

S.O. 21

Lalonde's forced resignation would be more than a personal tragedy. It would deprive Canada of a dynamic, progressive-minded politician at a time when they're in short supply. The budget would be delayed many months—a budget crucial to spurring the economy toward recovery and creating jobs—

The Opposition has made much, throughout this debate, and non-confidence vote, of the need for honor and accountability in government . . . Marc Lalonde abused no fundamental public trust, in breaching the guidelines; there is no compelling public interest in seeing him driven from office.

The Government has brought vital economic issues into the House over the past month for debate. We must continue the debate on the Income Tax Act if we are to get refunds out to low-income people who need the money. We must debate the—

Madam Speaker: Order.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

ENFORCEMENT OF CHILD MAINTENANCE ORDERS

Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre): Madam Speaker, nearly half of all single parent families headed by women in Canada live below the poverty line. An important reason for this economic distress is the lack of enforcement of court ordered maintenance payments for child support. In Ontario, for example, 75 per cent of orders for child maintenance are not paid after two years.

The problem, Madam Speaker, is that the responsibility for collecting the money owed them is left to the mothers who have been abandoned by the fathers of the children. If the father does not pay, the mother must incur legal costs and return to court to request enforcement. If the father has left town, the mother must try to trace him. In many cases the cost of enforcement exceeds the value of the order.

As a solution I urge the federal Government to introduce two amendments to the Divorce Act. The first amendment would empower the courts to enforce and collect child maintenance payments through the issuance of continuing orders. If a parent defaulted, a Crown attorney would be appointed to trace the parent and compel him to pay.

The second amendment would permit the court to use Revenue Canada records and social insurance numbers to trace spouses who default on their child maintenance payments. Appropriate safeguards could be applied to ensure that only the courts had access to this information. This system already operates successfully in the United States.

The economic situation of single parent families today is so desperate that immediate Government action is imperative.

● (1110)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES REACTION TO LOWER CANADIAN AIR FARES AND OTHER MEASURES

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Madam Speaker, yesterday the administration of the United States cancelled seat sale air fares offered by Air Canada, affecting 56,000 Canadians who planned to travel to the United States. Obviously that administration wants to collapse the convention on air travel arrangements with our country, because Canada had given approval to United States airlines to charge similar fares on travel to Canada. What the U.S. administration really wants to do is put Canadian airlines out of business hauling Canadians to Pacific Rim destinations, by allowing U.S. carriers to funnel our travel around the Pacific via California. Canada must take immediate action to counter this blatant interference in our affairs.

This is nothing more than another action in a series where the United States has broken faith with Canada: obstruction to the showing of National Film Board films, one of which is nominated for an Oscar award; stonewalling solutions to acid rain problems; refusal to ratify a fisheries treaty; failure to meet commitments on the Northern Alaska pipeline; attempts to emasculate FIRA; blackmail to force us to test U.S. weapons systems.

Canada must be firm and forthright in its dealings with the United States and stop its supine acquiescence. We must stop acting like mendicants on our hands and knees in our dealings with that country.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

CORRECTION OF MISLEADING STATEMENTS

Mr. David Smith (Don Valley East): Madam Speaker, yesterday both the Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nielsen) and the Right Hon. Member for Yellowhead (Mr. Clark), as reported at page 23188 of *Hansard*, called for the resignation of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) on the grounds he had misled the House. Clearly these Hon. Members are demonstrating rank hypocrisy by failing to distinguish between an honest mistake and a deliberate misleading of the House. No one on the opposite side suggested that the Minister of Finance intentionally misled the House. They know his reputation, and they know that such a suggestion would be unthinkable.

On October 15, 1979, the Minister of State for International Trade in the Tory Government, the current Hon. Member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson), rose to correct an answer given by him in the House three days earlier. He said:

Since making that statement, my officials have made me aware of three contracts which have been cancelled, one in the amount of \$4.2 million and two other smaller ones, one contract for approximately \$350,000 and the other one for approximately \$60,000.