

country. I do not know of a more fair way to deal with this situation than to make the money available to all Indians in Canada on an equal basis, which is precisely what we are doing.

#### FUNDS FOR EDUCATION

**Mr. Laverne Lewycky (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister. In light of statements made by leaders of the Indian community and officials in the minister's department that the Indian education problem stems primarily from the lack of government funding, is the minister prepared to seek additional funds, instead of merely washing his hands of the matter, by transferring jurisdiction, along with the existing problem, to the Indian bands?

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member is referring to a report which has just come out. All directors of education in the department are meeting to consider the recommendations in that report. As soon as a study of the report has taken place, I will be pleased to indicate to the hon. member what action we will take.

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#### VETERANS AFFAIRS

##### DELAY IN PROCESSING PENSION APPLICATIONS

**Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs. Veterans pension applications, new and appealed, are still not processed and finalized for as long as 62 months, as verified by the Legion. The United States department of veterans affairs takes from 60 to 90 days to finalize an application. What measures is the minister taking to correct this disgraceful situation in his department?

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member was present at meetings of the House committee on veterans affairs and I think the presidents and responsible officers of most of the agencies for our veterans and of the pension commission and all the others were present. The hon. member had an opportunity to ask these questions, and he had some answers, which were very good by the way, that most agencies were progressing and the cases to be heard were less and less as time goes by. I think he had all the answers as far as the agencies are concerned, that progress is being made and will be made in the future.

● (1450)

##### REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN LEGISLATION

**Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine):** Yes, Madam Speaker, we received answers all right. The chairman of the pension commission told us that he is hamstrung. He cannot correct a situation that is going from bad to worse because of

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the legislation with which he has to work. I should like to ask the minister if he will give a firm commitment to the House that he will bring in corrective legislation so that these applications can be processed within 90 days, instead of from one to five years. I want to point out that the mortality rate among veterans waiting for applications to be processed is exceedingly high and is a national disgrace.

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that the question that he has submitted in this House will be discussed with the president of the pension commission, and if any correction can be made in order to improve the disposal of these claims, it will be made. We will do our utmost to improve the system, if it is possible at all, according to the law.

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#### FINANCE

##### EXTENSION OF SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BOND PROGRAM TO UNINCORPORATED FARMERS

**Hon. George Hees (Northumberland):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance. The minister's colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, has been making a number of speeches across the country in which he has quite rightly said that if the farmers are to be able to continue to do the excellent job they do for this country, they must have far lower interest rates available to them. In order to accomplish that, he has urged very strongly that his colleague, the Minister of Finance, make the Small Business Development Bond available to unincorporated farmers—that is the vast majority of all Canadian farmers—to enable them to do their job at a cost they can bear. As a result of those recommendations from his colleague, does the Minister of Finance intend to act on that suggestion and, if so, when?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, I answered a similar question just recently to the effect that when the decision is made about either the extension or widening of the application of the Small Business Development Bond, I would obviously be making it known in the House. No such decision has been made. I want to assure the hon. member that I had discussions yesterday and will continue to have discussions with the Minister of Agriculture with respect to what possible way we can move to assist the farmers of Canada meet the current situation.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Resign. That is the best way.

**Mr. Trudeau:** You did that.

**Mr. Crosbie:** That is what you should do. If you care about the country, get out and give it a chance.

**Mr. Trudeau:** Go to South Africa.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Why don't you go skiing again?