

Oral Questions

service to the public. It does no one any good for a member of the Opposition to try to run them down.

Miss Carney: Madam Speaker, the Minister's answer indicates that he is the expert on saying nothing about nothing.

STATISTICS CANADA—EMPLOYEES' OBSERVANCE OF WORK HOURS

Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Supply and Services. The management of Statistics Canada is also concerned about the observance of the hours of work, specifically whether employees are employed for a seven and a half hour day and a 37.5 hour week. A StatsCan survey of the Department's employees shows that 15 per cent to 20 per cent of them are goofing off before the day's work is done.

Since there are 2 million Canadians unemployed, many of them highly qualified, has the Minister considered firing the employees who are goofing off and replacing them from the ranks of the unemployed?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, contrary to what the Hon. Member is saying, as a result of the budget that was introduced by the Minister of Finance, my Department, with no or very few additional person years, through the procurement process will be able to increase our level of procurement and thereby create jobs.

If the hon. lady needs some experience of the level of activity in my Department, I invite her to come over and see how hard the people in the Department of Supply and Services work. The most effective and most professional workers in the Public Service of Canada are to be found within DSS.

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CHARTER OF RIGHTS

APPLICATION TO ALL CANADIANS

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. The Government is the author of the so-called Charter of Rights. I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether he believes in equal rights for all Canadians?

[Translation]

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Madam Speaker, we even put it in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

[English]

• (1440)

BILINGUALISM

PETRO-CANADA—USE OF UNILINGUAL SIGNS IN QUEBEC

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Madam Speaker, I have a very simple question to direct to the Prime Minister. The Government is advertising that Petro-Canada is ours and it belongs to all Canadians. That being the case, Mr. Prime Minister, will you instruct your officials in Petro-Canada to stop installing unilingual signs on its gas outlet stations in the Province of Quebec and install bilingual signs because, if Petro-Canada is ours, it is paid for by all Canadian taxpayers, 75 per cent of whom are English-speaking and who should have some rights?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I discussed the problem of bilingual signs two months ago with the President of Petro-Canada, and I said then that I wanted services in Quebec to be offered in both official languages, the same as everywhere else in Canada.

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[English]

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

REFUSAL OF NHL FRANCHISE FOR SASKATOON—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Yesterday the Board of Governors of the National Hockey League rejected an application for the transfer of the St. Louis Blues professional hockey team from St. Louis to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, which is an outrageous decision. The people of Saskatchewan and across Canada supported this transfer, except for the New Democratic Party which has been against it, as has been confirmed by the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville. Has the Minister's Department looked into the possibility of an investigation under the Combines Investigation Act to see whether or not the possibility of prosecution exists under the freedom of trade provisions of that Act, particularly Section 32 of the Act?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I would like to say that this matter is under review by officials in my Department at the present time.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I appreciate that very much, and the people of Saskatchewan will appreciate the interest of the Minister in this matter. Indeed, the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport has supported the application for transfer.