

Oral Questions

not be aimed only at single-parent families with children, but at all families with children and at people of an age between 55 and 65.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lalonde: Such a proposal was discussed with the provinces in the course of the social security review. There have been differing views expressed by the provinces. My successor is currently studying this matter, examining whether there are various alternatives to implementing such a proposal. The exact time when these studies will be concluded and when we will have the financial resources to put this particular proposal into effect is a matter that will be considered by cabinet at a later stage.

Mr. Symes: Mr. Speaker, the minister is quite right in saying he is having difficulty getting this expanded program accepted by the provinces. I was referring to a particular, narrow program involving single-parent families headed by women. We could have achieved more progress in that regard. Because of the concerns expressed that women are not receiving proper attention under government programs and planning, the cabinet issued a directive in 1976 entitled "Integration of Women's Concerns into Policy and Program Development", which was to be monitored by the co-ordinator on the status of women. Why has there been no accounting to date of the progress that has been made? Will the minister table the report, or is he too embarrassed about the results?

Mr. Lalonde: No, Mr. Speaker, there is no embarrassment about the results as such. There has been no formal report on this particular subject. This is a matter of continuing concern. The co-ordinator on the status of women has been in touch with all departments of the federal government. She is working on a regular basis with the department, seeing that the directive of the cabinet in this respect is being implemented by the various departments.

At the level of the cabinet committee and the cabinet itself, I am charged with the responsibility to see that those particular concerns are taken into account in cabinet decisions. In that respect, there is no formal report that has been written and none will be forthcoming. It is a matter of current and continuing concern which arises on every issue as it comes before parliament or as important decisions are taken by various departments. So it is a matter that is integrated into the current operations of government. We are trying, in every policy decision, to make sure that these concerns are taken into account.

● (1427)

Mr. Symes: That is a disappointing reply, because we have no way of knowing just what progress is being made, when we cannot have the information.

[Mr. Lalonde.]

PROGRAMS TO UPGRADE SKILLS OF WOMEN

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I view of the fact that the unemployment rate among women is 17 per cent, when the hidden unemployed are taken into account, and that the minister recently indicated that of the \$450 million for the employment strategy fund, \$48 million would go for native programs and \$117 million for youth programs, can the minister enlighten us as to how much will be spent on programs meeting women's needs, especially in light of the report on the status of women which states that in the minister's own departmental programs women are underrepresented in the apprenticeship and skilled programs that are available?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would not pretend to have all the statistics at my fingertips, but I should point out to the hon. member that in the upgrading and language courses the percentage is about 54 per cent for women. In the skilled courses the figure is 40 per cent for women. In the managerial and administrative courses it is 34.5 per cent for women.

I believe I indicated earlier that under our Canada Works Program the percentage of participation of women is actually higher than the percentage of women in the labour force. That is not to say we are satisfied with those statistics; that is why there are programs like Affirmative Action which convince firms to do upgrading and to give training courses to move women into their untraditional forms of employment. All these things are necessary. I think most assuredly that day-care centres to give women an equal opportunity to participate in the work force could be improved upon.

An hon. Member: When?

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[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

QUEBEC—COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGE CAUSED TO AQUATIC FAUNA BY CANADIAN FORCES

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence. Could the minister say whether he was aware of the manoeuvres of the Canadian forces in Quebec during an exercise of the Canadian detachment of the allied forces of NATO and would he say to what extent these manoeuvres were authorized?

[English]

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence): I have had questions on this matter from the hon. member for Pontiac and other hon. members on this side who have expressed concern. There is no need for concern. This is normal training for the Canadian armed forces prior to deployment to the Arctic Express exercise in Norway. It has