

investigate because at that time he had no information about it. Could the government House leader now indicate to the House whether in fact such an investigation has been carried out and whether various Cabinet ministers have been canvassed as to whether such a list was circulated to members of his Cabinet?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I am able to say that I am not aware of any such list. I have not seen any such list and, to the best of my knowledge, no such list exists or has existed.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

\* \* \*

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

ALLEGED REVERSAL OF MINISTER'S POSITION IN CASE OF WILLIAM BIGGS—SUGGESTED REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

**Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence. On December 20 last the minister told me that he was going to have an independent inquiry made into the case of William Biggs, an employee in Germany who was found innocent of charges but severely punished by being dismissed from his employment. The minister said he was going to ask the Ontario ombudsman to investigate the case. Some four days later, however, the minister changed his mind completely and wrote to William Biggs informing him that he was not improperly fired. The minister also had the gall to wish Biggs a happy holiday. Could the minister inform us what happened during those four days to induce him to reverse his position and deny an impartial hearing to Mr. Biggs?

**Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, I believe I discussed this case with the hon. member, and suggested alternative ways of dealing with it in a satisfactory manner. There was no commitment made in respect of any such inquiry. I do not even know, and did not at that time, whether the Ontario ombudsman would even accept such a reference. In the interim I made a very thorough study of the case, as I had been doing up till then, and came to the conclusion that no further purpose could be served; it was a normal management decision, there was no question of Mr. Biggs' integrity involved at all but was a management decision which was made by competent management authority. He was not in the armed forces nor was he employed by the armed forces, and I am satisfied that the proper decision was made. I do not expect Mr. Biggs to necessarily agree with that decision as I never did when I got fired.

**An hon. Member:** Stop your histrionics.

**Mr. Nowlan:** There were different reasons for you getting fired.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

#### Oral Questions

**Mr. McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same minister. While Biggs may not have been in the armed forces, he was employed by them in that his superiors were members of the armed forces. To ensure that justice is seen to be done in this case I would ask the minister to refer the case of the dismissal of William Biggs to the Standing Committee on External Affairs National Defence, for that committee to be authorized to call such witnesses as may be necessary and to make recommendations to the House for a fair and just settlement of the case. Will the minister grant such referral?

**Mr. Danson:** No, Mr. Speaker. I think it has been dealt with in a proper way and I am satisfied that justice was done in this case.

\* \* \*

#### MANPOWER

CANADA WORKS PROGRAM—REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR FILING APPLICATIONS

**Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the fact that countless requests are being received by many members indicating the difficulty encountered in obtaining information regarding the Canada Works Program, will the minister consider extending the deadline beyond February 4 for submission of applications under Phase I of the program?

**Hon. Jack Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, in view of representations that have been made to extend it, I am looking at that suggestion. I am endeavouring to determine how many applications are coming in now and how many are going to beat the deadline. It would seem inappropriate to extend the deadline too far if we have a sufficient number of applications by the deadline date, but I will look at this, not only the numbers but the actual areas from which the applications come.

**Mr. Scott:** Mr. Speaker, since a similar situation exists in respect of the Young Canada Works Program, would the minister consider extending the deadline in respect of this program to enable submissions of properly constituted and well developed proposals to help reduce student unemployment?

**Mr. Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, that is an area I am looking at.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Fraser Valley West.

**Mr. Patterson:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague stole my thunder.