

*Oral Questions*

The students of Canada need answers to these questions. Will the minister advise us when the reforms from the student loans program reconsideration will be announced?

**Hon. Monique Landry (Secretary of State of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I know the importance of the student loans program not only to my colleagues in the House but mainly to the 250,000 students who are receiving assistance on a yearly basis.

I want to assure my colleague that the government is committed to reforming the Canada Student Loans Program to do exactly what he is asking for, enhancing aid to needy students, but at the same time reducing the costs. That is why we have been discussing new financial arrangements with lenders based on risk-sharing as announced in the budget.

I am sure that with the consultations we have had with the different groups, the provinces and the students the program will go on to respond to the needs of those students very soon.

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**HEALTH**

**Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Witness after witness before the subcommittee on health issues has asked for a public inquiry into the tainted blood tragedy.

Does this not finally convince the minister that today is the day to call for a public inquiry? With over 1,000 Canadians dead or dying, why does this government persist in saying they do not have the basic right to know? Why?

**Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

HIV tainted blood has been a major issue for all of us. We have worked very closely with the haemophiliac society and realize the difficulties that they have been suffering.

We provided some compensation to those people and while it might not be enough it offered them some compensation.

My colleague from Delta, B.C. is chairing the subcommittee on health and welfare which is hearing these

witnesses. We look forward to the committee's recommendations which will answer his particular questions.

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**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**Mr. Speaker:** I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Ed Tchorzewski, Deputy Premier of Saskatchewan and Minister Responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs.

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

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**MEMBERS**

**Mr. Speaker:** I wonder if I could return to the matter that engaged us for a moment or two during Question Period. I asked the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca to remain in the Chamber and I see that he has done so.

I think all of us who are in public life know that there are times when we feel very strongly about issues. That is a good thing, because as I have said many times, this is not a tea party and the long history of this place is that the men and women who vote in our country and in the country from which our institutions came have insisted on sending strong-minded and idealistic people to the House of Commons. We all understand that.

The dispute that took place a few minutes ago no doubt stems from strong-minded views on both sides of the House.

The difficulty is that one could make light of this. I sometimes have said to the many groups of students that come to the House of Commons that the distance between both sides of the Chamber has at least been considered to be two sword lengths. It is an adversarial system, and for better or for worse, we who have inherited it and adjusted it to our own needs have nonetheless maintained it. Because we believe as we do in our court system, the adversarial system is probably as competent a way of getting at the truth and the facts as has been developed by any civilized people anywhere. It is not the only way and it is obviously not perfect but that is what it is.

• (1505)

However, it only works if we respect the traditions of this place and the rules we have set for ourselves. It means that conduct in the Chamber has to have some restraints upon it.