

Oral Questions

as I said earlier, is on record as saying that she is in favour of choice for women. Is this the ticket to the inner cabinet, compromising one's own personal views?

• (1440)

Some hon. members: Shame, shame!

Some hon. members: Withdraw, withdraw!

Some hon. members: Cheap, cheap.

Mr. Speaker: I think the hon. member would know that the implication of that remark is clearly not acceptable in this House because that kind of retort can turn this place into absolute disorder. I would ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Ms. Black: Mr. Speaker, if you deem that it is necessary, yes, I will withdraw it.

Mr. Speaker: I recognize the hon. member for her supplementary.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, we know that access to reproductive health services is already a problem for women in this country. The Canadian Medical Association has indicated that if this bill passes this House access will become worse for women in Canada, that doctors will be frightened of criminal repercussions. Will the minister on International Women's Day, this week or next week, listen to the women of Canada? Will she listen to the doctors of Canada, and will she withdraw this bill?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the bill is before committee, before the parliamentary process. I think this is hardly a time to engage in a debate in Question Period on the merits of the bill. I have stated very clearly in this House my reason for supporting the bill personally before I became responsible for it. I hold the same opinion now and I will be expressing that same opinion on behalf of the Government of Canada in front of the standing committee.

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COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. He will recall that last August the Supreme Court ruled that telecommunications falls under federal jurisdiction. He

will also recall that his government tabled a bill to put that court ruling into effect. Some western provinces were not too happy and Quebec is now sabre-rattling. This is a very key interprovincial field and has now been declared a federal jurisdiction.

Is the Deputy Prime Minister prepared to exercise federal leadership to ensure that federal jurisdiction is maintained and ensure that this key sector is not going to be Balkanized or fragmented? When is he going to bring that bill into the House and ensure federal jurisdiction?

Mr. Jim Edwards (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to respond to the hon. member. As the member knows well, there is a bill before the House now, Bill C-41, which relates to the three prairie provinces. However, the minister has given an undertaking to all his counterparts, including the Quebec minister, that there will be a broad-based telecommunications bill introduced into the House in due course.

It is important that he conclude his consultations with the ministers involved before that is done, particularly the three prairie ministers and indeed, if necessary, the Quebec minister.

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the parliamentary secretary that the Prime Minister, who I think has something to say in this country, said we will simply not allow our system of communications to be fragmented and broken up by different regulations.

[Translation]

My question was supposed to be directed to the Minister of Communications, who seems to have forgotten his commitment to a national telecommunications policy, made when he was appointed Minister of Communications five years ago. My question is this: What is the minister's policy? Did the parliamentary secretary say—? We are still waiting. And meanwhile, will the bill to implement federal jurisdiction be passed? Why is the minister dragging his feet? Whom is he trying to accommodate and why?

Mr. Jim Edwards (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, when the minister announced the new Canadian telecommunications policy last October, he said that in the months to come he would table a bill to implement this policy which is based