

Oral Questions

impress upon labour the need for labour to discharge its responsibility with respect to the Economic Council of Canada, from which the minister will have to acquire in due course.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): It does not seem to me that it is particularly necessary to seek a panic meeting this week to tell them what I have been telling them for the last two or three months.

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INCOME TAX**BASIS UPON WHICH RELIGIOUS GROUP NOTIFIED OF DANGER OF LOSING STATUS OF CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION**

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue and it has to do with the cancellation of a march and a presentation of position by a religious group last weekend, of which I am sure the minister is well aware, with respect to the advocating of the Christian cause in iron curtain countries. I wonder if the minister can indicate on what basis his officials notified this group that they would be jeopardizing their charitable tax status, and whether he thinks it is appropriate for his department to make a definition as to the kind of representations that are legitimate and those that are illegitimate.

Hon. Jack Cullen (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the regulations are quite clear as to what groups can in fact qualify for the charitable donation certificate. In this particular instance this group had lost its right to be considered a charitable group as a result of failing to file a particular report. They are now making an application to be reinstated. In the course of that they indicated they would be taking part in this political activity or moving in this particular political arena. Jurisprudence in the courts indicated this goes beyond what the act allows. There are four clear items under which an institution qualifies as a charitable organization. In effect, they were going one step beyond the promotion of their religion.

● (1430)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Cullen: If hon. members are interested in hearing the answer, I am trying to give it. This was not given as a ruling of the department; it was given as an indication—and as a courtesy—that they might run this particular risk. We asked them to consult their lawyers, to look into the matter and to see if the jurisprudence did in fact tell them this. It was a matter of courtesy, and it was a suggestion.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Perhaps there is some disagreement about the nature of the course of events. I wonder if the minister can confirm that in respect to this specific demonstration officials of the minister's department contacted directly representatives of this organization and warned them that they would in fact jeopardize their status. Could the minister confirm that there was no request by the organization of Revenue Canada but that an initiative was taken by his department to forestall this specific demonstration?

[Mr. Alexander.]

Mr. Cullen: I suppose we could get into a question of semantics. It did not seem appropriate when this particular group was endeavouring to be reinstated, that if it ran the risk of losing that reinstatement as a result of participating in that activity, it should not be brought to its attention that it should consult its lawyer. It seemed appropriate and courteous of my officials. I applaud my officials for taking that initiative, if they in fact did.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Can the minister indicate whether his officials took this action as a result of either reading a newspaper ad or by being contacted by third parties who asked that action be taken by the department to forestall this demonstration by this particular religious group?

An hon. Member: Did you get a call from the Soviet embassy?

Mr. Cullen: In taxation we do not speak that particular language. No, we did this as a courtesy to the individual group because it had lost its charitable donation status. The group advised that it had made application to get that status back, and in the course of that we indicated that if it participated in this particular move it might be jeopardizing that status and that it should consult its counsel.

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IMMIGRATION**ARREST OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WORKING AT TORONTO AIRPORT—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. John Reynolds (Burnaby-Richmond-Delta): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration of which I gave his office notice this morning. It involves the Towers Cleaners operation at Toronto international airport. I wonder if the minister could advise the House whether nine employees of that company were arrested approximately three or four months ago for being illegal immigrants in Canada?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I did receive notice of this just before I came into the House. I know of some arrests at the airport about a year ago, in July of 1975. I want to follow up on the results of that, and since the hon. member has indicated a more recent occurrence. I should like to check on that before I give a definitive response.

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AIRPORTS**REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE ALL EMPLOYEES HAVE SECURITY CHECKS**

Mr. John Reynolds (Burnaby-Richmond-Delta): Mr. Speaker, I gave the minister's office notice at 9.30 this morning, not just before question period. My supplementary question is to the Minister of Transport. Could the minister advise whether his department has taken any action since those arrests to ensure that all employees