

Oral Questions

nizations helping the civilian population affected by the conflict.

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[English]

WAR CRIMINALS

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in January of this year the government announced that war criminals living in Canada would be deported rather than prosecuted for their crimes against humanity.

This is a shift in policy from 1987 when the Liberal Party endorsed a made in Canada solution to Nazi war criminals.

My question is for the Minister of Justice. Why has the government given up on the idea of prosecuting Nazi war criminals in Canada?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, by far the preferred way of approaching such cases is to initiate criminal prosecutions.

However, a couple of things have happened since 1987. First, the provisions in the Criminal Code that were added at about that time to provide for such prosecutions have been tested in court proceedings and interpreted by the Supreme Court of Canada.

Second, the nature, quality and availability of the evidence in such prosecutions has diminished in the years since 1987. When we came to office we came with a determination to do something about the moral imperative of removing such people from our midst.

We looked at the possibility of criminal prosecution and determined that in view of the interpretation placed on the provisions of the code by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Finta* and in view of the state of the evidence in these cases, the best approach for achieving the moral imperative in a practical way was to institute civil proceedings by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. That is the step we have taken.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have been here for 18 months and in all areas of crime we would like to see some justice. I am still waiting. We have not seen justice yet.

Earlier this year the Minister of Justice said: "War crimes investigators have evidence that 12 suspects are living in Canada". However, the government is only pursuing four cases in order to test the legal waters.

The longer the minister waits, the more unreliable the evidence is going to be. Why is the minister not pursuing all 12 cases immediately?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is quite

right. These cases must be undertaken as soon as possible. We are starting with four cases. We have identified eight others as appropriate for proceeding in this same way. We have eight counsel under the lead of a senior justice counsel dealing with the four cases that are already before the courts. As soon as we possibly can we will initiate the others.

We started with four cases that we believe in some important respects will clear the way by creating legal precedents that will make it simpler to proceed in the other cases.

I fully agree with the hon. member and we will commence the balance of the cases at the earliest possible date.

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TRADE

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry.

In order to create jobs and stimulate small and medium sized businesses in a new, innovative economy, we need new approaches to equity capital.

What is the government doing to create a new environment for encouraging Canadians to invest in their own country and its technological excellence?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Durham for his continuing interest in the issue of capital formation with respect to small and medium sized businesses, especially in the new economy areas which he knows require both investment in technology as well as in skills development.

• (1455)

It is a key issue. In keeping with the approach that the government announced in the orange book of assistance to business, our objective is to create a framework in which business will succeed. We are looking to the private sector for the kinds of linkages and sources of funds that are important. In addition we have a tax system in place that encourages innovation and investment in R and D.

The R and D tax credit, the creation of the Canada community investment plan as well as Industry Canada are pursuant of our macroeconomic agenda. It will ensure that we understand the needs of small business and that we make the appropriate linkages and partnerships that are available. They are the keys to solving these problems.

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[Translation]

HEPATITIS C

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.