

*Oral Questions***IMMIGRATION**

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

The 1991 expenditure plans confirm that the government is planning to not continue its citizen instruction and English language textbook training agreements effective April 1. That is less than two weeks away.

Why is the Canadian government insisting on undercutting those new Canadians trying to learn English, trying to establish a community life, trying to get better jobs, by taking away opportunities to learn our official languages? Will the minister immediately reinstate this low cost and effective program?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out how much of an increase there has been in the instruction and capability of language training for immigration since this government took office.

We spend \$130 million a year on language training in our various programs. That is considerably higher than it was in 1984. I would point out particularly that the Settlement Language Training Program marks the first time that a government has provided a program designed for people not destined for the labour force. It is for women at home.

We have made a lot of progress in this area and I am quite hopeful that we will be able to make more.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I want to raise a very serious matter with him today because of the presence of a delegation from Indonesia.

As the minister knows, six Indonesians are facing a death sentence. Has the minister had an opportunity to raise that with this delegation? Perhaps more important, will he take measures to arrange for parliamentarians to meet with them so that we may raise our concerns with them at this time?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have not had the opportunity to raise the matter with the delegation, but I have had the opportunity to have the matter raised with Mr. Alatas, the Foreign Minister of Indonesia. He has given me an understanding that leads me to believe that those executions will not proceed.

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PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works. Yesterday the minister informed the House that he would find out whether negotiation has taken place with any of the four bidders for the goods and services tax centre prior to the formal tender call.

Can the minister inform the House today whether or not such negotiations did in fact take place?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I do not know of any particular negotiations that have taken place. Of course, as my colleague knows, once the tendering process has occurred and is complete, there can be no further negotiations except for clarification or it would be looked upon as bid repair.

As far as I am aware, there were no negotiations about any particular buildings.

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, the minister also told the House yesterday that the bidding process was completely transparent.

Can the minister explain how the system can be transparent and fair when Justice Strayer said with regard to the case last Monday that one of the bidders, namely the lowest tenderer, had not been informed of the changes in the rules?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I did read Mr. Justice Strayer's decision, as I indicated I would. I took his words very seriously, as I know the member would, when he talked about a certain lack of apparent administrative fairness.

Again I point out that as far as transparency is concerned, once the process has been engaged and any of the parties are concerned about how it works, the data is there for them to scrutinize afterward.