

Oral Questions

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the Department of National Revenue exchanges information with other departments in accordance with a particular section of the Income Tax Act. I believe there is a section in the Statistics Act and sections in the Canada Pension Plan and other legislation. I would have to know the particular case the hon. member has in mind, but if he will look at those sections of the acts he will see the limitations that are placed on the use of that information.

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STATISTICS CANADA**SUPPLYING OF MAILING LISTS FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a supplementary of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Can the minister confirm whether it is government policy that enables Statistics Canada, for instance, to release confidential mailing lists, which were supplied originally by the Income Tax Department, to private business which then uses those lists to send out advertising and junk mail circulars?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the agency, Statistics Canada, operates under the Statistics Act. It does not receive direction from me or the government concerning its policies. It is governed by the act itself. As to the particular practice the hon. member has raised, I believe the agency has in the past engaged in such commercial services. I have made inquiries and have found out that this is a perfectly legal practice under the act. I have reviewed the situation with them have asked them to reconsider the practice, and they have undertaken to do so.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We have reached the end of the question period. If the hon. member asks a second supplementary that will have to be the end of the question period.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, obviously other people share the minister's doubts. Will the minister, therefore, if he has conducted an inquiry into this matter through his department, please table the results of that investigation for us or, if he has not conducted an inquiry, will he please do so?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased at some later date to indicate to the House, after the matter is fully considered, what the decision of Statistics Canada is.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I brought to the attention of hon. members a moment ago that we have gone beyond the time allotted for the question period. The hon. member for Hastings has a supplementary and will be recognized, after which I will have to call orders of the day.

[Mr. Lawrence.]

ALLEGED ERROR IN REPORTING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DEFICIT

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce who reports for Statistics Canada. In one of their bulletins they report that the annual deficit for unemployment insurance last year was slightly over \$2 million. I want to know whether there is a mistake there or whether the government does not know the difference between \$1 million and \$1 billion?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I would be very pleased to discuss this question with the hon. member and draw it to the attention of the agency.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

YUKON, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AND CANADA ELECTIONS ACTS**AMENDMENTS RESPECTING COUNCILS AND ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES**

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) moved that Bill C-9, to amend the Yukon Act, the Northwest Territories Act and the Canada Elections Act be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development:

He said: Mr. Speaker, this is the second time I have had the pleasure of bringing a proposal before this House to amend the Yukon and Northwest Territories Acts and to give the people of the Yukon and Northwest Territories more control of government there. In 1970, you will recall, this House approved measures to increase the lifespan of territorial councils to four years, to enable the councils to prescribe the qualifications of voters and candidates in the territorial elections and establish their own indemnities, and to give the territorial governments authority over the administration of justice. This House also increased the size of the Northwest Territories Council to 14, and reduced the number of appointed members from five to four.

These measures represented an important advance in the constitutional growth of the territorial governments. Only four years have passed since we approved these changes—a very short time when you consider the historical evolution of government in Canada. But these have been years of unprecedented development in the north, of economic growth and social advance. Let me take a moment to give you some examples: the rate of population growth in the territories is about twice the national average; the Yukon population is estimated at 21,000 and the Northwest Territories at 39,000. The gross product for both territories, an indication roughly equivalent to the national gross national product, stands at approximately \$275