

Oral Questions

or giving a broader mandate to the Federal Business Development Bank? Or is it really that the FBDB is going to be phased out, or sold to another financial institution?

Mr. Rompkey: No, Madam Speaker, the latter is not true at all. Indeed, the mandate has been expanded. We asked FBDB to stay into term lending and to expand its counselling program, including the very popular CASE program, and, in addition, to get into what we call "merchant banking", which is really the role of the deal maker for a small business. FBDB, of course, is not necessarily putting in its own money. The message in the budget was that the private sector needs to do the job. It needs to be out front. What we are saying to FBDB is that in putting together those deals, it should access capital in the private sector as a first alternative. Therefore, there is an expanded mandate for FBDB. We have requested FBDB to make sure it serves small business, particularly in rural areas of Canada.

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[Translation]

TEXTILES AND CLOTHING

INQUIRY RESPECTING GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Madam Speaker, since the Minister of State (International Trade) is not in the House, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. For three months the Minister of State (International Trade) has been promising that a position would be taken by the Government, while clothing imports have risen by 26 per cent, compared to 1982. Could the Minister inform the Canadian people what he intends to do about the thousands of workers who are losing their jobs because of unacceptable delay on the part of the Minister, and what kind of jobs the Government intends to provide for these workers, since their industry is becoming extinct? Are these workers—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I think the Hon. Member's question is long enough.

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, the Minister of State (International Trade) is working on the problem.

[English]

He hopes to make a report in the next couple of weeks.

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CRIMINAL CODE

PROSECUTIONS FOR BROADCASTING PORNOGRAPHIC PROGRAMS

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice.

The Minister has said that the better way of dealing with pornography broadcasting for which the CRTC has given licences, is to prosecute after the fact, using the obscenity laws. Will the Minister explain to the House how the existing law, or even the amendments which he proposed last week, will suffice for pornography broadcasting? How could the law be used for pornographic programs transmitted by satellite, for example? I refer to complaints I have received of taverns showing pornography broadcasts of vicious gang rapes, which are treated as a spectator sport. Is a TV program a "matter" or "thing", as in his legislation? Would he not agree that the language of Section 159(1) and (2) of the Criminal Code is hopelessly out of date?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Madam Speaker, I do not recall expressing any opinion that there should not be any special provisions for the broadcasting situation. I certainly have taken the position many times that the existing law on obscenity, and the amendment which I proposed last week, do apply and should apply to the broadcasting area, as to all others.

The Hon. Member asks how this would apply in the situation which she raises. Usually, with an earth satellite station or a cable company, there is no problem in convicting in a case of that kind. In fact one was convicted very recently in this vicinity for showing obscene representations. Nor, Madam Speaker, should there be any problem in the case of an hotel owner or a pub owner who is showing obscene representations. He is responsible and he will be subject to legal liability.

The Hon. Member asks whether such representations are a "matter" or "thing". Whether they are a "matter" or "thing" does not, perhaps, count for so much as the fact that they would be included. The Hon. Member will observe the fact that the Code uses the words "any other thing whatsoever", which is certainly broad enough to include all of the matters which she has raised.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

INQUIRY RESPECTING DATE OF CENTRAL NOVA BY-ELECTION

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Can he inform us whether the Prime Minister has screwed up sufficient courage as yet to announce the date of the by-election in Central Nova?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I do not see the Prime Minister having to muster very much courage to announce that by-election. He said clearly yesterday that it was a matter of a week or two, and that is a short period of time if one looks at Canadian precedents, both federal and provincial, in these matters.