

obtain an answer to my question. I have not been able to obtain an answer from the provincial government. Because of the interest of the federal government in the creation of national parks, I am sure it will give me the answer I seek.

I feel sincerely that the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development should send a team of experts to the area to advise and support the statements of the ministers of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The people who are to be involved should be allowed to participate in the development of their future and the advancement of the economy of this area for the benefit of their families and children. I humbly request the parliamentary secretary to provide me with an answer to this question.

Mr. Judd Buchanan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I assure the hon. member that we are also very concerned about the residents of his constituency, particularly those who will be resident within the boundaries of the park. We intend to do everything possible to minimize the hardships and the inconvenience they will suffer. Let me refer to the question posed by the hon. member, which was:

—would the minister indicate whether a contract has been let to do survey work on the national park in western Newfoundland, Bonne Bay park?

The specific reply is that a call for tenders for the boundary survey of Gros Morne National Park has recently been concluded. Twelve interested firms were contacted and six bids were received. The bids have been reviewed in concert with the Surveyor General and a recommendation has been forwarded to Treasury Board, where it now rests. A contract is presently being prepared and an announcement of the successful bidder will be made shortly.

YOUTH—OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—CRITERIA USED IN CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS

Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, when the Opportunities for Youth program was announced, members on this side of the House took exception to the very short period of time available for applicants to prepare projects, submit them and have them approved or rejected. The program was announced so close to the termination of the university year that we felt adequate treatment of potential projects would be impossible before university students were looking for jobs. This has proven to be the case. The vast bulk of funds allocated to the program has not even now been assigned, and university students are looking for jobs.

The government took some pride at the time in the fact that it had prepared its program for students three weeks earlier than last year. I see this as no cause for self-congratulation since, to be really useful, employment opportunities for students should be announced prior to the new year in order that unsuccessful applicants may have the chance to look elsewhere. It is not as though the

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government did not know there would be a problem of student unemployment this summer. The government's own policies created the conditions which have produced potentially high unemployment. Having created these policies, it should have been prepared to deal with their side-effects.

Opposition critics of the program suggested the program's funding would be inadequate to meet the demands placed upon it. This worry has again proven to be valid. The program is already vastly oversubscribed. I should like to know, as I asked in the House this afternoon, how many projects will be rejected, which would otherwise have met the program criteria, on the sole ground the government has run out of money; and how many jobs would have been created by the projects rejected on this ground alone? If I do not receive an answer to my question this evening I intend to place it on the order paper, because I consider the answer to be part of the information the public will require in order to judge the efficacy of the government's program.

Another worry the opposition critics had at the time of the introduction of the program was that the criteria upon which a judgment of the acceptability of projects would be based were too vague. We were worried about applicants having to recast their applications at the eleventh hour because of their failure to meet some standard they did not know of in advance. That is why myself and others repeatedly asked the minister specific questions about the criteria being employed. That is why so many of us attended a meeting convened by officials administering the program to explain it to Members of Parliament. We asked questions about the criteria even though the meeting was held only a week prior to the effective deadline for applications.

Our concern about the lack of published criteria has been justified in the event because projects are now being returned to their sponsors to have them recast to meet criteria which they were not aware existed, or returned because of confusion about the meaning of published criteria. A number of such examples have come to my attention. I have referred them to the minister for inquiry and have no reason to believe he will not be conducting the requested inquiry.

My point this evening is to bring this specific principle to the attention of the House. I am asking now for assurance that the criteria created after the program was announced—criteria never generally known to the public and not included among the published instructions to applicants—have no part in establishing the acceptability of a project submitted for consideration.

I await this assurance with interest. Because this program was introduced so late in the day, because it is so inadequately funded and because its administrative apparatus has not yet had time to properly take hold, the program is bound to be a mess. I am simply requesting that the government not make it worse and more unjust than it need be through an attempt to enforce criteria which no one, not even the minister, knew about in advance.