

Point of Order

We know that in this one that the big winners are his buddies on Bay Street. They will make a couple of hundred million. The losers are Canadians—

• (1500)

Mr. Speaker: May I ask the hon. member to put his question, keeping in mind the time.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Prime Minister this. Can he tell us whether there are other casualties? In particular, can he assure us that the privatization of PetroCan in no way delays or jeopardizes the Hibernia development off Newfoundland?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Simmons: Wilson's not interested. That's what they're saying back home.

Mr. Speaker: If the minister wishes, he has the floor.

Mr. McDermid: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is yelling. He is not interested in the answer so he is not going to get one.

Mr. Simmons: You scum! You give scum a bad name.

Mr. McDermid: Don't be so god-damn stupid, Roger.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for London East may ask a single question.

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HOUSING

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

The waiting lists for social housing are scandalous. In Toronto there are 20,000 people on a waiting list. In Vancouver there are 5,000. In New Brunswick there are 20,000. In Montreal there are 20,000 people.

How long do these waiting lists have to get before this government wakes up and realizes that we need more housing for the homeless, seniors, single parents and the working poor, not less? Why has this government cut the social housing budget by 15 per cent this year?

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, obviously the situation with respect to and the

need for social housing is one that is of great concern to this government, the Minister of Finance and myself.

It is also something that is of concern to knowledgeable Canadians in the field of social services. They are particularly aware of the problems that we are having with the budget.

A few months ago I received a letter from the Executive Director of the Family Services Association of Metropolitan Toronto in which he said: "It should be evident to most Canadians that 31 cents interest on each tax dollar is an unacceptably high price to pay for current government operations and programs. Furthermore, allowing the deficit to grow—"

Mr. Speaker: That is a very thoughtful letter. I am sure it could be given to the hon. member.

The hon. member for Edmonton East may ask a single question.

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PETRO-CANADA

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, under Article 1602 of the free trade agreement, the 25 per cent ceiling on foreign shareholdings the minister responsible for privatization proposes to set on Petro-Canada can never be lowered ever. It can only be raised.

Will the minister agree that there is absolutely nothing in his proposals to prevent Exxon, for example, from securing anywhere up to 30 per cent of Petro-Canada's shares through itself, its subsidiaries and associates and thereby effectively controlling Petro-Canada?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is entirely wrong. When he sees the legislation before the House he then will understand that that would be entirely impossible.

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POINT OF ORDER**STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.