

Oral Questions

REQUEST FOR INCREASED DEPARTMENTAL RESOURCES

Mr. George Henderson (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, in light of those allegations will the Minister now admit that the Government is heading in the wrong direction in fisheries management? There have been cuts on the scientific side, the biological side, and in enforcement, protection and management. Will the Government change direction by increasing personnel in those areas in order that proper quotas will be set and adhered to in the future?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Acting Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I do not know what world the hon. gentleman is living in. I can assure you that it is not the real world.

Mr. Henderson: Tweedledee and Tweedledum.

Mr. Crosbie: If you want to shout me down, I am a gentle soul and you can do it. The Hon. Minister of Fisheries announced within the last two weeks increased resources for scientific and research purposes in eastern Canada—

Mr. Tobin: How about enforcement?

Mr. Crosbie:—including the fishing district of Newfoundland and, in particular, St. John's.

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NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

FUTURE OF PERSONNEL

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of State for Science and Technology. The NRC is telling the 200 employees who have been given their notices that there will only be 40 to 80 jobs in the expanded space program which the NRC will be operating, and no new jobs in biotechnology. Will the Minister tell the House what plans he has for those people who have been laid off and will not find jobs in the space program? Can the country afford to lose the work of these highly trained and skilled people?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, as I have told the House before, the reallocations will not come into effect until the fiscal year 1987-88. I am very confident that none of these people will be laid off. There have not been any lay-off notices as the Hon. Member wishes to imply. I am totally confident that, due to the techniques which have been put in place by the Government, there will not be any lay-offs, that most of the people will be reassigned. As you know, an early retirement option has been offered and a number of people are considering it very seriously. I am confident that there will be no lay-off notices issued.

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, in answer to earlier questions the Minister said that he would suspend cuts in programs which have to do with safety because of the importance of safety. Would the Minister consider suspending all the cuts and referring the entire question of funding of the NRC to the Standing Committee in order that it can hear witnesses and discuss the whole thrust of the Government's proposals?

● (1450)

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, in line with new national priorities, the Government is reorganizing all of its assets. As the Hon. Member knows, the National Research Council represents roughly 10 per cent of the total government effort of \$4.2 billion of research and development and science related activity.

I am confident that the integrity of the programs that he has outlined in his question will be preserved. If the safety and health of Canadians are involved, unless there is another agency of the Government that can perform that work, I have undertaken to review that decision. However, I am not inclined to overrule the Board in the manner that he has suggested.

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MULTICULTURALISM

CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM COUNCIL—REQUEST FOR RESIGNATION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister responsible for multiculturalism I will direct my question to the Prime Minister. It concerns the confidential McCreath report which basically concludes that the Canadian Multiculturalism Council is nothing more than an appendix of the Conservative Party of Canada. The Government has surely read the report. Therefore, will the Prime Minister assure the House that he will seek the immediate resignation of the Vice-Chairman of that Council, Mr. McCreath, and order an immediate and full investigation into the affairs of the Council so that the credibility and the integrity of this national advisory board can be quickly restored to enable it to do its work on behalf of the ethnocultural communities from the Pacific to the Atlantic?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism is not in the House, we will inform him of the question, and he will give the Hon. Member a reply as soon as he comes back.