

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That question really ought to be put to the minister when his estimates are before the standing committee.

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[Translation]

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

POSSIBILITY OF PLACE GUY FAVREAU BEING USED TO HOUSE ELDERLY PEOPLE

Mr. Jacques Lavoie (Hochelaga): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Supply and Services.

Considering the high percentage of unemployed in the construction industry in Montreal, that is 40 per cent, and since this high rate of unemployment could be considerably reduced if there were more housing starts in that region, and following the statements of the minister during the weekend to the effect that the use of Place Guy Favreau could be altered, could the minister tell the House whether the government intends to undertake the construction of Place Guy Favreau taking into account that with the co-operation with the provincial government the building could become a residence for senior citizens?

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, the comments of many citizens, several commentators of the mass media and some members of this House as well as the last suggestion of the hon. member show that questions are raised about the future use and design of Place Guy Favreau. The Minister of Public Works who is ultimately responsible for that building will certainly take into consideration the various representations made to him.

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[English]

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

REASON FOR DELAYING DECENTRALIZATION OF DEPARTMENTS UNTIL QUEBEC LANGUAGE BILL PASSED

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, but because of his absence and because of the involvement of the Prime Minister in this matter, I will put my question to the Prime Minister. I welcome him back to the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muir: Regarding decentralization of government services, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce indicated in his answer to me on April 26 that because of the introduction of the language bill, Bill 1, in the Quebec legislature, it appears that government action and future announcements in this regard pertaining to other parts of Canada will have to be held up. In his press conference on April 28 the Prime Minister said that, and I quote, "The minister is now

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waiting to see how the Act is going to come out before making any announcement on decentralization into Quebec."

Would the right hon. gentleman explain why, in so many words, the premier of Quebec indirectly by his actions is going to decide if decentralization is to go to other parts of Canada, particularly Cape Breton Island, and why does the government not proceed with its plans for decentralization to other parts of Canada and deal with Quebec when the minister sees, to use his own words, "what is going to happen on that score," namely, Bill 1?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am sure when the hon. member hears the eventual announcement by the minister, he will understand that decentralization is not only a very complicated package but an intricate one as well, and it means affecting various departments of government. They are all interlinked. Any decision which would move people in one direction in one province is not irrelevant to other moves, and we want to have a total picture of the possibilities before making that statement. That seems to be a very sensible way of proceeding.

Mr. Muir: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the explanation of the right hon. gentleman as far as it goes, but in view of the fact that the right hon. gentleman also said, and I quote, "There would have been hundreds and thousands of jobs moving around the country and in Quebec in particular" why should Rene Levesque be making the decision as to whether the unemployed on Cape Breton Island may be given an opportunity for jobs? Why does the government not go ahead, in view of what has been said, with what can be done in other parts of Canada?

Mr. Hugh Poulin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, if I may add—

An hon. Member: What do you know, Charlie McCarthy.

Mr. Poulin: —to the previous answer, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce said in the House last Friday that he had been in touch with Premier Alex Campbell of the province of Prince Edward Island on Friday last. Mr. Campbell assured him that when public servants were moved from this community to Prince Edward Island, there would indeed be Francophone education available for their children. He went on to say that he wished Premier Levesque of the province of Quebec would provide at least equal service for Anglophones moved into his province.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Paproski: What's that got to do with the question?

Mr. Muir: You've got the wrong island.