

Oral Questions

amine the policies of air carriers for the transportation of disabled persons.

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[English]

PROVINCIAL BUDGETS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, to hear the Prime Minister talk, you would think that the whole world is focused on Bob Rae's projected budget deficit of \$9.7 billion.

Why make an international incident of it? Is he concerned if a Conservative premier has a deficit? Not if recent history is a guide. In 1986 when Premier Grant Devine of Saskatchewan, which had balanced budgets under the NDP, ran up a \$1.2 billion deficit, we did not hear comments from the Prime Minister or from finance. They did not chide Alberta Premier Don Getty about his 1987 deficit of \$4 billion-plus.

Ontario's deficit will be 3.4 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product. Saskatchewan's was double that at 7 per cent. Alberta's deficit took 6.9 per cent of its GDP. Surely the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister are being silly, petty and ridiculous. The country would be well rid of both of them.

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FRASER RIVER FESTIVAL

Mr. Stan Wilbee (Delta): Mr. Speaker, this weekend the annual Fraser River Festival will be held at the Deas Island Regional Park in my riding of Delta.

A very special guest at the festival will be the Minister of the Environment.

This event is put together through the co-operation of the federal and provincial governments, as well as businesses and environmental groups.

The mix of sponsors is reflected in the events which celebrate all aspects of the Fraser River. The Fraser River Festival provides a special opportunity for families to learn more about how both people and wildlife use the Fraser River and its estuary through a variety of displays and entertainment.

It is a very popular event in the lower mainland. Last year almost 10,000 people attended and organizers hope for even more this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish the organizers of the Fraser River Festival the very best for a successful 1991 festival.

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MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, multiple sclerosis is the most common disease of the central nervous system, usually striking young adults in the prime of their life.

Since the month of May has been designated multiple sclerosis month by the MS Society of Canada, let us pause and remember those who must live with this disease and also those who take care of them.

I encourage my colleagues and all Canadians to support the carnation fundraiser-public education campaign, and I take this opportunity to recognize the worker of the society's many volunteers.

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada is made up of 160 local chapters in communities all across this country. It is relentless in its pursuit of its goals in finding the cause and a cure of this dreadful disease.

On behalf of the federal government, I wish to express the gratitude of all Canadians to the members and the volunteers of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

QUEBEC'S REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. The Minister of National Health and Welfare has just announced the creation of a so-called new department of regional development for Quebec. However, he immediately added there would be no new initiatives, no new programs and no new money for this program. Could the Acting Prime Minister tell us what all the hoopla is about? Is the government trying to fool Quebecers?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the minister of health will be in the House a little later to respond more fully. The intention here is to focus on the regional develop-