

*Oral Questions*

far we can go in expediting the movement of vessels to make up for that loss.

● (1442)

**Mr. Neil:** Mr. Speaker, the producer in western Canada looks upon the situation as being critical. I wonder if the minister is prepared to take immediate steps to have officials of the Canadian Wheat Board, grain companies and railways appear before either the Standing Committee on Agriculture or the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, so that members and producers can be made aware of all the facts and problems and consider any recommendations and suggestions which may be made by those officials and representatives of other organizations?

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to consider that with officials of the Wheat Board and other organizations. However, I think the urgent thing at this moment is that they have all their time free to deal with the problem and to make sure they move as much grain as possible, rather than be deflected from that even to answer the very important questions of the hon. member.

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**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

PRESENCE IN SPEAKER'S GALLERY OF PRIME MINISTER  
MENACHEM BEGIN OF ISRAEL

**Mr. Speaker:** Before continuing with the question period, I know all hon. members will want to join with me in extending an extremely warm welcome and best wishes for a successful tour of Canada, and in all his other present endeavours which are of such an important nature not only to his own country but also to peace in the world. I refer to the presence in our gallery now of the very distinguished Prime Minister of Israel, His Excellency Menachem Begin.

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

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**FINANCE**

FUNDING OF URBAN IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. When he told the provincial finance ministers last week that because they would not go along with his request to reduce federal cost sharing for hospital care, medical care and post-secondary education, he was deferring going ahead with the community services grants program, did he really mean that there would be no federal funds this coming year for neighbourhood renewal programs, sewage treatment programs and low-cost housing?

[Mr. Lang.]

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, we have decided to postpone implementation of this program which was advocated by the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. As for details on some programs which are terminated, those will come to an end while others will be maintained on the former basis. I cannot be more explicit for the time being. I suggest that this question be directed to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs when he is back in the House.

[English]

**Mr. Orlikow:** Mr. Speaker, it is good to know that those programs which have been started will be allowed to continue. However, a large number of cities have plans which are almost ready for this type of program, and they certainly will not be able to proceed without federal funding because of their financial difficulties and the financial difficulties of the provinces in which they are located.

Can the minister give any idea as to when there will be a decision and an announcement by the federal government that there will be any money available for these programs which are so essential in the various cities of Canada?

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, three programs were involved in the new proposition of the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Two of them will be terminated by the end of the year; the third one will still be in operation. The hon. member can ask a specific question of my colleague, but if the provinces and municipalities are faced with financing problems, I suppose we have the same problems at the federal level.

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[Translation]

**LABOUR CONDITIONS**

INQUIRY AS TO FINANCIAL MEASURES TAKEN TO REDUCE  
NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED

**Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse):** Mr. Speaker, I had a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce but, in his absence, I shall direct it to my excellent friend the Minister of Finance. I say my excellent friend because we sit together on the committee.

According to a recent article Canada is in the leading position on the worldwide level as far as unemployment is concerned. This is not in accordance with the statements made by the Minister of Finance. The article says that Canada has a record 8.5 per cent of unemployed. I would like to ask the following question of the Minister of Finance: In the face of all those contradictory statistics, I would like to ask seriously of the Minister of Finance, who now has a budget to prepare and to submit to the House, whether those statistical data are really in accordance with facts and, if so, what he intends to propose to try to further develop the use of our manpower in order to increase our gross national product to become as