

Oral Questions

TRANSMITTAL OF BARBADIAN INFORMATION TO OTTAWA

Mr. Terry Sargeant (Selkirk-Interlake): Madam Speaker, I come back to the Minister of State for International Trade and ask him very simply the same question that I have now asked twice. Was the information that High Commissioner Power received from Prime Minister Adams on Friday night passed on to Ottawa, and when was it passed on to Ottawa?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, the report of the discussion that Mr. Power had with Prime Minister Adams covering all of the items discussed was passed on to Ottawa. It was passed on in the course of the weekend. I would have to check to find out the exact hour.

If Hon. Members will be quiet and patient, I will frankly and honestly tell them what we know. The report of his discussion was passed on to Ottawa, as is the practice. It was not passed on with any apprehension of any early military action on behalf of eastern Caribbean countries. There was mention of this remark by Tom Adams, but also many other matters that Tom Adams had discussed. I suggest for the Member to picture that Tom Adams talked only about the possibilities, at some definite time in the future, of eastern Caribbean countries considering the possibility of a military action, was something not given the high profile in the discussion by Tom Adams that he is now suggesting.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT—REQUEST FOR ACTION BY GOVERNMENT

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Employment and Immigration, who has momentarily left the Chamber, perhaps I can direct my question to the Minister of Finance. In a document on the economy prepared by the Ministry of State for Economic Development last February, and released through Freedom of Information, there appears this interesting comment:

Large numbers of unemployed workers in major urban centres, especially young people, are presenting a dramatically different series of problems for which we are by and large unprepared.

Given the fact that youth unemployment in Canada has been hovering around 20 per cent for the past 15 months, and in light of the warnings and advice that were given to the Government in the report of the Ministry of State in February, why have there been no initiatives in the last nine months to deal with this matter? Why must we wait for another Speech from the Throne? Why, in the name of a half million young Canadians unemployed, can this Government not act now?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, this statement by the Hon. Member is rather unbelievable. He quotes a document that was prepared last February, before the budget. It was part of the preparation of the budget that was released last April. I do not know where my friend has

been for the last nine months, but he should remember that in April we had a budget which contained a very large amount of economic stimulus. It provided incentives to the economy of about \$4.8 billion. It provided additional funds for the purpose of direct job creation, as well as providing large incentives to the private sector to create jobs.

The Hon. Member knows that since last November Canada has been creating jobs at a faster rate than any other industrial country in the world. This has happened since last November as a result of the recovery taking place in North America and also with the policies and incentives provided by the Government of Canada in the last budget. We have taken steps to ensure that our policies try to deal with the problems as they develop, and try to foresee the problems that are coming. The Minister of Employment and Immigration indicated that, now that the level of unemployment among adults seems to be coming down relatively fast, we must give even more attention to the problem of youth unemployment. He said he will be addressing this question more particularly in the next few months.

REQUEST FOR IMMEDIATE INITIATIVES TO CREATE JOBS

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, I do not know where the Minister has been because, when he brought down his budget, he provided \$90 million for 31,000 jobs for young people at a time when there were 600,000 young people unemployed, a time when the unemployment rate among young people was averaging 20 per cent over the previous 12 months. Why have there been no new initiatives, given the warnings back in February and the warnings by the Minister of Employment and Immigration who, incidentally, must agree with this because he was musing on the weekend about new initiatives, but these new initiatives will not come about until the Speech from the Throne. If there are to be new initiatives, in the name of all of these unemployed young Canadians, why cannot these new initiatives be taken now?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, very simply, my hon. friend should realize that when the Government provided \$4.8 billion of incentives in the last budget, these incentives were not provided by saying that the young people cannot have access to them. That money has created incentives in the economic system in Canada to help all Canadians—adults, the young, males and females. The Hon. Member is completely distorting the fact when he contends that the only amount added for job creation among young people was \$90 million over and above the hundreds of millions of dollars that were already allocated for the young people.

My hon. friend has to look at the total impact of the budget on job creation in this country which is available for young people as well as for adults. The Hon. Member should realize these facts.

As I indicated in my previous answer, the Minister is also considering whether there are additional steps that can be