

Oral Questions

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, payments under the Canada Assistance Plan have grown from about \$4 billion in 1984-85 to over \$7 billion in this fiscal year, 1992-93.

Those payments to the so-called have provinces are growing at the rate of five per cent per year, while government expenditures are being contained in the area of 3.5 to 3.8 per cent per year.

There is recognition of the fact that these are difficult times. We have a fiscal problem. We have a debt problem, and I know the hon. member shares the view we have to deal with that as well as with the unfortunate situation that prevails across the country. We are indeed trying to do our best with the resources we have available to us.

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Mr. Speaker, the minister does not seem to grasp the seriousness of the situation in Edmonton, in Vegreville, and right across the country.

While he plays shell games with transfer payments, the Edmonton Food Bank last year serviced 98,000 men, women and children. Federal, provincial and municipal governments have to work together in this crisis. I would ask the minister if he is prepared to co-operate with all governments in Canada, including the three so-called have provinces in order to help Canadians get out of this crisis?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have just answered that question. We are increasing over-all Canada Assistance Plan payments to all provinces by something like 5.4 per cent and 5 per cent on an annual basis to Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario.

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• (1450)

JUSTICE

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

The Crown prosecutor who ordered the arrest of Kitty Nowdluk-Reynolds, an aboriginal woman who had been brutally raped, has now been appointed as director

general of the minister's Council for Aboriginal Justice Administration.

Kitty was dragged across Canada and even confined in a van with the rapist.

As the minister who created this program, does the appointment of Don Avison, that very Crown prosecutor, meet the minister's vision of trust and respect that she has said is needed between the justice system and aboriginal peoples?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is being fair she will know, if she has reviewed that file as closely as I have, that the problem was not with the Crown prosecutor.

Those who were responsible for Ms. Nowdluk's treatment are now being investigated. My colleague, the Solicitor General, has this file under his full advisement.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, this is the very Crown prosecutor who ordered the arrest of this aboriginal woman but also justified publicly on television the subsequent events that happened to this woman.

How can the minister allow the appointment of someone who has been so incredibly insensitive to aboriginal women?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, when I was in Yellowknife in September with the federal-provincial meeting of ministers responsible for justice, I had the opportunity to see how this individual was received in his community and how he was regarded by aboriginal and other women in that community.

I am very confident that he is in fact uniquely suited to carry out this responsibility and will do so credibly.

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GRAIN HANDLING INDUSTRY

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, during Question Period I was informed that the labour dispute between the Alberta Wheat Pool and local 333 of the grain workers' union in Vancouver has been settled.

This is good news for suffering Alberta grain farmers, but these disputes and the disruption in their lives are getting altogether too common.