

Oral Questions

Young Offenders Act will be proclaimed and to date there has been no announcement of any appropriate funding arrangements with any of the provinces. Would the Minister apprise the House of whether any agreements have actually been signed and, if so, what the nature of those agreements is?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, no agreements have in fact yet been signed. However, a federal offer has been on the table for well over a year and a half. Last week I did make that offer public. I would be prepared to send the Hon. Member, and any other Members, a copy of the proposal of the federal Government. I think he would agree, after he read it, that it was a very fair and reasonable contribution for the federal Government to be making to a program for which it has no constitutional responsibility at all to contribute to financially. Nevertheless, a very substantial offer has been put forward.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: It is certainly not a question of whether I feel that the offer is generous or otherwise. The problem is with respect to whether the provinces feel that this offer is appropriate.

ROLE OF PROVINCES IN ENFORCING LAW

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the offer that he has made—the \$45 million, 50-50 split on the operational aspects of the program—what will the Minister do with respect to this program if the provinces do not accept his offer, having stated his intention to proclaim this Bill on April 1? How will he ensure that there will be even handed application of the law relating to young offenders across the country if the provinces are not going to co-operate with the Minister?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I have not heard of any province that is not prepared to co-operate and discharge its responsibility pursuant to a law which this Parliament unanimously passed. The provinces can be looked to, to govern themselves accordingly. I am sure they will recognize, as they must, that in the interest of decent treatment for young offenders, the new law ought to be applied evenly across the country. We look to the courts for the proper application of law, and I do not think the courts will let us down either.

As far as our financial responsibilities are concerned, when the new law is proclaimed, old funding arrangements will cease to be valid in many cases across the country because we had different agreements with different provinces, all of them covering the same basis of contributions. For some provinces the agreements will terminate.

At the moment it is hypothetical to ask what we will do in the event that no agreements are signed before then, because more than two weeks remain and I am optimistic that agreements can be signed before that time.

EMPLOYMENT

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM—EXTENT OF FUNDING

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Employment and Immigration is supplementary to that asked by the Member for Ontario. There was \$150 million set aside in the Budget for the Youth Opportunities Program. First, could the Minister tell us how that money is to be spent and how much is to go into Career Access? Second, will he tell us if he intends to put the \$90 million left over from the SEIP slush fund into Career Access, which now only has a total budget of \$300 million?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the first question is that proposals are being prepared for Cabinet consideration on the \$150 million that my colleague, the Minister of Finance, provided to augment the Youth Opportunity Fund, bringing it to an over-all total of \$1.3 billion. The Cabinet documents for the distribution of those funds are being prepared now, but Cabinet has not yet considered them. Therefore, I cannot give an indication to the Hon. Member of how those funds will be allocated.

● (1200)

The answer to the second part of the Hon. Member's question is, no, I do not intend to make the transfer out of the Special Employment Initiatives Program that he has recommended. I have received recommendations for a large number of projects, many of them coming from Members of the Opposition, which can legitimately be considered within that program.

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FISHERIES

SEAL HUNT—UNITED KINGDOM COMPANY'S BAN ON CANADIAN FISH PRODUCTS

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I want to direct my question to the Hon. Minister for Fisheries and Oceans. On March 13, 1984, in response to my question calling for a ban on the clubbing of white coat seal pups, the Minister said that it was not necessary since his Department was in touch "with every single important buyer of Canadian fish" and that not one of them was boycotting our products.

Yesterday one of the directors of Safeway, which has over 100 large stores in the United Kingdom, telephoned me, informing me that his company has asked all wholesale fish suppliers in England not to ship any fish caught in Canada, whether it has been canned, is whole, or mixed with fish from another country. Will the Minister in light of that fact, which contradicts his statement in the House, set the record straight, and now tell this House what he plans to do about this issue, so that our fishermen and plant workers will not soon be unemployed?