

*Oral Questions*

This will be improved upon, as I said, when the postings are announced shortly.

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• (1430)

**PENSIONS OF MEMBERS**

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal two-tier pension reform is inadequate, unfair and in fact illegal in the private sector. The MP accrual rate of 4 per cent is double the legal limit allowed for the rest of Canadians under the Income Tax Act.

How can the President of the Treasury Board justify this blatant double standard in light of the job losses that will have to be announced this afternoon in the budget?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the basic pension plan in accordance with the Income Tax Act is 2 per cent. As in the case in the private sector, there are many supplementary plans where additional moneys are put aside. It is quite common for that to happen in our community.

Let me also point out that what is not common is that in this case members of Parliament pay double what is normal in the private sector in terms of their own contributions. In spite of all that, we are reducing the amount of the taxpayers' contribution to the MP pension fund by a third, by 33 per cent.

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the solution to a fair and proper pension plan is simple: Pass a bill in the House that would make MPs subject to the same laws as all other Canadians. That way an MP pension plan would be no better than that of any other Canadian or as good as any plan that is out there in the real world.

Why will the minister not consider abolishing his ill fated, inadequate, still gold plated, two-tier pension plan and make it the same as those in the private sector?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can understand that members of the Reform Party are taking aim at the cheapest thing they can find. Members of Parliament are terribly underpaid in this nation. At this time they are trying to undermine the institution.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** When a member of Parliament is making less money than the worst hockey player in the NHL, half of what a hockey player makes, I think I understand the problem of Reform Party members. They know they are not

very good and they know they will not benefit from the plan because they will be defeated in the next election.

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[Translation]

**BLOOD SUPPLY**

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Last Friday, the minister told the media that she still had not read in detail the interim report of the Krever commission, which was submitted to cabinet ten days before.

How can the Minister of Health, who said on several occasions in this House that she was anxiously waiting for the Krever report to take action regarding the tainted blood issue, justify that on Friday, ten days after the tabling of that report, she still had not read it in detail, considering that the health and lives of thousands of people are at stake?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said that we were thoroughly reviewing judge Krever's interim report and that we would provide a detailed answer as possible.

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, will the minister at least tell us that she made the necessary representations to the Minister of Finance, so that he does not cut into the funds allocated to the federal agencies responsible for the safety of our blood supply, since these agencies already lack the financial resources necessary to fulfil their mandate?

[English]

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have taken my position as Minister of Health very seriously. We at Health Canada and I as Minister of Health have not waited for the recommendations of Justice Krever. We have doubled the resources of the Bureau of Biologics within the past year.

We will continue to ensure that there are adequate resources to enforce the regulatory powers of Health Canada.

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**PENSIONS OF MEMBERS**

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon in his budget speech the finance minister is sure to ask that we all make sacrifices for the good of the country. He will lecture Canadians on the need to make tough choices. Yet Liberals are providing themselves with pensions twice as rich as the best in the private sector. They will get their pensions at age 55 even though they want to raise the age limit to receive the Canada pension plan from 65 to 67.