

openly. It is sad but true. It is high time both Ottawa and Quebec showed some political will and tackled these problems seriously. We have been able to clear up worse situation in the past, and it is time to show that distributory justice is possible.

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● (1410)

[English]

## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

### RESIGNATION OF UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

**Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** Madam Speaker, the sudden resignation of James Watt as U.S. Interior Secretary drew cheers from a wide array of Watt's foes. As someone put it, for people concerned with natural resources, the environment, acid rain, and so on, he was the epitome of all that is not good. Now that all of the politicking and fuss is over, let us get back to the important issues.

Over the weekend I was delighted to hear the Governors and officials from various midnorthern U.S. States met and discussed in earnest the issue of acid rain. In view of Mr. Watt's resignation and the importance Canada places upon his position, it is hoped the American administration will make an early appointment of someone who is more acutely aware of and sensitive to the international importance of air pollution, especially the acid rain issue.

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## INDIAN AFFAIRS

### STATUS OF NATIVE WOMEN

**Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood):** Madam Speaker, in marking the tenth anniversary of the Murdoch case last week I was able to note that substantial progress had been made in redressing the injustices committed on Canadian women. The House will remember that the amendments passed last Spring on unemployment insurance corrected the discriminatory measures against which Stella Bliss had unsuccessfully complained. Regrettably the same cannot be said for injustices to native women.

Ten years ago the Supreme Court of Canada decided against Lavell and Bedard. With an astonishing lack of logic the Supreme Court held that no discrimination had taken place, although the loss of Indian status through Section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act deprived these women of the right to live on their reserves, run for band council or chief, be eligible for education grants, housing, welfare, and ultimately even burial on reserves. Since then Canada has been humiliated internationally by being convicted of violation of the United Nations Human Rights Convention.

There is still no action on the part of the federal Government, only excuses about the delicacy of the situation and advice to native women to be patient. The word "soon" has become a four-letter word to Canada's native people. We need

S.O. 21

a firm promise and an early date for repeal of Section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act and reinstatement of the women who were deprived of their status, with their children.

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## PUBLIC SERVICE

### HOSPITAL INSURANCE PREMIUMS—SUGGESTION GOVERNMENT DISCONTINUE CONTRIBUTIONS

**Mr. Hal Herbert (Vaudreuil):** Madam Speaker, last Thursday in an exchange with the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Gray) I suggested that the federal Government should discontinue its tacit support for a regressive form of taxation in its contribution to hospital insurance premiums of federal public servants. In a subsequent exchange between the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) and the Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp), the Minister said that the premiums were a very regressive form of taxation. I was happy to hear the Hon. Member for Provencher say in response:

—if the Minister says this is a regressive form of taxation, I agree.

I suggest that the federal Government discontinue as quickly as possible its contribution to the payment of hospital insurance premiums of federal public servants in the three provinces where they are paid, inasmuch as the Provinces are now using the non-payment of a regressive form of taxation in order to stop benefits to which every citizen should be entitled.

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## INCOME TAX

### INTERPRETATION OF NORTHERN REMISSION ORDER

**Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic):** Madam Speaker, everyone knows that the taxation problems facing residents of northern Canada will not be solved until the Income Tax Act is amended to reflect northern financial realities. Indeed it is unfortunate the liberal Government obstinately refuses to address the issue except to demand more and more taxes from northerners. Now the Government has sunk to a new low as it seeks to penalize and harass employees of small businesses.

Ottawa tax sleuths have been examining the books of small companies and, if there has been the slightest possibility that their accounting terminology or practices do not correspond with the Remission Order, employees have been assessed back taxes of which they had no prior anticipation. It is grossly unfair to single out employees of small business for discriminatory and arbitrary tax treatment. The Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Bussières) ought to reconsider his jaundiced procedures in light of the spirit, not just the strict legal interpretation, of the Northern Remission Order.