

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged at the government's show of concern for ethics in the public service, but is it not ironic that it will investigate the public service for unethical conduct while the unethical conduct of the heritage minister and the public works minister goes uninvestigated altogether.

It is no wonder that the auditor general says there is confusion in the public service about ethics. It is examples from the top that prove the old adage that the fish is rotting from the head down in this case.

My supplementary question is for the Acting Prime Minister. Since the federal code of conduct does not seem to apply to the cabinet, how does the government expect to enforce ethical standards in the public service?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, ethics are very important to the government. We show this in many ways every day when it comes to the cabinet and when it comes to the public service.

Dealing with the hon. member's rather tasteless metaphor about fish, obviously things have stretched quite a way down to the bottom of that party judging by his question.

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[Translation]

**BOVINE SOMATOTROPIN**

**Mr. Michel Daviault (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Health Canada officials revealed today that the synthetic hormone somatotropin can legally be imported and used in Canada. Yet, the Minister of Health has tried to reassure the public by saying repeatedly in this House that the use of somatotropin is illegal in Canada and that cheaters would be punished.

How could the Minister of Health let us believe in the House that Health Canada had the situation under control when she knew that, through a loophole in the Food and Drugs Act, synthetic somatotropin could legally be used in Canada?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in our opinion, the current regulatory framework adequately blocks the use of bovine somatotropin in Canada. The example mentioned by the hon. member is a minor exception.

I am aware of the hon. member's concerns, but, up to now, they have been unfounded. We will continue investigating and, if we detect any problems, we will take the appropriate action.

**Mr. Michel Daviault (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the minister that all of the members of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, which met this morning, share this concern about this minor exception. If she talks to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, she will realize that he is of exactly the same opinion.

• (1435)

How can the minister explain why, in the past year, she has taken no steps to plug this important legal loophole, now that the voluntary moratorium imposed by her agriculture colleague has expired?

[English]

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for the vast majority of people in Canada other than pharmacists or veterinarians it is illegal to import, to sell, or to distribute rBST.

To date Health Canada has felt that the regulatory framework that was put in place was effective in preventing the use of rBST in the country. If that is not the case we will take appropriate action.

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**BOSNIA**

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, every report from Bosnia suggests that our peacekeepers can no longer do their job. The Canadian commander says they are "frozen in place".

In response, the Minister of Foreign Affairs said this morning that if our peacekeepers "are no longer able to accomplish their raison d'être then they will have to be evacuated".

Given the minister's statement, is the government now preparing the evacuation of Canadian troops from Bosnia?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** No.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we found out today that the government will be joining the Bosnia strike force. The presence of such a force is not in keeping with the peacekeeping mandate and has only two purposes: one, to join an escalating conflict as a combatant; or two, to facilitate the withdrawal of UN troops from the region.

Since the government is contributing troops to the strike force, does this mean it is abandoning its professed resolve for neutrality or is it preparing for withdrawal as we have proposed for the last six months?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know by reading reports from the NATO meeting a couple of weeks ago that the establishment of the rapid reaction force is a measure designed purely to assist UN personnel in danger. That is why it is being put together.