

Oral Questions

MANPOWER

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—REQUEST FOR
EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR APPROVAL OF PROJECTS
BECAUSE OF POSTAL STRIKE

Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister responsible for the Opportunities for Youth program. In light of the fact that many Opportunities for Youth area co-ordinators have encountered delays in receiving applications due to the postal strike, will the minister consider extending the deadline for regional approval of Opportunities for Youth projects in the affected areas?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I will examine that question. I doubt very much if we could justify an extension of the deadline in view of the fact it would affect so many people. However, I will review the matter in light of the conditions about which the hon. member is concerned.

Mr. Scott: In some central Ontario regions, applications postmarked before February 21 are still reaching area co-ordinators. Will the minister make some adjustment to ensure that there is sufficient time for all applications to be given full consideration?

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that if there is evidence of posting or some alternate way of sending in applications before the deadline date, they will not be prejudiced by late arrivals due to conditions over which the sponsors or applicants had no control.

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[Translation]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR NEW NATIONAL STANDARDS TO FIGHT
POLLUTION

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of the Environment.

In view of the fact that the legislation pertaining to industrial and commercial buildings does not apply to mining, and that those companies are not subject to the environmental protection legislation, can the Minister tell us whether he will assume his responsibilities immediately by instructing his department's task force which is considering the matter to look immediately into the Thetford Mines problem and report as early as possible, at a specified date, since workers of this sector demand a real answer this time, and this is one of the points in dispute in their general strike started Tuesday?

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, a task force is presently examining the problem of emanations from asbestos mines. We are presently establishing national standards or national objectives, the application of which will fall under provincial jurisdiction. As far as the Thetford Mines problem is concerned, I have had discussions on that matter with the Quebec minister of natural resources on Monday last when I met him in Montreal. I have offered him my cooperation as for the possibility of making avail-

[Mr. Allmand.]

able to him the expertise we have in the department in order to help him set standards which would be tolerable. For his part, he has ensured me that he had increased the number of inspectors which would be able to tell him whether the company complies with the provincial regulations.

Mr. Beaudoin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary question. Has the hon. provincial minister expressed the desire to cooperate with the federal department officials, given the fact that this problem has been pending since May 1949, following the strike in Asbestos and Thetford Mines? The same promise had been made then and, for the Minister's information, nothing more has been done since.

Mrs. Sauvé: Mr. Speaker, I think that during the 1949 strike, questions of industrial health were involved. Today we are discussing effects which seem not to be tolerated by the environment and radiations which seem to have indirect effects on the health of individuals.

Both levels of government are aware of these new environmental problems, and that is why the federal government and the provinces have departments of the environment to deal with these matters.

We are now trying to use the existing legislation to grasp this problem and perhaps force the companies to change certain work conditions. However, I must say to hon. members that if the bill on substances that contaminate the environment was passed as soon as possible, some of the powers given to us by the act would help us deal with this problem more efficiently.

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● (1450)

[English]

IMMIGRATION

ASSISTANCE TO TEACH ENGLISH IN VANCOUVER—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Art Lee (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for immigration. In view of the need for more financial assistance in helping Vancouver school teachers teach the English language to immigrant children in order that they may have an equal opportunity for a good education, will the minister undertake to look into this matter with the minister of education of British Columbia, notwithstanding the fact that this provincial official has primary responsibility for this matter?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am certainly aware that the number of children in primary and secondary schools whose first language is not English or French has increased as a result of immigration. My officials have met with a number of school boards, including that of Vancouver, to discuss the matter and explore ways and means of rectifying the situation. We work closely with and give financial assistance to, voluntary agencies, and this program is in the process of being enhanced and augmented. We are anxious to co-operate, but in the final analysis