate.

The mother of three has been a long-time advocate of liberalized divorce laws, access to contraception and the decriminalization of homosexuality.

The fact that the women of Ireland overwhelmingly supported her candidacy is another example of the increasing influence of the gender gap world-wide.

Ireland's presidential mansion is in Dublin's beautiful Phoenix Park. I know that all members of this House join me in agreeing with Mary Robinson's campaign slogan—A woman's place is in the park.

**Mr. Speaker:** I think members would permit me to observe that my grandmother was Mary Robinson. She also was Irish.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### PROPOSERS OF FEDERALISM

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Jonquière):** Mr. Speaker, would you believe it? After Jean Chrétien campaigned across the country and managed to kill the Meech Lake Accord, and now that Canada is in a constitutional dead end and the country is no longer able to renew and regenerate its federalism—all because of Jean Chrétien and the Liberal Party—the Progressive Conservative Party and the Liberal Party, to provide a counterweight to Quebec's efforts to redefine its future, may be getting together on the Bélanger-Campeau Commission via their respective representatives. That the Progressive Conservative Party's representative is a federalist and defends that position is his right, and I respect that right,

but Mr. Speaker, I also would like to see some respect for our history and the events that took place last June. Trudeau—and Chrétien—style federalism and Brian Mulroney's federalism are at opposite ends of the scale—never the twain shall meet!

[English]

\* \* \*

### RURAL CANADA

**Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River):** Mr. Speaker, rural Canada is in crisis. Most rural communities are losing their businesses, and their populations are stagnant or in decline.

This is not a crisis made in rural Canada. Past P.C. and Liberal governments have mismanaged our forestry, farming and fisheries.

This government's policies are a direct attack on rural communities. High interest rates, cuts to VIA Rail, the abandonment of railway branch lines, the goods and services tax, cuts to regional development and unemployment insurance changes are just a few examples.

Symbolic of it all, the government is standing by and applauding while Canada Post guts rural communities by closing rural post offices, even in places the size of Yorkton. Government members opposite sit idle while the only federal service that rural communities have is being savaged.

Rural Canadians deserve better. This Saturday, December 1, New Democrats will initiate a rural Canada defence campaign. We plan to stand shoulder to shoulder with rural people from Newfoundland to B.C., fighting with them against the government's attack, and for policies which will support viable rural communities.

\* \* \*

### LOBSTER FISHERY

**Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, many fishermen in the riding of Malpeque and across Prince Edward Island are angry and confused over the contradictory policies and broken promises of this government.

Last spring the federal government advised Prince Edward Island lobster fishermen that no size increase