

Oral Questions

the point. What the hon. member should be noting is that, at the present time, there is no ethics counsellor and no reports have been filed.

The government has moved forward on a number of important commitments that were contained in the red book: commitments to fulfil the report of the standing committee of the House of Commons from last June; the commitment to appoint an ethics counsellor; the commitment to give him investigatory powers; the commitment to stop the contingency fees that were polluting the government procurement process.

These are important commitments. We have met them. They should be applauding us.

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[Translation]

NORTH KOREA

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Yesterday, the United States pleaded in favour of commercial sanctions against North Korea. The proposed sanctions include a mandatory ban on North Korean imports or exports of arms or weapon components, a ban on technical and scientific co-operation in order not to enhance North Korea's nuclear capacity, and terminating all economic assistance through the UN or its subsidiaries.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs tell the House whether Canada unconditionally supports the U.S. position on banning North Korean imports or exports of arms, and on the whole range of proposed commercial sanctions against that country?

• (1430)

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to tell the hon. member that Canada supports the U.S. position and that, if needed, we will lobby other members of the Security Council so that it passes this resolution. If the UN goes ahead with these sanctions against North Korea, we will certainly fully comply with all of them.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères): Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate what action has been taken by the government of Canada to bring North Korea back into the fold of the Atomic Energy Agency and to ensure that that country's nuclear program is compliant with the provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we do not have diplomatic relations with North Korea, and are not able to express our views directly to that country. However, we did so through public statements, and indirectly, by presenting our point of view to people who are in regular contact with the North Korean government.

During the recent visit by the South Korean foreign affairs minister, the Prime Minister and I stressed how important it was,

in our view, to fully respect the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to have all the nations of the world renew it, and to convince the North Korean government that it cannot isolate itself in that way. It must join the ranks of most other countries of the world who want us not only to ban nuclear arms but also to respect the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

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[English]

JUSTICE

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

On March 14 the minister said in the House: "I do not believe it is reasonable for anybody to interpret the term sexual orientation as it appears in the human rights legislation as including pedophiles".

Whether child molesters are homosexual or heterosexual in their orientation they certainly are not reasonable. Child abusers will find it entirely reasonable to launch a challenge to the Criminal Code on the basis of this sexual orientation if the term is not defined in the human rights act.

Why is the minister so reluctant to define the term sexual orientation?

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the hon. member that the Minister of Justice is in no way reluctant to define the term sexual orientation. He has expressed the seriousness of this question in the relevant situations.

It is going to require a good deal of study to deal with it. The Minister of Justice is now in the middle of doing this study with the department. We will not only have a definition of sexual orientation, but we will be able to bring forward to the House a program and a policy of which I think the House will approve.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that answer. If the meaning of the term sexual orientation is so clear—and he referred to jurisprudence previously as being the avenue by which he would have it defined—I believe the government should take over, should not shirk its responsibilities and should define the term. The minister said: "I do not think matters of public policy should be determined in the courts".

Why is the minister not willing to take that responsibility, let that be discussed here, and define it properly in the legislation?

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice has put before the House a record which in my opinion is enviable. He has brought forward legislation on young offenders and sentencing and amendments to the Criminal Code.