

*Oral Questions*

that they will be taking that issue under consideration. I have nothing further to report on it today.

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### ROYAL COMMISSION ON REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, I will direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister. It is with regard to the Royal Commission on Reproductive Technologies.

This Royal commission is due to report in October of 1991 and hundreds of groups, women and men, nationwide, want to contribute to this process.

• (1420)

Can the Acting Prime Minister tell Canadians that the process will start immediately, or is this just another example of the government stifling debate, particularly when it relates to women's issues?

**Mr. Andre:** We set it up.

**Ms. Clancy:** You set it up, Harvey, but let's get it moving.

**Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women):** Mr. Speaker, we discussed this in committee last week. I am pleased to inform the hon. member that that commission is proceeding. It is hiring its staff. It is preparing for hearings which, I understand, will be held this fall throughout the country.

As I am sure the hon. member is aware, once a Royal commission is established, it is the author of its own destiny. I am sure that its work will proceed and it will be able to bring forward recommendations which will stand in the interest of both men and women in this vital area for the future.

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian women are, to say the least, disillusioned by the government's failure to restore funding to eight major research groups in the country. The Royal commission, in spite of the good words that we hear, is still not on the road.

Will the Acting Prime Minister show that the government is committed to research and development, and

restore funding to these research groups? Will someone announce the royal commission's timetable?

**Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women):** Mr. Speaker, I have been advised that the royal commission is planning its hearings. I am meeting with some of their people in the near future.

I cannot assure the member that there will be any changes with respect to funding. The Secretary of State has had to have funding cuts, as have all government departments, in order that we can proceed with deficit reduction and ensure that our economy is moving ahead. That will absolutely be the most important issue for women in the future.

I have met with representatives of these organizations. The Secretary of State has met with their representatives to work with them to find alternative sources of funding in order that they continue with the good work that they undertake.

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### STATUS OF WOMEN

**Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. The largest women's group in Canada, representing five million women, had asked to meet with all three political parties today. The government and the minister responsible for the Status of Women refused to do so.

The government meets with business groups and that is reported on publicly. It meets with the corporate sector and that is reported on. The government travels around the world and meets with other governments, and that is reported publicly.

Even if her colleagues will not, why will the Minister responsible for the Status of Women not meet with the National Action Committee representing five million women? Why does she not have the courage to say: "I will meet with you in public. I will be accountable for my government's policies"?

**Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women):** Mr. Speaker, as I am sure the hon. member is aware, I did offer to meet with its representatives to enter into a