

CANADIAN CULTURE

INQUIRY AS TO CONSULTATION WITH PROVINCES AND ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS ON SELECTION OF DELEGATES TO MULTICULTURAL CONFERENCE

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State. Can he inform the House whether the various ethnic organizations and the provinces of Canada were asked to select delegates for the multicultural conference now in progress?

Hon. James Hugh Faulkner (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I will have to consult my colleague, the Minister of State responsible for multiculturalism, on the exact format. I have a general idea but I would like to be absolutely precise.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will recognize the hon. member for Athabasca on a supplementary, then the hon. member for Vancouver South and, before calling orders of the day, the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Yewchuk: Perhaps from his general knowledge of this information the minister could inform us whether these organizations were at least asked for advice regarding who the delegates should be.

Mr. Faulkner: Mr. Speaker, I believe so, in most cases. I am not sure if this would be true of all organizations.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

ALLEGED REFUSAL OF VISAS TO RUSSIANS INVITED BY FISHERMEN'S UNION TO VISIT CANADA—REQUEST FOR EXPLANATION

Mr. A. John Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of Canada's policy to maintain friendship with Russia and, more recently, with mainland China, as evidenced by the Prime Minister's visit, can the minister tell the House why visas were refused last week to Russians invited to Canada by the United Fishermen's and Allied Workers' Union in British Columbia?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, this situation was brought to my attention over the weekend, and I have asked for a full report on it. I will advise the hon. member as soon as I get the details.

* * *

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

MONITORING OF SALES TAX AND TARIFF CUTS TO ENSURE BENEFITS REACH CONSUMERS—REQUEST FOR REPORT

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs from whom I have been trying to obtain a report on the monitoring of the consequences of tax reductions contained in the budget of the Minister of

Family Allowances

Finance last February, which the minister has frequently indicated would be forthcoming. Now, following three weeks of leisure, can the minister tell the House when we may expect this report, if we are ever going to get it at all?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I intend to table it in the House this week.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

FAMILY ALLOWANCES ACT, 1973

MEASURES TO PROVIDE FOR PAYMENT OF FAMILY AND SPECIAL ALLOWANCES

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare) moved that Bill C-211, to provide for the payment of family allowances in respect of children to supplement the income of Canadian families and for the payment of special allowances to provide for the care and maintenance of other children, and to amend the Income Tax Act in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.

[English]

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride today that I move second reading of Bill C-211, a measure to supplement the incomes of Canadian families and improve their capacity to meet the costs of raising children. Bill C-211 will permit 3½ million Canadian families, the great majority of which have low or middle incomes, to realize a net additional amount of \$840 million in 1974 alone. In addition, it will advance the development of a more equitable regional redistribution of income across Canada. For these reasons, Bill C-211 represents a major step in the over-all reform of the social security system to which this government is firmly committed. As a matter of fact, it constitutes I believe the largest single federal expenditure ever voted by Parliament for any new program.

This bill is the second major social policy measure that the Government has brought before the House in the past six months. The first, of course, was legislation this past spring to increase the universal old age pension to \$100 per month, thereby raising the guaranteed minimum income for pensioners to \$170.14 monthly for single pensioners and \$324.60 monthly for married couples when both the husband and wife are pensioners. Recently, Parliament approved a further amendment to the Old Age Security Act to provide that both the Old Age Security Pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement be escalated in accordance with increases in the cost of living on a quarterly basis, instead of once a year, as was previously the case. This means that as of October, the guaranteed minimum income is \$179.16 for single pensioners and \$341.80 for a married pensioner couple. These increased pensions for the aged, together with the changes in income tax law which substantially reduced or eliminated the tax burden