

Oral Questions

My question is this: Where is the fairness in asking these people now to put out money to go through an application, then to be told that there are delays, and to be getting conflicting evidence as to what is required when the enumerator comes to them at their homes ahead of the next election and asks, "Are you a Canadian citizen?" These people are getting conflicting evidence to the effect, "Well, you don't have to prove you are. You can just go ahead and not be completely honest with the enumerator." That is the kind of advice some of these people are getting. That has come back to us as members of parliament. It is a very bad situation and I would ask the minister to treat this matter with the utmost importance.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated to the right hon. member for Prince Albert that I will treat it with seriousness. I have nothing further to add at the present time.

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NATIONAL REVENUE

REGULATIONS RESPECTING CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Minister of National Revenue is no longer accountable to this House in that he has been called to glory at a higher plane, I would direct a question to the minister who answers questions in this House relating to the Department of National Revenue.

I ask the minister if it is the government's intention to change the ridiculous regulations that were circulated last week to charitable organizations in Canada, whereby they were enjoined not to conduct letter-writing campaigns to politicians, and/or organize demonstrations against the government or write editorials on political topics. This is obviously their democratic right and would appear to be an infringement of the Canadian Bill of Rights. I ask the minister if the government will change these ridiculous regulations, given the fact that most groups in this country have legitimate grounds for demonstrating against this government?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I regret that I did not hear the first part of the hon. member's question, but I will read it in *Hansard* and try to provide an answer for him.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria.

Mr. Corbin: My question was for the Minister of Labour who was in his seat a moment ago.

[Mr. Fraser.]

● (1442)

ESTIMATES

ITEMS RESPECTING INDIAN RESERVES

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. It relates to the very serious concerns raised by various native associations, particularly in Alberta and New Brunswick, with respect to the 1978-79 estimates, the increased allotments for internal administration and the very significant decrease in terms of program moneys for the various reserves which could affect such things as hot lunch programs, the education of Indian students by Indian teachers, and fire protection services. These are issues of which the minister is well aware.

I understand the minister had a meeting earlier today with officials of the National Indian Brotherhood. What kind of assurance was he able to give the National Indian Brotherhood that vital services to the Indian people of this country would not be very detrimentally reduced or cut off?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct in saying that along with my colleague, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, I had a meeting with members of the National Indian Brotherhood and some provincial organizations this morning. Without evading the basic question, I would say it should more properly be addressed to my colleague, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, who has responsibility within the over-all allocations to that department for the distinction between various programs.

We both agreed to address ourselves to this question. We are very concerned about some of the evidence or indications that we received this morning. We will be looking at this matter in all seriousness because it is one of considerable concern.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the President of the Treasury Board could indicate whether he, or the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, was unaware of the very great impact these budgetary announcements would have on native peoples. If they were unaware of it, are they going to take steps now to alleviate some of the very serious problems already being created for bands in Alberta and British Columbia with respect to services for native people?

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I can add to my response of a minute ago to the hon. member. The question of awareness of departmental programs within an over-all allocation for a particular department is the responsibility of that department. Treasury Board would know about it in a general way, of course. I have been receiving other indications of this problem. We are seriously concerned about it and will be looking at it.