

Oral Questions

● (1140)

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (President of Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the hon. member earlier in the committee today, I will certainly consider expanding the terms of reference we will be giving the management consulting firm that will be looking into Statistics Canada over the next couple of months. I think, undoubtedly, the credibility of Statistics Canada is something all members of this House wish to preserve and ensure will not be questioned in future.

If the terms of reference to which I have referred could include some meaningful review of the actual operations of Statistics Canada from a technical standpoint, I am certainly not opposed to it. It is important to learn from those who may have some professional view on the subject. Whether the practicalities are such that it will be difficult to do that in a public context, or whether it would be better to do it in a more private context in that we are dealing with highly technical information that might easily be better dealt with in a private context.

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged by the response of the minister now and in another forum earlier, but I really would like to push the minister just a little further by asking him to assure this House that, whether the examination is done privately or not—and I respect some of those considerations—the results of that examination will unquestionably be made public. That is my first concern and I would like that assurance.

Second, I would be very interested, as I am sure all members would be, because we agree that the integrity of that organization is fundamental, to know when he intends to have this examination take place and when the terms of reference will be made available. Surely they will be made public. I would like to know when this is going to happen.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, first I would like to confirm for the hon. member that the terms of reference will certainly be made public. I intend to take up with the management consultants I will be meeting with next week the question as to whether they feel it would be constraining on their activities if the eventual report they give us is made in the context of it in turn being made public.

I say that in the context that we will be asking the management consultants to give us their views, not only with regard to administrative and organizational matters within Statistics Canada but also in respect of the personnel of Statistics Canada. There may not only be practical but even statutory difficulties in having those observations made public. This is what I want to take up with the management consultants.

[Mr. Andras.]

SPORTS**FUNDING OF B.C. NATIVE INDIAN SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FEDERATION**

Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody): Mr. Speaker, the affable Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport and Multiculturalism met recently with the B.C. Native Indian Sports and Recreational Federation regarding the funding cuts to that organization. As he promised on November 15, has the minister yet reviewed and clarified the audit position of the organization, and has he instructed his officials to remove the B.C. National Indian Sports and Recreational Federation from the suspended list for funding?

[Translation]

Hon. Steven E. Paproski (Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport and Multiculturalism): Mr. Speaker, this is a very important question.

[English]

I had a very positive and productive meeting with the National Indian Brotherhood last week. I would like the hon. member to know that we discussed the complete five-year package or plan, and we are meeting again in December. At that meeting the B.C. Indian Brotherhood did produce a letter to me with regard to some of the problems that they had. My department is looking into it and we hope that by the time we meet in mid-December we will have a solution to their problem.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, I imagine the minister would prefer a no-cut contract himself. I would like to ask him whether he has now withdrawn the demands for funds from that federation because of a recent audit, in order that in the meantime this organization can carry on and function in providing very important services to native people in the northern part of British Columbia as well as in other parts of B.C.

Mr. Paproski: Again, Mr. Speaker, my department is looking at all aspects in relation to this Indian Band in British Columbia. I would like to give the hon. member an affirmative answer today, but I am sorry that I cannot do that.

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LOTO CANADA**EMPLOYMENT OF MR. DAVE JENKINS**

Hon. Steven E. Paproski (Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport and Multiculturalism): While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might answer another question which an hon. member asked yesterday with regard to Dave Jenkins and the committee. The gentleman does not work in the PMO. He is on secondment from the PMO and works with Loto Canada and has been since August of this year in order to wind down Loto Canada.