

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse Act

Mr. Nunziata: Madam Chairman, can the Minister indicate what type of budget the centre will have? Does the Minister have some figures for the first year of operation? If he does, can he give us some examples of how money will be spent by the new centre?

Mr. Epp (Provencher): Yes, Madam Chairman. There is a budget allocated for national drug strategy. There was a recommendation at one time of \$1.4 million. The standing committee recommended that that should be reconsidered and it should be somewhat higher. We have allocated a budget of up to \$2 million annually for the centre at this time.

Mr. Nunziata: Madam Chairman, exactly what does the Minister expect to do with \$2 million? It seems to me that that is a small amount of money in relation to the magnitude of the problem. If you are only allocating \$2 million to the centre, how much advertising could you possibly do with \$2 million? How much promotion could you actually do? Presumably the centre would have to pay salaries, rent and other such matters just to be in operation. Can the Minister indicate exactly what will be done with the \$2 million, and does he feel that \$2 million is enough or is it just a token amount?

Mr. Epp (Provencher): No, Madam Chairman, I do not regard it as a token amount. If the Hon. Member would go back to the recommendations that were made by Mr. Archibald with respect to the setting up of a substance abuse centre, I think the recommendations are inherent in the Bill and the amount of money I have mentioned is in keeping with the recommendations.

Second, it is not the purpose of the Centre to "run the federal Government's drug program". As the Hon. Member knows, that is a drug program of \$210 million over a five-year period. What was identified and needed was a clearing house for various types of information and activities, and while we have passed Clause 3, if I could direct the Hon. Member to Clause 3 as to the purpose of the centre, I could go through the five sections but they are listed in Clause 3.

Clauses 13 to 26 inclusive agreed to.

● (1550)

On Clause 27—*Registered Charity*

Mr. Nunziata: Madam Chairman, Clause 27 indicates that the centre, for the purposes of the Income Tax Act, shall be deemed to be a registered charity within the meaning of that expression for the purposes of that Act. Does the Minister anticipate that the centre will be on a fund-raising drive of sorts? Will individual Canadians and organizations be in a position to make donations to this centre? Does it expect to operate, to some extent, through public donations?

Mr. Epp (Provencher): Madam Chairman, as I indicated earlier, up to \$2 million has been allocated for the running of the centre. The recommendations from Mr. Archibald were that there should also be corporate and public participation in the funding of the centre, and so Clause 27 was inserted in such a way that those who make donations to the centre would get the same tax consideration as those who donate to other charities.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Clause 27 carry?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Clause 27 agreed to.

Clauses 28 to 32 agreed to.

On Clause 33—*Evaluation*

Ms. Copps: Madam Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister why there is legislation which calls for review only after the fourth anniversary of the coming into force of the Act. Why would there not be a review after the first anniversary, or does the Minister not intend to bring this on stream for four years?

Mr. Epp (Provencher): Madam Chairman, there will be annual reports, and as the Hon. Member knows, annual reports are subject to review by Parliament and specifically by Standing Committees. If she were to check back to the national drugs strategy, she would see that there was a comprehensive review mechanism built into that after the fourth year as to the continuation of the program. This is parallel to that.

The Hon. Member asked if we intend to bring the Substance Abuse Centre into place after four years. No, we intend to get the legislation passed and the Substance Abuse Centre established this year, possibly even flowing into this fiscal year.

Ms. Copps: Madam Chairman, it seems to me that if the Minister's intention is to coincide the evaluation of the centre with the evaluation of the national drugs strategy, he should call for an evaluation of the centre in two years. Presumably the national drugs strategy has been in operation for almost a year and a half and the evaluation process should then occur in 1990. Therefore, the Minister will be two years out of sync according to his own Act.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): Madam Chairman, no, I do not think that there would be enough time for the Substance Abuse Centre to have established itself or to have an evaluation that comprehensive so soon. I think it is better to give it a five-year program as we do with other fiscal arrangements to get it established, although there will be annual reports which are obviously important and will be studied by Parliament each year.