

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this 27th day of January, in the year of Our Lord, 1983, and of the Independence of the United States of America the 207th.

Canada did not follow the President's example in 1983. However, may I suggest that this Parliament proclaim a day of prayer in Canada in early 1984, a day on which we might all pray for world peace and brotherhood.

• (1415)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

CORPORATE SHAREHOLDING LIMITATION ACT

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Brian Mulroney (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Last Friday, the Minister said that the Liberal caucus unanimously supported Bill S-31. Is that still the case and does the Minister intend to proceed with consideration of this Bill?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs will be here in a few minutes, but I can inform the Leader of the Opposition that the caucus has examined this matter and has made suggestions to Cabinet. Bill S-31 is now before the Senate, and since the House intends to adjourn shortly, it stands to reason we will not be able to consider and pass this Bill before the end of this session. The caucus—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lalonde: I wonder why my hon. colleagues opposite are so surprised, because they know perfectly well we intend to start a new session very shortly, and that this Bill, like so many other Bills that are before the Senate or before the House, may not be considered by the House before the end of this session. Regarding the legislative program for the next session, the Leader of the Opposition will have to wait until the program is announced. However, as the Hon. Leader of the Opposition is aware, Members of the Quebec caucus have suggested that before proceeding with a new Bill during the next session, there should be further consultation with business and the Provinces.

Mr. Mulroney: I assume, Mr. Speaker, the Minister meant to say no.

Since the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is now in the House, as far as Bill S-31 is concerned, the

Oral Questions

Member for Longueuil said this morning, and I quote: "Bill S-31 is already dead."

Considering this very straightforward statement, does the Minister intend to let the Bill die on the Senate Order Paper or does she intend to proceed with this legislation?

[English]

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the normal course of events, of course, will unfold, and as to the future of S-31, I would say to the Leader of the Opposition, and I am terribly pleased that we have the head organ grinder asking the question today, S-31 will be thoroughly discussed with the business community. If the House prorogues, the normal course of events will follow and the bill will die. This Government, and I might add this caucus, even those members of the Quebec caucus who issued a statement this morning, approve in principle the intent of S-31.

[Translation]

OPPOSITION OF CERTAIN QUEBEC INDUSTRIAL LEADERS— GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Brian Mulroney (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the Minister, twenty-one Quebec industrial leaders, all of whom . . . , the Minister is being coached by the Minister of Finance, perhaps I can wait for a while . . . , all of whom are reasonable and respected citizens, twenty-one industrial leaders wrote to the Minister . . . I know this hurts the Liberal Members from Quebec, I know it does. They are busy changing their position, and I can guarantee we are going to see them all do that. Mr. Speaker, my question is as follows: twenty-one Quebec industrial leaders wrote to the Minister this morning, if I am not mistaken, stating their fierce opposition to the Bill. Does the Minister intend to take into consideration the views being expressed by reasonable and serious minded Quebecers, in her decision concerning Bill S-31.

• (1420)

[English]

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reply to the Leader of the Opposition in this manner: if he is going to quote and use numbers, I shall also use the same technique.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Erola: The supporters of this Bill within the Province of Quebec are numerous. If the Leader of the Opposition and Members of his caucus have followed events carefully, they will know that *The Gazette* said that "the truth is that this Bill, or something very much like it, is in the interest of