

*Oral Questions*

assurances on how these waters will be passed through by these submarines to reach the acoustic testing facility.

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the same minister because this is much more serious than what the minister wants to address. Certainly a public review is where you address the serious risks that the public face.

What I am asking is a procedural question of the minister. It is abundantly clear from documentation that was provided to cabinet that this technique was already found to be illegal in the Kemano-Alcan case. You cannot use Order in Council powers to exempt yourself in any decision from things such as this.

My question to the minister is will you remove yourself from this situation—

**Mr. Speaker:** The matter the hon. member raises is of course important, but I do ask hon. members to stay within the rules in presenting their questions.

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I think there are two important things here. First of all, the environmental aspects of this activity were reviewed pursuant to the 1990 cabinet decision to ascertain the environmental implications of cabinet decisions.

Responsible departments did analyse the information that was relevant to this activity including the final environmental impact statement assessment, as was done for the SEAFAC facility, the thoroughness of which has successfully withstood a court challenge in the U.S.

Pursuant to government policy, the results of a preliminary environmental assessment will be made available to the public.

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**CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

**Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal):** Mr. Speaker, over a year ago, the Prime Minister co-chaired with great fanfare the United Nations World Summit for Children where the Convention on the Rights of the Child was passed. This convention still sits on the shelf in the Prime Minister's office gathering dust.

**Some hon. members:** You are all wrong.

**Mrs. Finestone:** Fine. Will the Prime Minister today then, if I am so absolutely wrong, do the right thing and send a message to all Canadian children and to the advocates who are sitting here in the House and tell them where, when and how this convention will be signed?

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, the convention is not on the shelf of the Prime Minister. The convention has been proposed to the provinces as we said it would. The provinces are first responsible for children.

What the Prime Minister and I said is that as soon as the provinces have ratified or accepted the convention, it will be signed. We are still waiting for two provinces, one of which was recently involved in an election, and we are told that the provinces will deal quickly with the matter. I still say that the convention will be ratified before the end of the year.

**Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal):** Mr. Speaker, if the minister knows when the convention is going to be passed then political will should get it passed now.

The plight of the children of Canada is really staggering. One in six live in poverty, homelessness is at emergency levels, too many children still live in families that live below the poverty line, health conditions for our aboriginal children compare to that of the Third World, and this government's economic mismanagement is driving more people on to the bread lines.

• (1440)

My question to the Prime Minister is this. What concrete steps is he taking that will address and redress, right now, the crisis conditions faced by over one million Canadian children who are still living in poverty in this country.

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I will answer right now. This week I had four meetings with people dealing with children. I do not believe there is one member in this House who does not want to deal with the problems of children. It is a very serious one and must be addressed by all Canadians.

The member will recall that all departments of this government spend approximately \$15 billion a year. We would like to do more and we will. I have already announced that the government will come forward with