

Oral Questions

Mrs. Collins: Given the increasing numbers and rates of arrivals in this manner would the Minister consider imposing a visa requirement on Honduras in order to deter those who might seek to come to Canada through the refugee process when in all fairness they should be applying through the regular immigration process?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I have been advised that the number of people arriving in Vancouver from Honduras has doubled, particularly over the past two and a half months. Quite obviously we are facing the kind of situation we experienced last year in Toronto and Montreal, and we are seriously considering imposing a visa requirement in the near future. If the number of arrivals does not decline we will certainly consider the possibility of imposing visas on Honduras.

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[English]

TAX REFORM

FOOD TAX QUERY

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. I realize that he is overworked now with all his many responsibilities. However, I would like to give him the benefit of the doubt because I understood him to have said today in the House that food tax was not being considered as part of the fiscal reform package. Again, I would like to repeat in English, in case he did not understand my colleague from Montreal—Sainte-Marie in French—

Some Hon. Members: Order, order.

Some Hon. Members: Cheap, cheap!

Ms. Copps: I would like to ask whether the Minister has read page 10—

Some Hon. Members: Cheap, cheap!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Hamilton East.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he has read page 10 of his own Government's little mini-document on sales tax in which it states:

These issues are important in deciding what goods should be included in the sales tax base . . . These are illustrated below using food as a case in point.

Is this not part and parcel of the Government's strategy to introduce a tax on food? If it is not, why does he not repudiate a tax on food in the House today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, insofar as the Hon. Member's observation that I am overworked, I remind her that I am in the House every day doing my job, which is more than I can say about—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Cheap, cheap!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Hamilton East.

• (1500)

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, normally, I would not respond, but given that the Deputy Prime Minister is making himself out to be a little bit holier than thou, I wish to ask him whether a member of his family is suffering from an illness?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Copps: It's a cheap shot, and it deserves the response. I had reason to be away from the House because of family illness.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member for Windsor-Walkerville.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Deputy Prime Minister once again to clarify—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Windsor—Walkerville.

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HEALTH

SALE OF BENZOYL PEROXIDE

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Some time ago I wrote to the Minister concerning the agent benzoyl peroxide. This potential carcinogen is sold over the counter, and it is widely used in the treatment of acne.

My question today is the same as it was in the letter. Why has the Minister not acted on the recommendation of the expert advisory committee that benzoyl peroxide be banned from over-the-counter sale?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I will have to bring myself up to date both on the letter and that issue. At this stage I am not aware of the specific recommendation of the expert committee to which the