

Oral Questions

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, we are advertising tourism in 56 major populated areas of the United States in order to get Americans to come to Canada. In that advertising package we will enhance the idea that sport fishermen are still welcome to do their fishing in Canada and to bring their boats. We will add that, I suppose, to what we are already doing.

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INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD

CANADA'S PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the minister for external affairs and the Minister of National Health and Welfare, I would like to direct my question to the Prime Minister. It is a very important one of which I am sure he is aware.

In 1959, Canada voted for and was a signatory to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Children. To mark the twentieth anniversary of that declaration, the UN has declared 1979 as the International Year of the Child. I ask the Prime Minister, in light of the fact that a meeting is being held in Ottawa today by private groups which are fulfilling the leadership role in this area which has unfortunately been abdicated by the federal government, why the Government of Canada has not acted to set up a national committee to mark the International Year of the Child and make plans for it, as have 70 other countries.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, for a more detailed answer I am sure the Minister of National Health and Welfare will be in the House next week. I want to tell the hon. member that, far from being inactive, the government has taken many actions within its various departments to ensure that we live up to not only the letter but to the spirit of the International Year of the Child.

Of course, we also encourage the private sector to do the same thing and that is what is happening in Ottawa. People on the other side of this House are generally not too anxious to see the government set up new committees in every area and to create new areas of expenditure. That is why the government is doing its share. But it also expects the private sector and the voluntary organizations to do their share.

● (1127)

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, no one would expect the Government of Canada to exercise any degree of restraint in this very important area. The Prime Minister has confirmed what we already know, that the government has set aside a very modest budget for this very important year.

I should like to ask the Prime Minister if he can give the House an undertaking that the Minister of National Health and Welfare, or the Secretary of State for External Affairs, will make a statement to the House, before the adjournment, about the government's intentions with respect to marking the International Year of the Child.

[Mr. Darling.]

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I am sure those ministers will be happy to answer questions. As far as having a modest budget is concerned, of course we have a modest budget. I do not think the hon. member would expect us to have an immodest one. They are always preaching cuts in expenditure, and we are being modest in our expenditure.

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ABORTION

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF ABORTION LAWS

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that 1979 will be the International Year of the Child, and the government's policy respecting that program, will the Prime Minister review Canada's abortion laws so that children will be given the greatest gift of all, namely, the gift of life?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is not for the government to give the gift of life to children: that is done by God and by the parents.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, this is a serious subject and I do not want to respond to the Prime Minister in kind. We realize that, but this is a serious topic. The fact is that under our present law, 60,000 children are losing their lives by reason of the system now being established through abortion committees.

Will the government review its abortion system, whereby the spirit of the law that was changed will again come into effect, rather than the situation that obtains at present in some of our hospitals which have become abortion clinics?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, more than a year ago, we set up a committee to report on that very subject. The essence of it is that although the federal government would like to see those laws applied in an even-handed way in every province, as the hon. member knows, the criminal law is administered by the provinces, so prosecutions under and enforcement of the law is up to them. Perhaps the hon. member could talk to his premier and suggest that the spirit of the law be observed.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

CONSULTATION WITH MR. TERON ON HIS EXTENDED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. It concerns a subject I have discussed with him on a number of occasions, namely, the possible conflict of interest of one of his senior public servants, Mr. William Teron.

At this time when the government is going in an entirely new direction in respect of housing, Mr. Teron is taking four months leave of absence to shore-up what he calls his ebbing