

Oral Questions

used in criminal cases, the requirement still stands that entertainers applying for a work visa to Canada will, in fact, be fingerprinted by the Canadian authorities before getting a visa.

An hon. Member: What about Lassie?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): That is unlikely, Mr. Speaker. However if, in the view of the department an entertainer who applied for a work visa was a member of the "prohibited" class—I cannot think of the right word—that individual would be fingerprinted for the purposes of identification; but only in that particular instance.

Mr. Epp: I find the minister's explanation very ambiguous because, first, he says they will not be fingerprinted, and then he says that perhaps they will. Can he spell it out clearly, because at present even when a name artist who is not Canadian comes to Canada, he will have the back up of Canadian musicians, and that regulation affects Canadian musicians much more adversely than it does foreign musicians.

Would the minister review that regulation, in view of the fact that we have not had a chance even to discuss it in committee and the effect it is having on Canadian commerce, especially in view of the objectives under section 3 of the act?

Mr. Cullen: The hon. member has made a representation, and so have others. Our concern is that we should be treating people who come to this country to entertain in the way we would like Canadian entertainers to be treated abroad. We have been very generous in the approach we have taken. But I do have an obligation: when an individual comes in as an entertainer, under whatever circumstances, if that individual is suspected of being a criminal I must protect the Canadian public from that person.

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MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

FUNDS FOR RESEARCH

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put my question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Has she received representations from the medical research community to the effect that a crisis now exists in the field of medical research because the funds allocated to the Medical Research Council for the coming year have increased by only 3.8 per cent and as a result of this very small increase—less than the increase in the cost of living—20 per cent of the established medical research projects are being cut off in the coming year and the scientific community cannot live with that kind of budget? If that is so, what does she propose to do about it?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I did receive representations from the medical research community of Canada, which is one of the first groups I met when I became Minister of National Health

[Mr. Epp.]

and Welfare. I am very sympathetic to their representations for more funds. However, the facts given by the hon. member are wrong and I would like to correct them. We increased the budget of NRC by 5.6 per cent and we were able to exempt their budget from the exbudget procedure in order to protect to the maximum the funds we can grant them in this difficult economic situation. Therefore, they have received, proportionately, more than any department of government. This is very important and shows our commitment to medical research and our concern for their particular problem.

I have asked the community to provide me with the facts, and I will do my best to help them. I have not received anything from them as yet. They say that respecting medical research equipment, the cost of which amounts to about 80 per cent of the cost of a given project, comes from the United States and therefore they suffer from devaluation of the dollar in addition to inflation.

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[Translation]

FINANCE

INQUIRY WHETHER FRENCH BANKING INSTITUTIONS WILL JOIN CANADIAN PAYMENT ASSOCIATION

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. On April 19, the right hon. Prime Minister stated in the House that the caisses populaires and credit unions would be included in the new Bank Act. Could the Minister of Finance indicate whether, under this government policy, the caisses populaires and credit unions would be required to join the Canadian Payment Association?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): The decision whether the caisses populaires and credit unions should join the Canadian Payment Association will be known the moment the legislation to amend the Bank Act has been introduced. At the time the green paper was released, neither the caisses populaires nor the credit unions strongly objected to joining this association.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question. In view of the fact that both the caisses populaires and credit unions came previously under the jurisdiction of the provincial governments, could the Minister of Finance indicate whether the federal government has held discussions with the provincial governments concerning the possibility of having these organizations come under such a federal agency as the Canadian Payment Association or another federal agency?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, the details of this legislation will be announced in due course. Participation will be on a voluntary basis, and the caisses populaires and credit unions will have to decide one way or another, once the legislation has been duly introduced and studied.