

Oral Questions

willingness to get off the street, as opposed to providing programs for those who indicate a willingness to get off the street before they enter the program.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the hon. minister has not even read the Badgley Report on this subject. If she had, she would know that the majority of young street prostitutes do not want to be on the street. She is giving the wrong impression. It is absolutely not true that they are on the street because they want to and this is a totally ridiculous answer to a genuine social problem. I will direct this question to the Prime Minister. Given that his Justice Minister has turned her back on the young street prostitutes, will the Prime Minister at least give the young men and women who want to get off the street the chance to do so with federal programs or will he also turn his back on this major social problem?

[*English*]

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member will know, the program is designed to assist young people on the street, whether they are prostitutes or not. The program is delivered by three levels of government. I come from a city in fact where the question of street solicitation is in fact more severe than in any part of the country, and I do not have anything to learn from the hon. member about that.

My response was to a suggestion that getting young people off the streets and out of street solicitation was a simple question of providing those kinds of programs. That is not the case. It is a much more complex problem than that. I believe it has to be dealt with by all of the levels of government that are involved in it.

I indicated very clearly in my response my willingness to continue to discuss these programs with provincial governments that have the primary responsibility in that area.

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ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The Human Rights Commissioner indicates that the list of aboriginal issues continues to grow. The government has repeatedly ignored its responsibility to address the complex issues aboriginal peoples face. Many native communities are living in Third World conditions.

Will the minister commit himself to end the tragic price aboriginal peoples are forced to pay because of government policies that foster economic dependence instead of autonomy and self-reliance?

Mrs. Dorothy Dobbie (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question from the hon. member today, because it gives me an opportunity to speak on behalf of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and say that the four pillars the Prime Minister announced in last September's speech are well under way.

There is a very great concern in this government to see that the issues that have been dealt with in the human rights report are addressed. We are working toward that as rapidly as we possibly can.

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Human Rights Commissioner would like to hear that, because it is a very well-kept secret if anything is happening. I assume that even CSIS does not know about it, it is such a well-kept secret.

My question is for the Prime Minister. Aboriginal people and their leaders continue to be excluded and ignored in all serious constitutional talks. Last night, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development withdrew the government's promise of last summer for a royal commission on aboriginal issues. Another promise is broken.

Will the Prime Minister today announce a specific timetable and agenda for including the aboriginal people and their leaders in the constitutional process?

Mrs. Dorothy Dobbie (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, nobody has ruled out the possibility of having a royal commission.

However, I think the program the government has launched on right now is one that is working and that should be allowed to work.

If the hon. member is really serious—and I am sure she is—about seeing that these very real concerns of the aboriginal people of this country are addressed, she will join with us in helping to resolve these issues through