

Oral Questions

discussed the question before the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, I pointed out to him that I would very much welcome suggestions coming from him or other members of the Opposition for projects.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Roberts: It is with some regret that he has not bothered to send us any. As far as the allegation in terms of figures is concerned, I will have to look into it.

Mr. McGrath: We could hardly make submissions until we saw what the criteria were. We did not get the criteria until February 2, even though he promised them to us the next day.

CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Let me refer to the criteria, Mr. Speaker. In the House on February 7 the Prime Minister indicated that members of the Liberal caucus and Members of Parliament were consulted, specifically members of the Liberal caucus, and asked to submit projects. Yet the criteria indicate:

—Grants and Contributions were not allocated on a constituency basis and, thus, were not the subject of formal consultation with Members of Parliament.

Can the Minister explain to the House why it is that only Liberal Members of Parliament were consulted when, according to the criteria, no Members of Parliament were to be consulted?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Well, the Hon. Member forgets the use of the word "formal" there.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Roberts: I do not think that there were formal consultations with Members of Parliament on the Liberal side other than the general Communication of information which takes place between a Government and members, urging that they take advantage of government programs which are available.

The Hon. Member asked for the criteria for the program, before the committee in November. I indicated to him at that time that the criteria were deliberately very wide-ranging and flexible, because their purpose was to cut through bureaucratic red tape. I promised to make available to him as quickly as I could—

Mr. McGrath: Two and a half months later.

Mr. Roberts: —the criteria. The criteria were prepared, a description of them was prepared, a bit before Christmas. I was not entirely satisfied that that gave as clear a picture to the hon. gentleman as he would like and, upon return, provided it to him. He complains that he could not make proposals to us without knowing what the criteria were. I suggest to him that he might have talked to some of his colleagues who did not seem to have any problem making proposals to us.

TRADE

BAN ON CANADIAN FISH PRODUCTS ANNOUNCED BY UNITED KINGDOM FOOD CHAIN

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister in his capacity as Secretary of State for External Affairs. Just a few days ago Ian MacLaurin, chief executive officer of TESCO, a major food chain in the United Kingdom, announced that his company would, when present stocks were exhausted, no longer sell Canadian fish products, as a protest against the Canadian seal fishery.

Is the Minister aware of the fact that the entire Canadian fishing industry is facing a drastic loss of markets in the United Kingdom as a result of the malicious advertising campaign carried out by misguided sentimentalists for animal welfare and, if so, what action does he intend to take for the protection of the Canadian fishing industry?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the question the Hon. Member has asked is one of very considerable importance in relation to the fishing industry.

Mr. Crosbie: Has the cat got your tongue, Allan?

Mr. Regan: The Department has taken very careful notice of this statement in Britain. We believe that the Canadian fishing industry should be consulted, and is being consulted by the Department on the matter. The action, of course, is totally unjustified and is an isolated one. We are confident that it is best combatted with as little publicity as possible.

Mr. Nowlan: Sweep it under the rug.

Mr. Crouse: I thank the Minister for International Trade for his answer, but my question was directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT MOUNT PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the House, from my own experience visiting the U.K. and some European capitals only a year ago with the Minister of Fisheries, that the attitude of the officials of the Secretary of State for External Affairs was, "We will bury our head in the sand and maybe this one will go away". But it did not go away. Therefore I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether he would consider mounting a public information campaign in the United Kingdom, as well as in Europe, by broadcasting and using other items in the media, in the hope of counteracting this vicious propaganda. If he does not have money enough in his own budget, perhaps he would get the Minister of Fisheries to give him some of the \$20 million which he plans to spend in Canada. Perhaps some of that money would be better spent where the markets are, in counteracting what I construe as something which could be