

Oral Questions

what will happen to the projects in which they are engaged at the present time?

[Translation]

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my hon. friend for his kind words and in turn, I would like to offer him my best wishes on his re-election.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Wildlife Service still has 300 employees and a budget of \$19.8 million. I do not think the cutbacks we have made will adversely affect the survival of this program.

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[English]

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

EXISTENCE OF COMMITTEE STUDY

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Finance. Members are congratulating others on their new appointments, and I would indicate that this is the Minister's first opportunity to answer a question in the House. She will know in taking over the portfolio that the former Minister was supposed to have established a committee to study trust companies, insurance companies, banks, security dealers and so on, with respect to new legislation. Did that committee in fact exist? If it did exist, will it be making a report to this House?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. I am pleased to report that there is a private sector group which has been examining the issue at the instigation of the former Minister. This committee is not and, as far as I can understand, was never intended to report to the House. It is commenting on papers which were put together by the Department of Finance, and in due course, as soon as possible, an over-all report will be published and presented to the House. I will be happy to report on that later.

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[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

CLOSURE OF CANEXEL IN GATINEAU, P.Q.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Hon. Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Last week, the Canexel company in Gatineau announced that it would be closing down on February 14, thus putting about 200 employees out of work. During the election campaign, the Progressive Conservative Party talked a great deal about job creation. In view of the impending situation in Gatineau, I would like to know what the federal Government

intends to do about the possibility of keeping this factory open and saving 200 jobs.

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I can inform the Hon. Member that we are aware of the problem and are taking every possible action to improve the present situation. For instance, we are prepared to set up a committee with the employer and employees and to consider training, mobility and adjustment programs for all employees concerned.

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● (1500)

[English]

CLERK OF PETITIONS' REPORT

PEACE CAMP ON PARLIAMENT HILL

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) on Friday, November 16, 1984, meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

I must also, however, advise the House that there is some doubt in my mind as to the acceptability of this petition. Citation 688(1) of Beauchesne's Fifth Edition states:

Aliens, not resident in Canada, have no right to petition Parliament.

The precedents in our practice are not as decisive as they are in other jurisdictions. While I must report today on the form of the said petition—I am required to do so in fact by the rules of the House—I wish to advise the House that I am entering a caveat on the propriety of certain signatures of non-Canadian citizens pending further study on the matter.

Mr. Cassidy: I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I submitted this petition, and since the overwhelming number of signatories to the petition are in fact Canadian citizens, indicating that they—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The very reason that I indicated I was raising a caveat on the matter and wished to study it further is precisely the point the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre is making. I wish to advise both him and Hon. Members of the House that I do not propose to make a ruling today ruling the petition out. However, I do want to make it clear to the Hon. Member—and I know it is a serious petition for him as well as for others—that there are traditions about who can and who cannot petition the House of Commons. In the past, Speakers have ruled that petitions containing any names other than Canadian are simply not receivable. It is for that reason that I am reserving a judgment until I look at the precedents further. I will be making some comment on it later.

The Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre on a point of order.

Mr. Cassidy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make representations privately. However, surely, when thousands of