

Oral Questions

Mr. Epp: Which subject?

Mrs. Erola: May I remind him that this Government financed a definitive film on pornography called "Not a Love Story". That was financed by this Government. This Government has done more to promote the education of people on the subject of pornography. We do not spend our time going to watch the movies; we do something about them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH OF ALGERIA

Madam Speaker: I have the honour of drawing the attention of the House to the distinguished presence in our gallery of His Excellency Mr. Brehri, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Algeria.

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[English]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

REASSESSMENT OF BENEFICIARIES BY TAX OFFICIALS

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue. Would he advise the House whether his officials in the rulings division of the Taxation Department, in their capacity as the collectors of premiums for unemployment insurance, are now changing the rules and reassessing beneficiaries under the Unemployment Insurance Act as far back as four years?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, I was not aware of that situation. I shall make some enquiries and subsequently inform the House and the Hon. Member.

[English]

POSITION OF SELF-EMPLOYED PERSONS

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Would the Minister particularly look into the situation of those persons who were formerly classified as self employed, such as fishermen, Irish moss harvesters and others, who are now being reassessed?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, I shall make enquiries about the question in general as well as the specific cases raised by the Hon. Member.

[English]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

APPLICATION OF FILE DESTRUCTION POLICY

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. Late last Friday the Minister released his long awaited RCMP file destruction policy, setting out criteria with respect to the over 800,000 files opened by the Security Service on law abiding Canadians. The new policy is full of so many loopholes that, in reality, it is nothing less than a "Big Brother" privacy invasion policy, written and administered by the RCMP Security Service itself. Will the Minister tell the House approximately how many files will be destroyed pursuant to this policy and, more important, whether this same policy will form the basis for the future in terms not only of destruction of existing files but of the opening of new files by the Security Service?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I cannot indicate now precisely how many files will be destroyed, but tens of thousands and even hundreds of thousands will be destroyed. The policy is a defined one. I disagree with the Hon. Member that it leaves a great many loopholes. I would like to hear from him what sort of loopholes he perceives could indeed be filled.

The policy calls for an independent review by the Privacy Commissioner. I think that will provide an effective safeguard that the privacy of Canadians is being adequately regarded by the Security Service in its file destruction policy.

As far as opening files for the future is concerned, the statement that I made on Friday was not meant to cover that. It was addressed to file destruction. Basically, the criteria are the same for opening new files as for the destruction of files.

Mr. Robinson (Burnaby): The McDonald Commission itself described the criteria proposed by the Minister as "so vague and loose as to justify almost any collection program." So the Minister is really giving a licence to the RCMP Security Service to continue invading the privacy of thousands of law abiding Canadians.

REQUEST FOR REFERRAL TO STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Madam Speaker, will the Minister now clarify what the provisions in the policy related to blackmail and indiscretion specifically refer to? Will they continue to apply generally to all homosexuals and lesbians in Canada? Will the Minister now agree to refer this important question to the Justice Committee for a full and comprehensive study?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I think the ridiculous characterization of this policy by the Hon. Member shows that he has not taken the opportunity of the weekend to read the policy. I would urge him to do so before making such ridiculous suggestions about what the