

Oral Questions

Vancouver, Thunder Bay or wherever there are difficulties to explain to the railway workers the provisions of the act and what the powers of the arbitrator are?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated, and I reiterate, I am satisfied that the provisions of the bill have been explained and that those who are doing the explaining are fully aware of the provisions of the bill. That having been said, I believe the reasonable period in terms of explanation is at an end and we should insist on compliance with this act of parliament.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Minister of Labour why he did not accept the request of various unions across the country that he go to Vancouver and explain the provisions of the bill, realizing his well known lack of desire for publicity?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I believe my position, and I think the right hon. member will agree, is to insist on compliance with an act of parliament that has been passed and not to lend any credence to anyone who may believe there is any way by which they can avoid compliance with this act. In the circumstances, I feel there are other appropriate ways of getting explanations to those who desire them. In fact, we have done that. I reiterate to the right hon. member I am now fully satisfied that all those who expressed concern are well aware of the provisions of the act and should now instruct all their men to comply with its provisions.

Mr. Diefenbaker: In view of this declaration, have any informations been laid or when are they going to be laid?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated that if we are going to insist upon compliance with the act, action will have to be taken very shortly indeed. This reasonable period in terms of explanation is just about at an end. The right hon. member has just expressed an inclination that these explanations should be offered. Indeed, I believe the implication of his question was that I should have done it. I take it from that that he has no disagreement with the procedure to date. I would hope I would have his support when I insist on behalf of all members of parliament that there now be compliance with the provisions of the act of parliament.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the right hon. member for Prince Albert for one further supplementary and then the hon. member for Hamilton West.

Mr. Diefenbaker: With this vast accumulation of words to conceal information, will the minister now say whether any informations have been laid or, if not, when they are going to be laid? That is a very simple question. It cannot be evaded by the kind of language in which the minister has been engaging.

[Mr. Orlikow.]

MANPOWER**LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—ADVERTISEMENTS
RESPECTING CONSTITUENCY ADVISORY GROUPS**

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration related to the LIP program. Why did he or his department find it necessary to publish advertisements in the papers in the last two or three days indicating that constituency advisory groups would be set up when, in fact, he had asked for the opinions of members of parliament, which opinions were supposed to be in his hands today, as to the efficacy of constituency advisory groups? It seems to me the minister's letter was a sham and a farce. Would he explain the circumstances to the House?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): We will certainly hold to the intention of offering members of parliament the opportunity to make the decision whether there should or should not be such groups within their constituencies. It is a legitimate choice because some constituencies, by reason of their make-up or structure do not lend themselves, at this stage anyway, to the operation of local advisory groups. If the hon. member reads the advertisement carefully I think he will find that an attempt is being made to make provision for more local input concerning decisions as to the desirability or otherwise of projects. The indication was given that in a typical constituency such a choice would probably be made. There was no attempt to put the hon. member on the spot.

Mr. Alexander: Notwithstanding what the minister has said, there was an indication of pressure placed on members of parliament to go along with these constituency advisory groups. To my mind the advertisement was very misleading. Can the minister tell the House that projects categorized as essential or desirable by constituency advisory groups will be accepted for funding by the minister? He has left the impression with the community that the constituency advisory groups would have the final say. Is this a fact or is it not?

Mr. Andras: I think the advertisement refers to consultation and respect for that consultation, but I want to make it absolutely clear, as I did in my letter to hon. members and in any public statements I have made, that while consultation will be a major factor in the decision-making process, ultimate authority for the approval of projects or otherwise will remain with the minister, who must accept that responsibility.

Mr. Alexander: Is it the intention of the minister, in order to give some credibility to his statement and to the policy that has been announced, to break down the \$83 million by constituencies in order that we can ascertain whether, in fact, constituency advisory groups will have the opportunity to have their projects funded?

Mr. Andras: Every constituency will have the same opportunity. The exact amount allocated to constituencies will be subject to already committed negotiations with the provincial governments. The allocation as between provinces has already been decided upon under a formula that