

Oral Questions

to be fair to the facts. Bill C-72 with respect to the drunkenness defence is before the House. Indeed it is at committee.

The hon. member took a very active role in the consideration of Bill C-37, which was improved because of his work on committee dealing with amendments to the Young Offenders Act. That bill is now in the Senate. The hon. member participated in committee work with respect to Bill C-41, which is intended to strengthen the sentencing provisions of the Criminal Code.

However, on the point the hon. member raises, I can tell the hon. member as I have in the past that we will introduce legislation to amend the Criminal Code to broaden the basis upon which DNA samples can be obtained.

I emphasize to the hon. member that there are provisions—

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): When?

Mr. Rock: I cannot say exactly when, but I can say we will do it.

I want the hon. member to be aware there are provisions in the code already that can be used for that purpose and have been used for that purpose. I do not suggest for a moment that they are insufficient for that purpose.

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[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs says that the scandal involving Canadian diplomats who trade their airplane tickets for money is a thing of the past. The President of the Treasury Board claims that the phenomenon is limited to diplomats assigned to dangerous and difficult cities. However, for a diplomat posted in Tokyo with his family, it can amount to 40 per cent of his salary, tax free.

How can the President of the Treasury Board justify that such financial benefits, which were granted in 1993, are still available to Canadian diplomats, when other civil servants have had their salaries frozen since 1991?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to look further into the particulars the hon. member has raised.

I can say, as I have said before, that in terms of foreign service directives there has been a tightening up of those procedures and that previous difficulties that arose have been corrected.

• (1140)

I could also point out that there is a three-year review which is being conducted this year with respect to foreign service directives. The matter is fully under review.

[Translation]

Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ): Mr. Speaker, moreover, the majority of diplomats who trade their airplane tickets for money to pay for their holidays do not go to Canada and are not even obliged to submit their receipts. They pocket the money, tax free.

Will the President of the Treasury Board undertake to review these benefits, granted in 1993, before laying off more civil servants, who cannot take advantage of the lax approach of Treasury Board?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, surely the hon. member understands that when people receive foreign postings they and their families should have an opportunity to be able to come home from time to time. There are, particularly in the case of what are called hardship posts, increased opportunities to do that.

Some very strict rules have been put into place. Lately we have been experimenting with a pilot system whereby we have actually lowered the amount of money that we will provide to 80 per cent from 90 per cent of the economy fare for a return trip, in that way further controlling the costs and recognizing the need of the government to cut government spending.

We will be evaluating that in the framework of the three-year review which is due this fall. We will be looking at further measures to ensure that the taxpayers' money is well protected and well spent in this regard.

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YOUTH SERVICES CANADA

Mr. John Finlay (Oxford, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I understand there was news this morning concerning Youth Services Canada. Since this is the time of year when many students are seeking employment, could the Secretary of State for Training and Youth provide the House with some of the details of the important announcement?

Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew (Secretary of State (Training and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to respond to my colleague from Oxford.

We have the start up of 63 new projects under Youth Services Canada. These projects will allow over 850 young Canadians across the country to gain valuable skills while helping out in