

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest):** Mr. Speaker, I think the minister is saying that there may be a referendum on this issue in Manitoba. We would like more clarification.

The chances of securing the consent of the aboriginal people of Manitoba to self-government would be enhanced if it were made crystal clear that any such government would be legally required to respect the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Can the minister give the House an iron clad guarantee that any aboriginal self-government arrangement established in Manitoba will give aboriginal people full protection of their personal rights and freedoms under the charter?

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, that is a good question. The rights and freedoms under the charter as they are now expressed apply to provincial and federal governments. I think we have to be cognizant that when we make these transfers that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, about which I feel very strongly, should be transposed into the negotiations.

The Leader of the Opposition will be happy—not the opposition leader but the leader of the Reform Party, hopefully the opposition—

Some hon. members: Soon, soon.

**Mr. Irwin:** Perhaps some day the government. The leader of the Reform Party makes a valid point. The next legislation that will be before the House dealing with aboriginal people he will see clearly that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms will apply. That will be some time this month.

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[Translation]

**SOCIAL PROGRAM REFORM**

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Yesterday, in his press conference, the Prime Minister, far from being more sympathetic to the provinces' reluctance regarding the social program reform, said that he would go ahead with it.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister confirm that her government intends to proceed with the social program reform one way or another, as the Prime Minister said, and even without the provinces' support?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister said yesterday is exactly what he has been saying since the beginning of our mandate. We are negotiating in good faith to

find a solution. Obviously, if we cannot come to a solution, we will proceed only in those fields which are under federal jurisdiction. This is exactly the position adopted by the Opposition leader when he disagreed with his government during certain negotiations, in 1989.

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier):** Mr. Speaker, how can the Deputy Prime Minister reconcile her comments with the fact that, except for unemployment insurance, all the other areas which would be included in the reform are under provincial jurisdiction?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said and keeps saying that he wants to find good solutions. What is most important to him, and what should be most important to all politicians, is to have jobs for workers. Unemployed people in Montreal, Shawinigan or Dolbeau are very interested in government projects but less interested in federal-provincial bickering. We are trying to use a fair and equitable approach and we are negotiating in good faith.

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• (1430)

[English]

**SELF-GOVERNMENT**

**Mr. Jake E. Hooppner (Lisgar—Marquette):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of aboriginal affairs. We seek the assistance of the minister in responding to written communications sent to us by our original peoples other than chiefs.

Will the minister tell us how he has responded to the fears and concerns expressed in these written letters about native self-government because his answers to these letters will help us in answering ours.

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, that is not a question.

**Mr. Jake E. Hooppner (Lisgar—Marquette):** Mr. Speaker, I am very surprised.

Does the minister tell me that he has had no letters from these native people? I would ask him how he will respond to this. The members on the opposite side support self-government. We want the minister to realize that we as Reformers support the same self-government for native people. We have had genuine fears of concern addressed to us about this.

Would the minister explain why he refuses to open up the process to all Canadians to alleviate the concerns of those people not directly involved in the negotiations?