

Oral Questions

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I am truly amazed that members of the Official Opposition and the NDP are not joining the Economic Council of Canada in congratulating the Minister of Finance on his Budget, and are not telling the people of this country about the growth predictions of the Economic Council of Canada which call for consistent growth over the next decade, which means jobs for Canadians. The Economic Council of Canada is looking for a lower unemployment rate than we have had in years—well below what it is now. That is its forecast, not mine. Aren't you listening?

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I would rather listen to the workers in Thompson who were told yesterday that they will be losing jobs. I would rather listen to the fishermen who cannot get money from the Government.

Mr. Crosbie: Order.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Order.

Mr. Murphy: Where are the Government's priorities? Why is it not looking after those people instead of bailing out the banks and giving tax write-offs, costing \$1 billion, to corporations?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, the jobs that have been created have been created consistently by this Government over the past year by working with the private sector and taking fiscal responsibility. Read the report of the Economic Council of Canada. The rate of job growth is going to continue, Mr. Speaker.

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ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

REQUEST FOR PROGRAM TO UPGRADE LOCKS

Mr. Allan Pietz (Welland): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Transport. The failure of Lock 7 on the Welland Canal in the City of Thorold in my riding of Welland has caused substantial financial loss to the Seaway and the users of it. Would the Minister consider an early implementation of a program of upgrading the lock system, such as the super lock proposal of 1973, for which land has already been expropriated or, as an alternative, the construction of the twinning of Lock 7 in the City of Thorold and Lock 1 in the City of St. Catharines?

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon. Member for his question. He will surely appreciate the fact that it is important for us to determine the cause of the blow-out problem that we have in the St. Lawrence Seaway, and only then to take the appropriate measures. We are obviously very concerned about the present situation. We want our system to remain as efficient as possible in order that we may continue

to enjoy the high quality of service we have had in the St. Lawrence Seaway for 25 years.

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THE ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and is with regard to political patronage.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Boudria: In its first year in office the Government has appointed one person every three hours, 24 hours a day.

Mr. Gormley: Which flight are you on this week?

Mr. Boudria: The same flight as Bob Coates. Can the Deputy Prime Minister tell us when he intends to reform the institution of patronage as was announced by the Prime Minister on September 9? In the last 10 days there have been 145 appointments, which is one appointment every two hours instead of one every three hours. Where is the reform from the Government?

Mr. Rodriguez: Look who's talking.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the Hon. Member back—

Mr. Boudria: I'm glad to be back. I missed you.

Mr. Nielsen: —to Canada after his exotic journeys. I would like to draw his attention to the fact that, if my recollection is correct, there are some 2,600 GIC appointments made every year. It is a simple matter of mathematics to figure out how many appointments were made in the 20 years that the Party which he supports was in Government.

● (1150)

Half of the population are probably Conservative, and the other half have other political allegiances. If the Hon. Member were doing his job properly, instead of whining about appointments that are made he would be making recommendations to the Government with respect to those whom he would like to see appointed to these various agencies.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE CERTAIN APPOINTMENTS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.