

Oral Questions

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT**INQUIRY RESPECTING REDUCTION OF BUDGETS FOR JOB CREATION**

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Can the minister say whether he still believes in the efficiency of Canada Works and Young Canada Works projects when it comes to job creation? If so, why does the minister make the job creation offices almost inoperative by cutting their budgets by 66 per cent?

[English]

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do believe in the talent, efficiency and calibre of the people we have in place. From day to day we are asked about the growth and size of the civil service. In an area where we can try to effect economy and where we can maintain service, I think that is an appropriate place to make changes. That is why changes are made, not to decrease the efficiency and effectiveness of the two programs.

[Translation]

Mr. Laprise: I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Considering that experience has shown that it is necessary and useful to have civil servants follow up, control and supervise Canada Works and Young Canada Works projects to make them as effective as possible and that several people in regional offices were dismissed following this decision by the minister for the sake of the future efficiency of these projects, would the minister reconsider his decision and put these people back to work so that they can monitor these projects to make them really efficient?

[English]

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, we have to decide if we are going to effect economies and if we are going to make the best use of the personnel in place. I am suggesting that that is precisely what we are doing now, and I do not think additional people would be necessary at this time. The programs are working very effectively and well and the people in place are doing an excellent job.

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TRANSPORT**HALL REPORT—REQUEST MINISTER CONSULT MR. JUSTICE HALL ON RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Transport. In light of the fact that the minister demonstrated his disdain for parliament and insulted a distinguished premier of our country in his answer to the hon. member for Vegreville about the necessity of the implementation of the Hall commission report, I wonder if he can tell us, if he has consulted all

[Mr. Andras.]

people he says he has, why he refuses to consult the architect of this commission, the Hon. Mr. Justice Hall, so that he can get first-hand information and advice about the implementation of this very important report.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think it is improper for the hon. member to suggest that I have any disdain for any aspect of parliament. I did refer to the partisan nature of the way the opposition worked a particular issue, but that should not surprise you, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that as far as the Hall commission report is concerned, I have had a variety of conversations with all of the five commissioners at different times, but not essentially about the nature of the report which I thought was fairly clear in its writings.

I have been acting to implement it, and in that regard the people who are obviously to be consulted are farmers, farm organizations, farm representatives and the communities which are affected by the recommendations, as well as my colleagues who are affected when I need \$100 million, \$200 million or \$400 million to implement those recommendations. These are the consultations which have been taking place, and we have been making good progress. For the first time in six or seven decades we have seen the rebuilding of rail lines on the prairies instead of their deterioration. That is extremely positive action. It is part of the positive program which, in their partisan way, even Conservatives from the west insist on ignoring.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question, unlike the minister, will be brief. In light of the fact that even the cowardly Prime Minister thinks this parliament has more work to do, will the minister himself not consult with Mr. Hall? Will he not use his good offices to have the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications have Mr. Hall and Mr. Snavelly appear before it so that if the minister does not care to consult them, at least members of parliament may?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I really am surprised at the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar, because I did indicate in my answer that I thought the Hall commission report was clear in its terms and that I had no difficulty understanding what it does recommend and, indeed, am taking action to implement most of the important provisions.

We took action faster than has ever been seen before in responding to a commission report. Within ten days of receiving the Hall commission report, we implemented the first and most important recommendation to make permanent the 1,813 miles of rail which the commission said should be transferred to the basic rail network. Within days after that we had a conference with all interested organizations and heard from them that they wanted faster action in resolving the doubt about the lines which were not identified by the Hall commission for either being kept or being abandoned. These interested organizations showed great support for the idea of the Prairie Rail Action Committee going ahead and identifying the future