

Oral Questions

GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber-Port au Port-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, the Premier of Newfoundland and, I understand, Premiers of other Atlantic Provinces, indicated yesterday to the Prime Minister that they were very concerned—

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the Hon. Member has a question.

Mr. Tobin: They were very concerned about the cut-backs. In view of the commitment of his Party during the election campaign to make tourism a high priority for this administration, can the Minister of Transport tell the people affected by the ferry services between Nova Scotia and P.E.I., P.E.I. and New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, the only method of cheap transport available to these people—two of the provinces are islands—that the Government will not slash subsidies and will not pass on unviable—I am coming to the question, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon.

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MULTICULTURALISM

IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Ernie Epp (Thunder Bay-Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Multiculturalism, whom I congratulate on his appointment to that important position. The question deals with the report of the Special Committee on Visible Minorities in Canadian Society, which was published under the title "Equality Now". Delegates to the conference of the Canadian Council for Multicultural and Inter-Cultural Education, which was held in Toronto this past weekend, endorsed all 80 recommendations in the report. Several hundred delegates signed a petition calling on the Government to implement the recommendations immediately. Will the Minister indicate when he intends to respond to the recommendations in the report, especially considering the difficult economic times and the recommendations it made regarding employment?

Hon. Jack Murta (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his kind remarks and welcome him to his important position as critic for multiculturalism.

In the area of our work, and the whole question of the "Equality Now" report, there is something in the neighbourhood of 40 recommendations, out of the 84 or 85 recommendations which were made by the committee, which directly affect the area of multiculturalism. My staff is actively working on those recommendations at the present time. We are prioritizing those recommendations. We have met with the ethno-cultural community across the country. I think the work is well on its way, and I am hopeful of early results.

ABELLA COMMISSION REPORT—DATE OF PRESENTATION

Mr. Ernie Epp (Thunder Bay-Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question deals with the report of the Abella Commission, which has been anticipated for some time. Could the Minister tell the House when the report will be presented and what are his expectations? I trust those expectations are for speedy action on the report of that commission, as well as on the report of the special committee.

Hon. Jack Murta (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)): Mr. Speaker, the report is scheduled for presentation in the very near future, literally within a matter of a few days. When that takes place I will be in a better position to respond to the Hon. Member.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF PAROLE PROCEDURES

Mr. Ross Belsher (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. Last week in *The Vancouver Sun* headlines appeared which read: "Court Rejects 15-Year Parole Wait for Killer". This case involved a convicted killer. He was convicted of second degree murder of his common law wife and infant child. The jury recommended that he wait at least 15—

Mr. Speaker: I will be as patient as I can with new Members, but I would ask that the Member please put his question.

Mr. Belsher: What steps is the Minister's Department taking in reviewing and changing the present parole board procedures, so that convicted killers will not be allowed to return to society before justice has been served?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, first, with respect to my hon. colleague's question, the case to which he refers is in the purview of the Attorney General of British Columbia and deals with the issue of crimes that were committed before the coming into effect of the Charter of Rights. Therefore, it is the lesser penalty of the 1969 era that applies rather than the present law. As far as the rest of his question is concerned, I can tell him that we are doing everything possible within the confines of existing legislation to control the situation, and hope that early in the new year concrete steps will be taken to give the public of Canada better protection.