

*Oral Questions*

and privileged position which Canada enjoys as an influential and respected member of NATO, and to use that position—

**Mr. Broadbent:** Thank you, Allan MacEachen. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):**—by maintaining the strength of the Alliance, which would not have been maintained and, indeed, might have been weakened had we cast our vote in a different way. We voted at the United Nations in a way in which we solemnly believe will move the world away from the danger of nuclear war.

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[Translation]

**THE CENSUS**

## JUSTIFICATION FOR CANCELLATION OF 1986 CENSUS

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Supply and Services.

Since, according to the Abella report it is imperative every five years to collect census data on the participation of target groups to the work force, and since the 1986 census would have provided the new data required for any affirmative action program concerning women, native people and the disabled, how can the Minister now justify the cancellation of the 1986 census?

[English]

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Supply and Services):** Mr. Speaker, the reasons for the decision the Government took were outlined by my colleague, the Minister of Finance. They have to do with the terrible financial situation of the Government. As to the question of whether Statistics Canada can and will provide the data necessary for government Departments to make the decisions which are so necessary in order to tackle the problems alluded to by the Hon. Member, I can tell him that he can be well assured that Statistics Canada will, in fact, be in a position to gather this data. It has a variety of techniques. It has very able professionals—

**Mr. Axworthy:** They have no work to do.

**Mr. Andre:**—who will ensure that we have adequate data to accomplish these goals.

## REQUEST THAT CANCELLATION BE RESCINDED

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** Mr. Speaker, how can the Government be serious about affirmative action when it wants to destroy the data base on which such programs are established? Will the Minister stand up in this House and tell those big bullies in front of him, Erik the Dreaded, and Mike the Knife, to go and do their cutting elsewhere and keep their hands out of the census?

• (1430)

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Supply and Services):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure the Hon. Member that his concern about the data that Statistics Canada produces for Government and others in our society is shared by myself and my colleagues, the Minister of Finance and the Deputy Prime Minister, indeed by everyone in the Government. We will be doing everything necessary to ensure that adequate data are available.

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**EMPLOYMENT**

## ABELLA REPORT—IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration and also relates to the Abella Commission report on employment equity, which report I think makes tremendous sense concerning the direction in which we should be going. The American experience also shows that it makes economic sense in terms of productivity in that country. Therefore, in view of the fact that last night the Minister said she agreed in principle with this report but had some problems concerning the enforcement agency, I wonder, if instead of leaving it to voluntary approaches, as the Liberal Government did in years gone by, will she now make a commitment to this House that she will implement some of the recommendations in the report, and tell us when.

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Hon. Member that, with 117 different recommendations, it would be difficult at this point to single out those that will be implemented, or when. Having said that, I assure the Hon. Member that, yes, we will be implementing certain of the recommendations just as quickly as we can.

## GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said on August 15, I believe it was, during the debate on women's issues, that it was inconceivable that a Government accept a principle but not implement that principle. In light of that, will the Minister take the Prime Minister's advice and assure this House that she will be implementing the major recommendations in the Abella Commission report within the next three or four months?

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the report that Judge Abella handed down is in two major sections. The first half of it makes a very fair and compelling case for employment equity, as she calls it. The second part of the report talks about the various ways in which this might be implemented. She makes a number of recommendations and those are the recommendations we will be studying. She does not say: "This is the way,