

Oral Questions

this is May 10, the last day for the public to write to the CRTC alleging bias or about complaints with regard to CBC programming and since I gave the minister notice of my question, will she tell the House how many members, and in particular how many cabinet ministers, have complained in writing to the CRTC about bias or balancing in CBC programming?

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of Communications): I thank the hon. member for the notice he gave me of this question. To date, a total of 945 letters have been received by the CRTC. However, there was no breakdown as to whether those letters came from members of parliament or from cabinet ministers.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

NUMBER OF MINISTERS COMPLAINING ABOUT BIAS IN
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION PROGRAMMING

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): If it is not asking too much of the ministry or the CRTC, I wonder if it would be possible tomorrow or some other day later in the week to break down, not by names but by status the people who wrote the 945 letters so that the minister can tell us whether any ministers have written in literate form, either bilingual or unilingual, setting out detailed complaints about bias and balance in CBC programming. In order to expedite any supplementaries and/or to further the business later in the week, if no ministers have written setting out in literate form, in bilingual or unilingual prose, the complaints about the CBC programming, will she talk to the Prime Minister when he returns to see if in fact the ministry will decide there is any purpose to be served by proceeding with an inquiry when, using the Prime Minister's own words, no specific allegations have been made.

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I must first tell the hon. member there is no such thing as bilingual prose. Therefore, these letters would have been written in either English or French. The CRTC is very reluctant to give me this kind of breakdown. In their view, letters from ordinary citizens are equal to any letter that might be received from a member of parliament or a minister, as Mr. Boyle told me on "Cross Country Check-Up", if the hon. member was listening.

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MANPOWER

CANADA WORKS PROGRAM—IMPLEMENTATION OF
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROVISION IN NEWFOUNDLAND

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the fact that unemployment figures in the province of Newfoundland have reached the unprecedented and disastrous rate of 19.2 per cent, figures which will increase drastically with the impending closure of one industry, is the

[Mr. Nowlan.]

minister now prepared to implement the "emergency response" segment of the Canada Works Program in the province of Newfoundland?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): As I indicated, Mr. Speaker, our officials are meeting with representatives from the company and with governmental officials in that area to determine if and how the emergency response part of Canada Works might be made applicable. I am not in a position to make any comment on that right now.

CONSULTATION WITH PROVINCES TO CO-ORDINATE
JOB-CREATION PROGRAMS

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): In view of the fact there is an alarming rate of unemployment in all of the Atlantic region, and indeed right across Canada, is the minister prepared to call a federal-provincial conference to co-ordinate all federal-provincial programs in order to provide jobs in this country?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, there is close co-ordination now between the various levels of government working in concert on a particularly difficult problem in that area.

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TRADE

CANADIAN POSITION ON GATT FORMULA FOR REDUCTION OF
TARIFFS

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Given the concern which many areas of the secondary manufacturing industry in Canada have regarding the apparent trends of the GATT negotiations, will the minister indicate whether our negotiating team or the government has accepted or is favourably disposed to the proposed formula which calls for a reduction of about 50 per cent in tariffs?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, a discussion is now going on and a tariff reduction is proposed to improve the flow of trade exchanges across the world. Of course, the tariff problem is only one aspect of it; there is also the problem of tariff barriers which may be as important as tariffs themselves, and all that requires extremely complex negotiations which should not come to an end before 1978. We are following the situation very closely and will keep the House informed on that.

[English]

REPRESENTATIONS FROM APPLIANCE AND ELECTRONICS
INDUSTRIES ON GATT TARIFF FORMULA—GOVERNMENT
ACTION

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Has the minister received many representations from management and labour, and in