

Inquiries of the Ministry

to the attention of the minister who will make a statement, as I indicated the other day, in due course.

Mr. Marshall: As this is the same answer we have heard for a week, can the parliamentary secretary assure us that this matter will be referred to the Standing Committee of Veterans Affairs before the end of this session?

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

SUGGESTED INVESTIGATION OF FOOD INDUSTRY

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs I would like to direct my question to his parliamentary secretary. In view of the statement by the president of the Canadian Grocery Distributors Institute that a recent survey shows that public confidence in the grocery business has dropped from 48 per cent in 1966 to 24 per cent in 1971, will the government consider implementing the 1967 recommendation of the Senate-Commons committee that the investigation into concentration in the food industry be continued?

Mr. D. R. Tolmie (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to bring this question to the notice of the minister.

Mrs. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a related question. Because the food chains now hold over 50 per cent of the Canadian grocery market, having taken 2 per cent more from independent retailers during the past year, will the government look into the effect of this control on consumers and the smaller independent retailers?

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

METIS AND NON-STATUS INDIANS—SUGGESTED DESIGNATION OF DEPARTMENT TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the representations made today to the government by the Native Council of Canada, composed of representatives of the Metis and non-status Indians, can the Prime Minister tell the House which department of his government and which minister will be designated to take responsibility for the special problems that concern these some 700,000 Canadians?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member might realize it is impossible to see that all aspects of the lives of some 700,000 Canadians can be taken care of by one department or one minister. It really depends on the subject which is foremost in their minds at any time. We would hope that all government departments would be open to them and, in dealing with their

[Mr. Francis.]

many areas of concern, provincial government departments also.

Mr. Nesbitt: In view of the fact that this particular group in our population, as the Prime Minister well knows, has rather special and unique problems which are not covered by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, would the Prime Minister not give consideration to designating one minister and one department of government through which their representations and complaints at least can be funnelled to the cabinet?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I do think it is important that their representations be funnelled to the cabinet. I hesitate to follow the suggestion of the hon. member to set up one minister to be in charge of all aspects of the lives of any one group of citizens. The hon. member has pointed out that we have a department responsible for Indian matters, and I am sure many of the concerns of Indians would be channelled through it. But as regards the Metis we have very many aspects of government concerned with them. For example, we know that the Secretary of State has set up friendship centres which are very successful and which deal with some urban aspects of the problem. We know that the Department of Regional Economic Expansion deals with other aspects of their problems. We also know that the minister responsible for citizenship deals with—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Before the Prime Minister goes through all the departments, perhaps the Chair could intervene and invite the hon. member for Peace River to ask his question.

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MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—CRITERIA IN SELECTING OF PROJECTS FOR EXTENSION

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration but in his absence I will direct it to the acting minister, or possibly the parliamentary secretary might even be persuaded to answer. My question has to do with the extension of the local initiatives program which was recently announced and the statement of the minister on Friday that the extended projects will in general favour quality of life over job creativity. As some of the extended programs seem very lively, including a telephone answering service for the homosexual society—that is one of them—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baldwin: —would the hon. gentleman request the minister to make a statement indicating the specific criteria which in fact were used to persuade the government to pick out and select certain projects to receive these extensions?

Mr. Ray Perrault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to enunciate the five principal criteria employed in determining which projects should be extended, starting with