

*Oral Questions*

must address those matters because of the changing age of the population and what that would do in terms of premiums and so on.

That is a discussion paper looking at the long term. We have no intention of making any changes whatsoever at this time in existing security programs for seniors.

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● (1145)

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast):** Yesterday, while the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was busy briefing the press, some real news was revealed by his deputy minister. Apparently no HIV test is required as a part of the routine medical testing for immigration to Canada. This is despite the fact the Immigration Act reads that:

No person who is a danger to public health or who would create excessive demands on health services should be allowed into the country.

That is the law. Why is the minister's department not testing each and every immigration applicant for HIV and why are we letting these people into Canada?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, that is only news to the hon. member because as my colleague mentioned earlier, they clearly have a vacuum in their research capacity.

The fact is there is not mandatory HIV testing. However, if in their routine checks they find traces of HIV, our doctors throughout the world are allowed to ask applicants to have that test. In the majority of cases they have been refused.

There is not mandatory testing yet for HIV. Many applicants are tested and many are not permitted to come not only with the perspective of problems for other Canadians but also with respect to the effect and impact it would have on our health care system in Canada.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think the Canadian people are going to be satisfied with that kind of an answer.

The minister has been aware for some time that HIV testing is not done. Not only that, but if an applicant admits being positive to HIV he or she still can be admitted to Canada. This is outrageous. Surely the minister cannot deny that HIV infected immigrants are a threat to our already overburdened health care system.

Does the minister have statistics on how many AIDS infected immigrants or refugees have been admitted to Canada to date?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I caution the member to try to curtail the kind of fishing expedition he wants to engage in.

I would point out that that mandatory testing has not taken place. Second, where those individuals exhibit traces of HIV they are asked to be tested. Third, most of those individuals are not permitted into the country. Fourth, the whole question of medical inadmissibility is now being reviewed as a result of some of the charter cases that have happened in the last number of months.

I will be happy to provide the hon. member with some answers to questions that he asked with respect to specific statistics, which I do not have at my fingertips today.

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[Translation]

**PURCHASE OF INFLUENZA VACCINE**

**Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works.

On Wednesday, the minister announced to the Government Operations Committee that a memorandum of agreement had been signed with BioVac of Laval and Connaught in Ontario for the purchase of influenza vaccine by the federal government for the provinces. This agreement is the direct result of an intervention by the Minister of Public Works.

Can the minister confirm that his intervention resulted in the division of the contract in two equal parts between BioVac and Connaught, whereas before BioVac held an exclusive contract?

[English]

**Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for raising the question which is indeed important to all Canadians.

The member may not be aware, but the Government of Canada purchases approximately 1 per cent of the vaccine in question. Ninety-nine per cent is purchased by the provinces. We act as a facilitator for the provinces. The member is quite correct that yesterday I did announce at committee that there was an agreement in principle between the participants and that the details of that particular agreement will be announced very shortly.

● (1150)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I am not very patient. Could the minister tell us today what reasons led him to intervene personally so that the government would circumvent the normal contracting process?

[English]

**Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises a question which is quite contradictory to a previous question one of her colleagues raised on the floor of the House.