

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Speaker:** May I ask the Hon. Member, out of her respect for Parliament, simply to withdraw what she just said.

**Ms. Copps:** The question is withdrawn.

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Oh, no.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order! The Hon. Member believes she asked a question. I believe she made a statement. She told the House that she has withdrawn what she said. That is good enough for the Chair. I will recognize the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill.

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### NUCLEAR ENERGY

#### CANADIAN NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS—SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Without making any uncritical analogies between Soviet nuclear technology and Canadian nuclear technology, could the Minister tell us whether he takes at face value the assurances of AECL and Ontario Hydro that that sort of thing could not happen here, or does the Government of Canada have contingency plans for evacuation and other emergency measures in the event that something like that did happen here?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, more and more information is coming to our attention from the U.S.S.R. about the tragic accident. It behooves us as Canadians and as citizens of the world to put in whatever precautions we can, keeping in mind that in the Canadian system every attempt has been made humanly possible to build in every safety precaution that technology, that the best advice we have, the best social responsibility people in the field take, suggest should be incorporated in that system. I can assure the Hon. Member, as I am sure the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and others close to that industry would want to assure him and all Canadians, that that safety precaution is being taken. I assure him that we will use whatever methods we have to, and any up-date of them that we should consider after the very tragic accident in the U.S.S.R., to make sure that we have everything in place should an emergency occur.

#### EMERGENCY PLANNING MEASURES

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill):** Mr. Speaker, apart from the safety measures which are being taken to ensure that there is not an accident, could the Minister explain what plans are in place, or are being put in place, in the event that our technology turns out to be as imperfect as any other technology and there is an accident? As well, could he tell us whether the Government is now considering living up to a

promise, made by an earlier Conservative Government and his Party on numerous occasions, to have a full public inquiry into the role of nuclear energy in Canada?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the second part of the question, I cannot make a Government statement and I think the Member understands why.

With regard to the first part of the question, in view of what has happened in the U.S.S.R. we immediately set up the federal Nuclear Emergency Response Plan. In an effort to be helpful to Canadians we have also set up a hot-line number: 998-3624. Any Canadian can use that number to receive further reassurance. Any long-term plans should be made with consideration of these events and others.

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[Translation]

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

#### INQUIRY WHETHER IT IS PROPER FOR MINISTER OF REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION TO REMAIN IN CHARGE OF CANADAIR PRIVATIZATION

**Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he thinks the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion should still be responsible for the privatization of Canadair, when we know—since the cat is out of the bag—that the Minister is obligated to the President of Magna International Inc., a potential buyer, who saved him from bankruptcy by helping him to obtain an interest-free loan.

Mr. Speaker, the conflict of interest here is as plain as the nose on your face. I would therefore like to know whether the Deputy Prime Minister could inform the House whether he thinks the Minister should still be responsible for this dossier?

● (1440)

[English]

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence):** The hon. gentleman not only distorts in his preamble but he does not understand the privatization process. It is carried out under a ministerial task force established under the chairmanship of the President of the Treasury Board. It is, in turn, subject to Cabinet review and approval. Canadair is no different from any other company which has gone through that process, including the measure passed just the other day by the House involving Canadian Arsenals Limited.

[Translation]

#### PUBLIC PERCEPTION—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. Public perception demands more than that.