

*Oral Questions*CONSULTATION WITH CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS
REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Lyle S. Kristiansen (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of State for Economic and Regional Development indicated as a leadership candidate that he accepted the key thrust of the report. I would hope that the Prime Minister and the Government after some deliberation—it is a government financed report—would also give a positive answer.

Concerning that matter, recommendation 12 of the task force report states that a steering committee should be set up with representatives of the established co-operative movement and emerging worker co-operatives. I am sure the Prime Minister would agree that one of the things we must do is maximize consent to and minimize dissent from the concept, if we want to go ahead. To that degree, would the Prime Minister assure the House in any such development that representatives of the Canadian Labour Congress Joint Committee on Labour and Co-ops would also be included in such consultations so that we can, as I said, maximize consent to and minimize dissent from what is a very positive recommendation from a long awaited task force report?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member refers to a leadership candidate's position. I take it that he is making representations to one of the candidates because one of them will become Prime Minister. I, myself, have only until midnight tonight to become a leadership candidate. I believe the entries are closed after that, so I will take notice of the question of the Hon. Member.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF THE VICE-MINISTER OF PUBLIC
HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. Speaker: May I call to the attention of the House the presence in the gallery of a delegation from the People's Republic of China, led by the Hon. Tan, Yun-He, Vice-Minister of Public Health.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[Translation]

SOCIAL SECURITY

ALLEGATIONS MADE BY QUEBEC MINISTER

Mr. Raymond Savard (Verdun-Saint Paul): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Today I was reading a statement made by Minister

Camille Laurin, in which he said that he would like to withdraw from all federal old age security programs.

I would like to ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare how she reacts to such a statement.

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I think Dr. Laurin should rather concentrate on the problems of his hospitals, especially the one in Dolbeau, instead of trying to wreck the old age pension system which works quite well and to the satisfaction of Quebec senior citizens.

If Dr. Laurin and the Quebec Government want to hand out supplementary benefits immediately to people between 60 and 64, for instance, there is nothing to prevent them from doing so. However, I do not see why they would want to get rid of something which has very well served Quebecers and will soon do even better since it will provide an additional \$50 for single recipients within the next few weeks.

[English]

INCLUSION OF WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION PAYMENTS IN
DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR GUARANTEED INCOME
SUPPLEMENT

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. On January 31, 1984, I asked the Minister a question regarding the effects of Bill C-139 on recipients of the guaranteed income supplement, to which she gave an answer which might have been logical and rational for an altogether different question. I will try again. Is the Minister aware that Bill C-139, in Clause 26, requires old age pensioners to declare workmen's compensation pensions in their declaration of income for the calculation of eligibility for a guaranteed income supplement, and does she approve of this attack on senior citizens who are recipients of GIS?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I must say, and maybe the Prime Minister will not like to hear this, but personally I would love to have no deductions made to pensions for seniors. But that is not very fair. Let me take the trouble to go one step further in the reasoning. I know that workers who get a private disability benefit when they are retired must declare that benefit. They have always had to declare it because it is an added source of income. Seniors who also get income from another source, like the workmen's compensation, unfortunately, but in terms of fairness, must declare it. I may regret this, but it makes sense in terms of simple justice.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Health and Welfare knows that people have to declare that type of income. She should also recognize the fact that workmen's compensation payments should not be considered as earned income, as investment income, or as income