

Government Orders

[Text]

Question No. 193—**Mr. Hanger:**

What was, in fiscal year 1994–95, the total cost to the Department of Health of providing health care to claimants of refugee status in Canada; what was the projected amount for this line of spending in the 1994–95 estimates or supplementary estimates; and how does the Department of Health expect to cover any shortfall resulting from refugee health spending overruns?

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): It should be first mentioned that as a result of a memorandum of understanding between the former departments of National Health and Welfare and Employment and Immigration Canada signed on March 1, 1993, resources relating to the interim federal health, IFH, program, formerly the non-insured health benefits, NIHB, program were transferred to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, CIC, from Health Canada, HC, effective commencing in 1993–94. It was also agreed at that time that HC would continue to deliver the program on the department's behalf. Subsequently, CIC assumed responsibility for the delivery of the IFH program on April 1, 1995.

In fiscal year 1994–95, under the interim federal health program, Citizenship and Immigration Canada spent \$7.1 million in providing health care services, mainly to refugee claimants across Canada. Until January 1, 1995, Ontario was the only province which provided health care coverage to refugee claimants. As a result of the recent decision of the Ontario government no longer to provide health care coverage to refugee claimants and given that, starting April 1, 1995, only emergency/essential services will now be provided under the IFH program, it is estimated that total program costs will increase by \$15.0 million for a total of \$22.5 million in program spending in 1995–96. This level of spending is expected to continue in future years.

Pending Treasury Board approval, additional program funding will be obtained through the supplementary estimates process as a result of Ontario de-insurance of refugee claimants. Specifically, the department's 1995–96 reference levels will be increased by an amount of \$15.0 million as will the future years' reference levels.

The projected amount for this line of spending in the 1994–95 main estimates and supplementary estimates was \$7.5 million.

At present, in light of CIC's additional appropriations as a result of Ontario de-insurance, no shortfall exists within program funding. Should costs exceed available funding due to an increased number of program beneficiaries and the health status of these persons or as a result of amendments to provincial fee tariffs upon which IFH payments are based, it is planned that additional resources will be obtained through the estimates process.

[Translation]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if question No. 146 could be made an order for return, that return would be tabled immediately.

[Text]

Question No. 146—**Mr. Axworthy:**

With respect to the government's actions to curb contraband trade in cigarettes in Canada, announced on February 8, 1994, (a) what estimates, if any, were made for (i) increased consumption of cigarettes in all populations, (ii) increased smoking prevalence among Canadian youth, (iii) impact on current and future mortality and morbidity; and, if not, why not, (b) what estimates, if any, of future levels of contraband trade in cigarettes were made of the market share of contraband cigarettes in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997 and what estimate was made of revenue loss due to contraband sales in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997 and, if not, why not?

Return tabled.

[Translation]

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Agreed?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-64, an act respecting employment equity, be read the third time and passed.

Hon. Sheila Finestone (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-64, the new employment equity act, was designed to resolve longstanding problems with the existing legislation and meet our government's red book commitments. It is part of the government's work toward achieving an open and inclusive society.

The legislation reflects the values of the government. It reflects the values of respect and understanding. The legislation is about fairness. It is about providing an equal playing field. Above all, the legislation is about making sure that all self-identified, qualified Canadians have a fair chance to compete for federal public sector jobs based on their merit.

The legislation continues to cover a total of 350 private sector employers and crown corporations that operate in federally regulated industries such as banking, communications and transportation. The legislation expands coverage of the employment equity act to the public service immediately. It also includes the Canadian Armed Forces and the RCMP.