

Oral Questions

colleague, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. Can the minister, in conjunction with his colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, take such steps as will be necessary to assure these unfortunate native mothers that there will be on the staff of the Charles Camsell Hospital in Edmonton people who are able to communicate with them in their own language and dialect concerning the problems surrounding the very matter the hon. lady has been discussing?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, it is already the government's policy to ensure that there is an interpreter present. That may not be necessary in every case, but when the problem is discussed, the policy established by my colleague is that the choice must be given to the person concerned through an interpreter if this is necessary; I believe the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare may have more information to give the House.

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[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**HALIFAX HARBOUR—SUGGESTED MEETING WITH FISHERMEN TO PLAN FOR DISPOSITION OF DREDGED MATERIAL**

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment. Will the minister use his good offices to suspend the dredging program in connection with the auto port in Halifax harbour until such time as the environmental protection service people have had an opportunity to meet with the fishermen and work out an adequate way of dumping the dredged material?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I will make inquiries and ensure that the necessary steps are taken.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**REPORTED ARREST OF GREEK LAWYERS ACTING IN DEFENCE OF STUDENTS—REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF CONCERN BY GOVERNMENT**

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I put this question to the Acting Prime Minister on Friday. Has the government received information that six Greek lawyers involved in the defence of students on trial in Athens have themselves been arrested, are being detained in police headquarters there and are reported to have been subjected to torture? If so, will the minister take the appropriate steps to indicate the humanitarian concern of the Canadian government and the Canadian people?

[Mr. Macquarrie.]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, like the hon. member, I have been aware of these reports. First, I ought to make it clear there are no Canadians involved, neither as lawyers nor students, so we are not directly concerned to make representations on behalf of Canadians. However, we are concerned about the suppression of civil liberties in Greece. I have made representations along these lines to the Greek government and have made them publicly as well. However, one has to bear in mind that when dealing with an intervention in a legal proceeding one has to be careful not to do damage to those people one is trying to help.

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INDUSTRY**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON PROPOSALS TO ASSIST SMALL BUSINESSES**

Mr. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. On Friday, the minister referred to "new proposals which I am preparing in order to provide additional special assistance to small business." Is the minister willing to indicate to the House whether he can make a statement on motions tomorrow indicating what those proposals will be to help this very vital sector of our economy?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, these proposals are under very active consideration at the present time. When I have an announcement to make on policy changes, it will be made in the normal fashion.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We are reaching the end of the question period. The hon. member can ask a supplementary, and I will then try to recognize one or two additional questioners without supplementaries.

Mr. Beatty: Can I ask the minister whether he intends to introduce these proposals while there are still some small businesses left in this country?

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MANPOWER**REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF CLOSING DATE OF ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAM**

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Due to the fact that manpower centres have not been able to complete contracts under the training-on-the-job program relating to the job creation element, which includes agriculture, as of the March 31 closing date because of shortage of applicants for available jobs, will the minister consider extending this program until April 30?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I will give the representation consideration.