

Oral Questions

who deal with immigration matters have already received their lay-off notices in London, Bonn, and Paris, and that further lay-offs are contemplated in other countries?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): First, Mr. Speaker, I must indicate to the Hon. Member what these medical officers have done abroad. It is not a matter in which the health of Canadians would be in any way jeopardized or that health checks will not be carried out.

The Hon. Member's information that there will not be medical doctors of Canadian citizenship in those locations is correct. As we have done for many years, we will have medical checks performed by doctors who are native citizens of a particular country. Those medical examinations will still take place and be checked here in Canada, as is done in many other countries where we do not have medical doctors.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is long.

EXTENSION OF VISITORS' VISAS WITHOUT MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, the Government has also extended the medical examination-free period for visitors to Canada from three months to six months. In view of these drastic changes, why have the provincial Governments not been consulted or notified of these changes since it is their health systems that would bear the brunt of the cost of lowering health standards?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, that also is not the correct interpretation of the situation. We have the Immigration Medical Review Board on which a number of provincial representatives sit as these questions are discussed and decisions are taken. For example, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick are on that board at this time.

The Hon. Member should be careful when he assesses this. We receive many requests from Members to ease visitors' entry into Canada because of regulations in other countries. That is one side. On the other hand we have a responsibility to ensure that health is not jeopardized. When we see what has been done with the Department of Employment and Immigration, External Affairs, and my Department, we see that those principles remain. They have not been jeopardized in any way—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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FINANCE

TAX CREDIT REQUESTED FOR VOLUNTEER WORKERS

Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Hundreds of thousands of Canadians are involved in volunteer work with

hospitals, charities, and many other worthy causes. Since this volunteer work often involves out-of-pocket costs for seniors and others with limited disposable income, will the Minister consider some form of tax assistance, such as a tax credit, for these worthy individuals?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Government values very much the work of the volunteer sector and has taken certain steps to encourage the volunteer sector. I suggest that the Hon. Member's proposal involves some complexities. It does lead to an increased administrative burden for a volunteer organization itself. However, it is certainly a worth-while proposal to consider, and I will do that.

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ENERGY

PRICE OF DIESEL FUEL

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. One of my constituents runs 35 diesel trucks from Richmond, British Columbia, through the interior of B.C. to the Kootenays. My question is one that he would put to the Minister if he were here. Why has the price of diesel fuel not gone down like gasoline? As a trucker he must pay this increased cost and he wants to know why the price has not gone down?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member asked that question in committee last week and I can only supply him with the same answer. The price of diesel fuel has gone down 7 cents a litre on average. However, the marketing circumstances are different from gasoline, generally, and it responds to the market depending on competitive pressure.

Mr. Waddell: One supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Algoma.

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AGRICULTURE

PRICE OF FARM FUEL IN MANITOBA

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. Last Thursday 600 farmers rallied at Carman, Manitoba, to protest grain prices and the high input costs.

Petro-Canada and other oil companies have eliminated their volume discount. World prices for crude oil have dropped by 60 per cent since last fall. The actual price for farm fuel in Carman, Manitoba, has dropped from 34.7 cents a litre to 32.6 cents a litre. Why is the Government not taking action to