

Oral Questions

Mr. Symes: Mr. Speaker, I still do not have the assurance from the minister that he will not follow through with the cut-back in the allotments. I would ask him whether this reasoning has been taken into consideration, that the data shows that language trainees have lower unemployment rates after graduation than basic skill graduates, and that the participation rate of women trainees in the labour force is much higher than normal? In light of that, will the minister review that recommendation to cut back funds so we can proceed with the finding of jobs for immigrants in this country rather than forcing them on welfare?

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, the funding used for this particular purpose now is very heavily weighted in favour of immigrants, frankly discriminating against Canadian citizens. It may be that rather than cutting back there should be a change in emphasis so that some of that money would be used for Francophones, from whatever part of the country, who have to work in English, or for English speaking Canadians who have to work in French. It may involve simply a shifting in priorities, but we want to look at the whole picture.

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CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

REPORT OF CRTC INQUIRY—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State. It is now a little over four months since the CRTC inquiry into the national broadcasting system was submitted to the Prime Minister and made public. I wonder if the minister has had time to study the recommendations and implications of this report, and would he be prepared to indicate what follow up measures he has initiated or recommended?

● (1442)

Hon. John Roberts (Secretary of State): I have studied the recommendations and I am reflecting on what our response to them should be.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): I wonder if the minister can be a little more informative in view of the fact that the president of CBC submitted the "touchstone" document prior to the time the actual CRTC report was made and that it dealt with a number of issues raised in the CRTC report. Has the minister communicated with the CBC management concerning three of the critical areas raised in the CRTC report in which the CBC has fallen short of its mandate, namely, the area of overcentralization, heavy dependence on U.S. television programming, and the isolation between the French and English services?

Mr. Roberts: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have had discussions with the people of the CBC about the recommendations of CRTC.

[Mr. Cullen.]

CRTC REPORT—POSSIBILITY OF PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO BROADCASTING

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, during the Prime Minister's press conference on July 21 last he indicated he might overrule the CRTC recommendation that no royal commission into broadcasting be held at this time, and indeed he indicated that he would ask the Secretary of State to report on the advisability of such a commission within a month. Since some time has passed since then, I wonder if the Secretary of State has yet reported on this and does the government in fact tend to go against the recommendation of CRTC and set up a royal commission into broadcasting, and in particular how does it propose to deal with the critical issue raised by the CRTC of the accountability of CBC and the whole issue of having autonomy without accountability, and particularly its relationship to parliament and the priority that was called for by the CRTC on this issue?

Hon. John Roberts (Secretary of State): When the government comes to a decision as to whether or not there should be an inquiry or a commission it will be announced in the normal way.

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GRAIN

WHEAT—SUGGESTED CHANGE IN GRADING SYSTEM TO GIVE RELIEF TO PRODUCERS HOLDING NO. 3 UTILITY GRADE

Mr. Bert Cadieu (Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture and I gave him notice of it. Can the minister tell the House whether there has been any change in the grading system to give relief to farmers holding about 100 million bushels of No. 3 utility wheat this year to give a fairer price to the farmers?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): I received notice of the question from the hon. member yesterday but I returned to the city late today and I have not had time to check if there has been any real change. I know there have been discussions with the grain trade and farm representatives about this and I hope I will have an answer for the hon. member shortly.

Mr. Cadieu: Is the minister aware that Australia from time to time makes allowances for weather deteriorated wheat by establishing temporary export grades? Why can Canada not do the same thing which would give a better price for the wheat? The fact is that this wheat is of poorer quality with a very small percentage of sprouting. I do not think the producer should have to take 40 cents to 50 cents a bushel less.

Mr. Whelan: One reason for the delay in even making a proposal for a grade change was the testing of protein content. What the hon. member says is true according to our findings that for livestock feed, and in some cases for human consumption, it is practically as good. Its only disadvantage is that it