

Oral Questions

Minister not think that the best way to start that trust would be for the Prime Minister to start trusting the Premiers of the ten Provinces rather than to throw up roadblocks? Does he really think, as we go into this winter, that the diet for the million and a half unemployed Canadians is a recycled, regurgitated Big Mac who will be heavy on politics and short on any economic solution?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, I do not think it is a question of trust. It is a question of what can be expected from a First Ministers' conference.

Mr. Nowlan: Who knows until you try?

Mr. MacEachen: We had one last February, I believe, and I do not think we need a second disaster like that. Unless appropriate preparations are made, I certainly would not be one who would advocate a repetition of what happened—

Mr. Nowlan: But you are no longer there.

Mr. MacEachen:—last February, because up to the present time no preparations have been made by the Provinces and no detailed proposals have been brought forward. It is a continuation, a repetition of the same rhetoric, that we heard yesterday from the Premier of Nova Scotia in Toronto.

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[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL POPULAR ASSEMBLY OF THE DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

Madam Speaker: I have the honour of drawing the attention of the House to the distinguished presence in our gallery of a delegation of parliamentarians headed by Mr. Rabah Bitat, Member of the political bureau and President of the National Popular Assembly of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[English]

MULTICULTURALISM

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF HANDBOOK ON ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State, whose Department was responsible for drawing up the 1974 document entitled "A Revised Handbook of Selected Ethnic Organizations in Canada". In view of the fact that yesterday the Minister of State for Multiculturalism said that he had

ordered his copy of the book destroyed, may I ask the Secretary of State whether he is prepared to release a copy of the handbook so that the various ethnic organizations and individuals portrayed in the handbook may see how the Government portrays them and may respond to the portrayals?

[Translation]

Hon. Serge Joyal (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, I wish to thank the Hon. Member for his question. When the existence of this document was made public, I asked officials of the Department of the Secretary of State to find out exactly when the data were compiled. According to the cover, it seems the document was updated in 1974, while according to my information, the document was originated as far back as 1960, when another government was managing the business of our country. I therefore asked that any copies that were in the department's possession be destroyed and not be made available to the public, to avoid giving Canadians the impression that the document is still being used.

[English]

USE MADE OF HANDBOOK

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, if the Minister has some difficulty locating copies, I can give him the call numbers for the Secretary of State's Library. It was there as of noon today and was consulted by an officer of P.C. Research. I would indicate as well that, if the Minister is not prepared to release the document, I am prepared to release a copy which was inherited by the Clark administration from the Liberal Government, which drew it up. Can the Minister give the assurance to the House, and to groups and individuals portrayed in the document, that no individual was denied rights and that no group was denied funding as a result of the portrayals? If he cannot do that, will he undertake to do research to determine how the document was used? For example, could he determine whether it was used by the Security Service of the RCMP and by the Immigration Department, and will he give some recourse to the groups mentioned in this document by which they may challenge the descriptions which are made of them?

[Translation]

Hon. Serge Joyal (Secretary of State): As far as I am concerned, Madam Speaker, the list of organizations and persons who received the document was drawn up by the government in power at the time, that is, in 1960. Consequently, if the information was distributed to the various government agencies whose names appear in the opening pages of the document, it was not the present government who took this initiative. I can also assure the Hon. Member that as far as I am concerned, and to the extent of my knowledge, the information contained in the document was never used for the purpose of obtaining financial contributions from, or providing grants to, any of the organizations mentioned.