

Oral Questions

en the House and enlighten the people in the country who might want to think about these proposals more seriously?

Mr. MacEachen: Madam Speaker, I would like to tell the hon. member something which he already knows, that all these matters are constantly under consideration by any government.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacEachen: But I want to assure the hon. member he should not hold his breath in respect of the implementation of any of these proposals which he is putting before me at the present time.

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EMPLOYMENT**JOB CREATION PROGRAMS TO REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT**

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Given the steady increase in unemployment in recent months—made worse by massive lay-offs in the auto and forest industries—and given the fact that the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance last night gave no indication of measures to expand the economy and, indeed, predicted an increase in the rate of unemployment in the coming year, will the Minister of Employment and Immigration tell the House whether he is planning any new job-creation strategies, especially those which would help meet the very substantial rate of unemployment of women, young people and natives whose rate of unemployment is reaching alarming proportions?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, in response to the hon. member for Winnipeg North, I would be pleased to point out to him that the question he asked was a simple repetition of a statement we made in the throne speech a week ago Monday, indicating that in fact measures would be taken to develop job programs, particularly those helping women, young people and those with disadvantages in the job market.

I would say, Madam Speaker, that I am very pleased to note the interest of the hon. member for Winnipeg North, and look forward to his support and encouragement when we bring forward legislation and measures into this House to provide those job programs.

Mr. Orlikow: Madam Speaker, given the fact that the minister's government is committed to reducing the number of people working for the government, and given the fact that women and native people who work for the government—in too few numbers—were the last hired and, therefore, in any program of reducing the number of public servants will be the first to be let go, would the minister indicate some of the concrete steps he proposes to take in the near future to meet the needs of those people, rather than just giving us more rhetoric, as he usually does?

Mr. Axworthy: Madam Speaker, it is not rhetoric. It was stated in the throne speech very clearly that we intend to introduce affirmative action programs to make sure that the full working rights of all people, both in the public service and in the public sector, are provided, and to ensure that where there are inequities or inequalities in the work place, the affirmative action programs would aid and assist to overcome those inequalities.

Again, I welcome the hon. member's support when we bring those measures in, because we will need it, compared to the attitude taken by members directly opposite me.

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NORTHERN AFFAIRS**SETTLEMENT OF ABORIGINAL CLAIMS IN MACKENZIE DELTA**

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. As the minister knows, the former Liberal government had signed an agreement in principle with the COPE organization regarding the settlement of their aboriginal claims in the Mackenzie Delta, which agreement the Conservative government had attempted to unilaterally change or rescind.

Would the minister confirm that he intends to respect the COPE agreement in principle; and when does he intend to proceed with the final agreement and the legislation to implement it?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Yes, Madam Speaker, we do intend as a government to honour the agreement in principle. I have met on a few occasions now—the last time as late as last Friday, I believe—with leaders of COPE, and we discussed the personalities to be considered in terms of a special negotiator to get on with the discussions for implementation. I believe we will be in a position to appoint that special negotiator some time, perhaps, within the next two weeks.

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FINANCE**PROPOSALS CONCERNING CAPITAL GAINS TAX**

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. I understood the minister last night to indicate that the capital gains taxes as proposed by the former minister of finance, the hon. member for St. John's West, would not be proceeded with. Since this may well ruin the retirement of many of our farmers, and will kill initiative, is the minister prepared to reconsider this decision?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I did say that it was not my intention to proceed with several items dealing with the