

SAVING TO BE MADE BY ENACTMENT OF BILL C-125

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the fact Bill C-125 stands on the order paper for second reading and is supposed to result in a saving of approximately \$100 million, and as the minister is reviewing this bill, can he still state that the bill will save the country \$100 million?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would hope so.

Mr. Alexander: Can the minister advise whether his involvement with the bill in terms of reassessment and bringing in amendments has been completed? Has he completed his investigation on behalf of the New Democratic Party and, if so, when can we expect the bill to be proceeded with?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will appreciate that a question asked in those terms is not in order.

• (1420)

Mr. Alexander: May I rephrase the question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the importance of the matter and in view of the fact the bill will save the country \$100 million, can the minister advise when the bill will be brought forward again and, if not in the very near future, what is holding it up?

Mr. Andras: I expect it to be brought forward in due course, Mr. Speaker. One thing about the situation is that we know at least where two parties stand on this bill. We do not know—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the hon. member for Fraser Valley West rising on a supplementary question?

Mr. Rose: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

ALLEGED INCLUSION OF IMPROPER PHRASES BY OFFICERS IN PREPARING APPLICANTS STATEMENTS

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration and it is supplementary to previous questions. Is the minister aware of the current practice of benefit control officers who, when interviewing clients, often smuggle into the statements of those clients, which the benefit control officers themselves write, words that condemn the clients or force them to testify against themselves such as "no transportation" and "excessively high salary expectation"? Is the minister aware of this practice, because it has been going on now for a year, and is he prepared to do something about it?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, in every case where I can prove such action by a benefit control officer or anybody else he will be dismissed as quickly as I can make the

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arrangements, but I would like to have concrete proof before doing so.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We will complete the first round of questioning, after which I will return to the hon. member for Fraser Valley West on a supplementary question.

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FLOODS

HIGH WATER LEVEL IN GREAT LAKES—FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO AVERT DAMAGE

Mr. Terry Grier (Toronto-Lakeshore): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address my question to the Prime Minister as there would appear to be several departments of the government concerned, and in view of the seriousness of the situation. In light of the statement by an official of the International Joint Commission that nothing more can be done to control the rising water levels in Lake Ontario and the other Great Lakes and that further flooding is therefore inevitable, can the Prime Minister give the House assurances that all courses of action open to the federal government are being actively pursued in order to avert, so far as possible, flood damage, and will the Prime Minister or the appropriate ministers indicate to the House specifically what these steps are?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the first question is yes. The answer to the second is that various answers have been given by the Minister of the Environment who is responsible in the government for co-ordinating action in these areas.

Mr. Grier: In an effort to attract from the government benches more specific answers, may I put this supplementary question. Has the government taken the initiative to discuss joint preventive programs with the governments of the province of Ontario and/or Quebec? My question is again directed to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Trudeau: I will take notice of the question, Mr. Speaker. I have not had such discussions personally, but I will have to refer the question to the Minister of the Environment who has been retarded on his way in from the west coast and is expected later.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

HIGH WATER LEVELS IN GREAT LAKES—USE OF ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL TO CONSTRUCT PROTECTIVE WORKS

Mr. Terry Grier (Toronto-Lakeshore): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of National Defence. May I ask him whether specific plans have now been made to assign units of the armed forces for flood prevention construction and other works.

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, as I advised the House last week, the armed forces are available for this type of emergency, but we