

Oral Questions

program for aboriginal businesses is strongly supported by aboriginal groups and non-aboriginal industries.

The ministers of public works, industry and Indian affairs are monitoring the situation very closely as they are considering to use these procurements to help small aboriginal businesses across Canada.

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LITERACY

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I quoted passages from "Making Scenes Between the Lines" for the minister of human resources. He was rightly shocked by the obscene language in it and wondered where I got my reading material. I hope the minister has now had time to realize that this booklet was funded by the government for use in classrooms across the country.

If the minister has actually had time to read this booklet in the interim, does he not agree that "Making Scenes Between the Lines" has no place our children's schools?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to look into the allegation made by the hon. member for Beaver River.

The fact is that the whole program was being sponsored by 21 organizations across the country, including the Canadian Bar Association, the John Howard Society and the Salvation Army. Their attempt was to try to provide ways of linking the use of literacy to crime prevention and to provide a way of enabling particularly young people who are at risk with the law to find solutions.

One of the booklets was prepared by the young people themselves, expressing their concerns and their feelings. I want to point out to the hon. member that the booklet has never been distributed to any school. It is for adult use only and distributed by those organizations. I think it is time the hon. member withdrew her allegation.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the executive assistant in the senator's office who funded this said yesterday that it was for adult use only.

On the contrary, James MacLatchie, the chair of the organization, said to press and MPs alike: "This is to go to all schools across the country without respect to grades or age level". There are two different stories coming out there. James MacLatchie should answer those questions.

Whether it is for adults, criminals, dropouts or young people in schools across the country, would the minister agree that this obscene language is not good for anybody to learn to read and

write? Will he obviously cancel it? Will he cut his losses, recommend to the senator responsible for it to cut her losses and cancel the booklet rather than cut their own throats and let it go ahead?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate the hon. member for Beaver River did not consult with her own colleague, the member for Mission—Coquitlam, who attended the press conference at which the booklet and the kit were released.

At that time the member for Mission—Coquitlam congratulated the minister responsible for literacy on the presentation of the document and applauded the efforts to provide protection against crime by the use of literacy.

I would simply like to raise a question with the leader of the Reform Party. Is he going to ask the member for Beaver River to resign after such overt, obvious fumbling of the question she has raised?

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[Translation]

FRENCH SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Quebec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Canadian Heritage. After the news that funding provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for scientific journals in French had been cut by nearly 50 per cent, while scientific journals—

• (1455)

[English]

The Speaker: We only have five minutes to go.

[Translation]

Mrs. Gagnon: Mr. Speaker, after the news that funding provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for scientific journals in French had been cut by nearly 50 per cent, while scientific journals in English were not affected, we heard today that the National Museum of Science and Technology will from now on publish its magazine on astronomy in English only.

What explanation does the Minister of Canadian Heritage have for this kind of decision by an agency for which he is responsible?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I had an opportunity to comment on a sports-related case, and I emphasized the importance of maintaining the status of the French language and complying the official languages legislation.