

Oral Questions

Mr. Rae: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the minister that we on this side in our party share her concern that welfare recipients should have the benefit directly, and that they should not suffer as a result of provinces failing to pass on benefits. My question relates to provinces like Alberta which have not as yet said whether they will agree to this commitment. A letter from the province of Alberta, dated November 17, 1978, to the executive director of the National Anti-Poverty Organization indicated that even at that time they had not yet made up their mind whether they were going to change their legislation to have the desired effect. Can the minister tell the House whether she is prepared to give a regular report to this House indicating which provinces are giving effect to the legislation and which provinces are not?

Miss Bégin: Mr. Speaker, it is an excellent, but an uncomfortable, suggestion which I accept. I will make a regular report for the House.

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ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION

ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICT OFFICE

Mr. Ross Milne (Peel-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Veterans Affairs, on behalf of the Legion and the many veterans in my riding, whether he and his department intend to go forward with the district office establishment that he announced many months ago and, if so, what will be their relationship with the Legion?

Hon. Daniel J. MacDonald (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I gather the hon. member is referring to the office in Brampton. Those plans are going forward and I hope to have a director in place by May. From then on, once the office is in operation, there will be considerable publicity in the local media and also by the veterans' organizations.

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LOTO CANADA

EQUIPMENT USED IN LOTO SELECT PROGRAM

Mr. Paul Dick (Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport). Could the minister tell the House whether any of the equipment which was to be used by Loto Select, the computerized lottery game, was purchased, or was the equipment simply leased from General Instrument? If leased, does Loto Canada have the right to sublease this equipment or to assign it?

Hon. Iona Campagnolo (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport)): Mr. Speaker, the question of the contract was one of lease. I am afraid I cannot answer at this time the other question put by the hon. gentleman because I have been asked specifically by the solicitors not to do so.

Mr. Dick: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister. The minister has made it clear that she cannot table at this time the agreement between Loto Canada and General Instrument. I understand that. She has tabled the agreement between the provinces and Loto Canada. However, there is a third agreement which I think we have been mixed up about in the past.

● (1452)

Would the minister be willing to table the telexes which, I believe, formed the agreement between the federal government, the province of Ontario and the province of Quebec as to the amount of money which Ontario and Quebec might be willing to contribute at this time to the federal government for Loto Canada?

Mrs. Campagnolo: Mr. Speaker, this was the subject of a question of privilege by the hon. member some weeks ago. There is not a third agreement, as he states. There is a legal accommodation between the corporation and the province of Ontario and the province of Quebec. If I were to table these in the House at this time, I would prejudice the resolution of the contract. Therefore, I will not be able to do so at this time.

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SOCIAL INSURANCE

USE OF SIN

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to that posed by my colleague from St. Boniface. I think it goes most properly to the Minister of Finance, as it relates to the Bank of Canada.

Can the minister tell the House whether his then colleague, the then minister of national revenue, was speaking for the government when he said it was the policy of the Bank of Canada that Canadians who did not want to be identified by a social insurance number could invent their own number?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have not seen that letter. I am very surprised at what the hon. member said and I would like to analyse the problem. Of course, when you have a social insurance number you cannot invent another number. That is my judgment. However, I would like to look into it.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, I will be delighted to make available a copy of the letter from the then minister of national revenue, his then colleague, dated November 22, 1977, in which he stated that was the case. I would like an undertaking from the Minister of Finance that he will inquire of the Bank of Canada whether they are, in fact, pursuing his highly inventive policy, and report back to the House on that matter as quickly as possible.

Mr. Chrétien: I do not think that is a question, Mr. Speaker: everyone knows I am a very diligent minister.