

*Oral Questions*

Through our missions abroad, we have asked the governments of those countries to assure Canada that the International Code regarding the respect for the rights of embassy staff in these countries will be observed; that there will be no violation of it. We have tried to take precautionary measures in this regard, and we also have contingency plans for evacuation should that become necessary.

With regard to the second question respecting minority groups—the hon. member mentioned specifically the Baha'i group—we have not made any plans to try to evacuate or to bring here a specific group such as the Baha'is; and we have not, at the request of the central office of the Baha'i faith in Tehran, made any largely overt moves to try to direct attention toward them because of their fears that they might, as a result, be looked upon as some kind of group expressing the opinions of western countries and, as such, become more liable to persecution.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**PENITENTIARIES****INQUIRY WHY CONSTRUCTION OF THREE INSTITUTIONS HAS BEEN SUSPENDED**

**Mr. Yvon Pinard (Drummond):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Solicitor General. Given the fact that all major construction projects in Quebec are at a standstill—that is the crude reality—and that these projects include at least three penitentiaries, could the Solicitor General explain to the House why he has put a stop to the construction of these three institutions and tell us what is happening indeed to the so-called penitentiary construction program in Canada?

[English]

**Hon. Allan Lawrence (Solicitor General and Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am not so sure that all public works in the province of Quebec have been suspended, or the construction of them. But in relation to the penitentiaries building program, when I arrived on the scene I was not convinced that the proper statistical base had been found respecting the forecasts of the future inmate population, not only in Quebec but across the whole country. A temporary freeze was put on the building program. We are about to lift parts of it, especially in relation to some parts of Quebec where I think it is quite essential that we get on with building some of the institutions.

● (1450)

[Translation]

**CONSTRUCTION OF INSTITUTIONS IN DRUMMONDVILLE AND MIRABEL—DATE OF RESUMPTION**

**Mr. Yvon Pinard (Drummond):** Mr. Speaker, given the fact that three weeks ago Correctional Service Commissioner Yeomans confirmed before the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs that in the last budget the government had

[Miss MacDonald.]

enough funds for the construction in Drummondville South and in Mirabel of institutions designed to replace the old Saint-Vincent-de-Paul institution; considering that the commissioner confirmed that the construction of a medium security penitentiary in Drummondville South and of a maximum security penitentiary in Mirabel was still one of the priorities of the Correctional Service of Canada; and finally in light of the fact that the Minister of Supply and Services, who is a member of the inner cabinet, announced the construction of these institutions in Drummondville last Saturday, can the Solicitor General confirm that the Minister of Supply and Services rendered was perfectly right and tell us at what specific date the work is expected to resume in Drummondville South and in Mirabel?

[English]

**Hon. Allan Lawrence (Solicitor General and Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, simply because funds are available to build these institutions does not necessarily mean that they should be built. I apologize if the hon. member did not understand me, but what I said was that I was not at all convinced that the statistical base was there—when I took over office—in respect of what institutions were required where and in what part of the country.

That doubt is beginning to be resolved by the emergence of a brand new set of statistics. Announcements have been made by the previous administration. As a matter of fact, I think there were four different, comprehensive total building programs announced over five years by the previous administration.

**FREEZE ON CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS**

**Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Solicitor General. Could he tell the House if the expected lift on the freeze of construction of penal institutions will apply to the proposed medium security institution in Dorchester and the maximum security institution in Renous?

**Hon. Allan Lawrence (Solicitor General and Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, as soon as a decision has been made, that decision will be announced.

\* \* \*

**NORTHERN AFFAIRS****FUNDING OF MANITOBA INDIAN BROTHERHOOD**

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In light of the severe difficulties that the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood finds itself in at the present time, and in view of the fact that the federal department has cut off funding to the organization, with the result that staff members are losing their jobs and the organization cannot operate at the present time, will the minister immediately reinstate funding to the