

Oral Questions

made over many years to this country. I can also tell the Hon. Member that no one recognizes the emerging new areas of refugee concern in this country better than Mrs. Bird and what has happened in response to those changes. There are many new fields of expertise that are developing. It is important that we draw on these new fields of expertise from across the country. I would say that, in conjunction and in consultation with the refugee communities of this country, we will be able to do so.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister now come clear with this House and tell us whether or not she is merely apologizing for the Prime Minister, who is obviously attempting to replace competence with another Tory hack?

● (1450)

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I gather that the Hon. Member is not very well informed about the committee. It is a Ministerial Advisory Committee. I would like to assure the Hon. Member that the persons who will be appointed to this committee are persons who have humanitarian concerns at heart, who are dealing with refugee problems; people who know the situation, not only in this country but in other countries around the world where we must address the refugee question in deeper terms than it was addressed by the past Governments.

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CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

TRANSFER OF EDMONTON BASE COMMANDER

Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence and is supplementary to the question put by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Pembina. The posting of Colonel De Tracey to a dead end desk job in Ottawa was, as the Minister said, a matter of course notwithstanding the crash event that preceded his posting. Colonel De Tracey was scheduled to attend the National Defence College in Ottawa in preparation for promotion. Will the Minister guarantee that Colonel De Tracey will be allowed to attend the National Defence College, or will the upper echelon of DND in Ottawa be allowed to tie a can to this very highly regarded career officer of the Armed Forces?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member will appreciate that with the 83,000 service personnel that comprise the Canadian Armed Forces, there is a routine of postings from time to time which take officers and men to different parts of the country for different jobs, and indeed to international postings. In this case Colonel De Tracey was due for posting. He is now going to be occupying a position in the Department relating to the Director of the Establishment of

Requirements, a significant posting for him. If I took the Hon. Member's question correctly, this should not be regarded as casting the kind of inference that was suggested. He is going to an important posting with an important responsibility. With respect to the staff college, I have not seen the recent list of attendees at the staff college, but I will make inquiries in that respect.

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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

DISCUSSION PAPER CONTENT

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance who referred earlier to the creation of a new environment. In that same spirit, today he and the Government released a discussion paper on financial institutions which, by and large, does nothing less than create a financial in-breeding system between the financial and commercial institutions. Considering that the proposed discussion paper will now allow a single individual to own a bank in Canada, will the Minister explain how the creation of a "Rosenberg Bank of Canada" will actually help Canadian consumers and borrowers?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think the paper that my colleague, the Minister of State for Finance, tabled today is very clear in its attempts to introduce a new degree of competition into the financial system. It also takes very much into account the importance of the protection of the depositor and in that regard has recommended some very clear and tough conflict-of-interest and self-dealing rules, as well as an increase in the degree of regulation that the financial community would have.

INDIVIDUAL OWNERSHIP OF BANKS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, I will return to the same question. I would like the Minister of Finance to explain, in terms of providing services to Canadians, how legislation flowing from this discussion paper, which would enable a single individual to be the sole owner of a Canadian bank, will assist the Canadian financial system by providing more competition and a higher level of safe service to the borrower?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member has not had a chance to read the paper through. If he does, he will see that there are some very, very tough conflict-of-interest rules, or self-dealing rules, that will not allow people to take advantage of ownership positions when dealing with the use of the depositor's funds. That, in connection with the tougher and more comprehensive regulatory environment that will be introduced as well, will protect the depositor from the abuses to which the Hon. Member has alluded.