

*Oral Questions*

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

## BENEFITS PAYABLE TO SEASONAL FARM WORKERS

**Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** I want to remind hon. colleagues that one of the reasons we had many trucking companies applying for assistance was as a result of action taken by the U.S. Government with respect to permits for the U.S. market. As a result of the very competent work accomplished by my colleague, the Minister of State for International Trade, in negotiations with the U.S. Trade Secretary, that problem was rectified during the sixty-day limit, and consequently many of the trucking companies did not need the assistance.

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

**Mr. Nowlan:** You are off your tree. That has nothing to do with the question.

**Madam Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Perth. Does he have one supplementary or two?

**Mr. Jarvis:** One, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** I just want to remind Hon. Members that when they are recognized, because they rise rapidly and say they have a question supplementary to whatever is going on, they need not expect to ask two.

**Some Hon. Members:** Why not?

**Mr. Jarvis:** I will take three or four supplementary questions if you are in the mood, Madam Speaker.

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

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

ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM—ELIGIBILITY OF TRUCKING COMPANIES

**Hon. Bill Jarvis (Perth):** Madam Speaker, again I direct my question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. The promise to the trucking industry was on the basis of a question put by the Minister's colleague, the Hon. Member for Northumberland-Miramichi, at which time the Minister's predecessor said he was looking at the Enterprise Development Program for other truckers. I want to be very clear about this. Do any truckers in Canada, except Maislin, qualify under the Enterprise Development Program or any other program for government largesse, or has Maislin got an exclusive monopoly on these bail-out funds?

**Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Madam Speaker, as I indicated, the Enterprise Development Program at the present time, as well as six months ago, only applies to the manufacturing and processing sectors. Those guidelines have not changed.

**Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. On January 1, 1983, we finally got the discriminatory section of the UI regulations removed from the Unemployment Insurance Act. We on this side of the House applaud this move because there are over 100,000 seasonal farm workers in Canada, many of whom are immigrants and do not speak English very well. They do back-breaking, arduous, seasonal, and sometimes extremely dangerous work. I think it was an injustice that Section 16 was there in the first place which either denied these people access to unemployment insurance benefits or forced them, often against their will, into the arms of labour contractors.

Because of some farm lobby, we hear that the Minister is drafting a new set of regulations. We are concerned about this. Will the Minister acknowledge that this is a serious matter by guaranteeing to this House that there will be no change in the current regulations, which are fair to everyone, including seasonal workers, until at least representatives of those farm workers have met with the Minister?

• (1140)

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased that the NDP caucus has now recognized the problems facing the agricultural workers that this Government recognized almost a year ago when it changed the regulations.

I do want to give the assurance to the Hon. Member that what we are concerned about in discussing amendments is the paperwork and administration that have been encountered as a result of the change of those regulations, and that all we are simply doing is having discussions and negotiations that would allow us to reduce any extra paperwork that would be required. The basic intent, purpose, and objective of limiting Section 16 will be maintained.

**Mr. Rose:** I put that question forward in all seriousness. I resent a sleezebag reply like that.

REQUEST THAT REGULATIONS NOT BE CHANGED WITHOUT CONSULTATION

**Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody):** Madam Speaker, when I raised this issue in the House a year ago, the Minister did not even know what we were talking about. Then he gets up and makes a political type of crass remark like that. I want him to assure the House that he will not make any move whatsoever without first coming back to the House to discuss it, and to discuss it with those people who are affected as well. What we now hear will happen is that he will put the same kind of regulations on the backs of these people and take away their rights and opportunity for a decent kind of unemployment insurance protection, and put them in the same category as circus workers.