

Oral Questions

the newly elected leadership, the leadership to be elected tomorrow of the AFN.

Naturally if they bring to us matters that were raised seriously in their assembly we will consider them very seriously.

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SELF-EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration and refers to the Self-Employment Incentive Program which has proven extremely successful in my area in helping people off unemployment insurance, so successful in fact that the funding has already run out for 1991.

Will the minister redirect funding or make funding available to this program which has proven so successful in helping people off of unemployment insurance and into their own businesses.

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I know that the Self-Employment Incentive Program is a successful one. As for the matter of budget, I can look into the regional allocation in the hon. member's province to determine whether or not we can reallocate within the fund to meet the requirements of his riding.

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EMPLOYMENT

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister for youth.

Various government departments have responded to a job-hunting Nepean student and I would like to quote from three of the many letters that he received: "—budgetary restrictions have had a serious impact—including the summer employment program—" Quote number two: "—I regret to inform you that our office is not participating in the COSEP program this year". Quote number three: "—sorry to advise you that our office will not be hiring students in the summer of 1991".

Why is the minister stating one thing in this House while officials in various government departments are stating another?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Youth) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member would do me the courtesy of sending copies of those letters to me so that I might look at them. I will certainly respond to her.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to send those letters to the minister.

Students cannot support themselves on platitudes. Because of the government's cuts in transfer payments, tuition is up, GST is on books, rent is up. It stands to reason that if the budget allocation remains the same there will be fewer jobs.

Will the minister assist Canada's unemployed youth and introduce today a comprehensive assistance program?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Youth) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, or should know, there is a debate on this question today. I invite her to participate in the debate and ask the appropriate questions at that time. I have already indicated in my speech this morning that the funds have not been cut with respect to the Challenge program. They have been increased, and some of her own colleagues admitted that.

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TRADE

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade who later this week will begin the talks with Mexico and the United States on a free trade agreement. He will also be well aware of the North America Water and Power Alliance proposal to divert Canadian rivers into the American southwest and northern Mexico.

Will the Minister for International Trade say today categorically that this government will never allow the