

● (1440)

## COLLECTION OF BENEFITS BY BRICKLAYERS

**Mr. Andrew Witer (Parkdale-High Park):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Reports in recent days have indicated that some 1,400 Metro-Toronto bricklayers are collecting unemployment insurance benefits while builders have set up an emergency manpower committee to help find qualified bricklayers to meet the demands of the current housing boom. Are these reports true and, if so, what action does the Minister intend to take to ensure that the unemployment insurance system is not abused and that only those who are genuinely unable to find work receive benefits?

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Hon. Member that I believe that if there is work available and if people can find work in their field, then they should not be drawing unemployment insurance benefits. However, I also want to advise the Hon. Member that we do have agreements with hiring halls. They advise us whether or not there are people who are unemployed in a particular field.

Regarding the Toronto situation, I have asked departmental officials to find out immediately whether or not contractors are giving work to the hiring halls, whether or not the hiring halls are referring that work to bricklayers, and whether or not the bricklayers are accepting the work offers that are made. As soon as I have that information, I will be able to take appropriate action.

## DEPARTMENT'S ARRANGEMENTS WITH HIRING HALLS

**Mr. Bob Pennock (Etobicoke North):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the same Minister. Regarding the hiring halls, can the Minister tell the House why the bricklayers' and other hiring halls have these special privileges to by-pass the unemployment centres in reporting, and just how many unions or organizations have these special privileges?

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, it has long been a practice of the Department of Employment and Immigration in working with the labour force to have arrangements with hiring halls across the country. That has been in effect for some time. We have found it to be of very beneficial assistance in making sure that proper flows of work are channelled through the hiring halls. I would hope to see that practice continue.

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## EQUALITY RIGHTS

## ELIMINATION OF MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE

**Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice. As a result of the new equality law, the Minister has announced the elimination of mandatory age of retirement for public servants but not

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for the tens of thousands of workers in the federally regulated private sector. Could the Minister tell us why these workers do not benefit right now from non-discrimination based on age?

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, apparently the Hon. Member simply refuses to read the details of this report. In the report we indicate that the same rules are going to apply to the private sector, but to give it time to adjust its affairs and labour contracts and to make arrangements, there will be a transitional period. Exactly the same principle will apply. The Public Service can act more quickly because the President of the Treasury Board has already been taking steps that can be put into immediate effect. The private sector has not had that advantage. If the hon. lady will read on, she will discover just what is going on.

## INDUSTRY STANDARD

**Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Minister that I know exactly how to read his document and that his document is certainly not clear. I would like to know what kind of fairness and equality can bank clerks, airline stewardesses, and rail workers expect from the Government when decisions for retirement are not going to be based on their performance ability but on their age, and normal age of retirement is an industry standard.

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I refer to page 9 of this historic document tabled yesterday which indicates the following:

However, since abolishing mandatory retirement will have an impact on labour relations in the private sector, the Government will consult with private sector employers and employee organizations before taking any action,—

The previous Government did not consult with anyone about anything. We consult first, and then we act.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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## FINANCE

## IMPOSITION OF TAXES

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex-Windsor):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened with great care and much amazement to the answers given by the Minister of Finance today with respect to the oil compensation fund tax and the sales tax increase that came into effect in October, 1984. My question is very simple. Who was it who put these taxes into effect, the Minister or Darth Vader?

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** Darth Vader from *Star Wars*. He's the guy who has taken over from them.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** He's working for you.