

*Oral Questions***INFRASTRUCTURE**

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board told the government operations committee that the government's much heralded infrastructure program cost Canadian taxpayers \$750,000 for every job created.

Last year the auditor general said the \$4.5 billion spent on job creation by regional development agencies has failed. The number of jobs created has been fudged, inflated and politically massaged.

Will the Minister of Finance acknowledge the taxpayers had a bum rap, that the unemployed have been led down the garden path, and that his own deficit reductions could have been much larger if he would only acknowledge that this process of job creation does not work?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one can speak to virtually every mayor of every municipality. One can speak to the executives of the mayors in municipalities. One can speak to the provinces. They will say the infrastructure program has been a tremendous success all across the country.

If one reads the auditor general's report, what he does is level a series of statements as to defects in evaluation, the vast majority of which occurred under the previous government and have been cleaned up by this government, which is why the auditor general congratulated the regional agencies under the Liberal government, and we are very proud of it.

• (1450)

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I could not find the congratulations. First we had the national unity cabinet committee and now we have the job creation cabinet committee being struck. This is talk, talk, talk and more money flushed down the drain for a top down, borrowed money, government directed job creation program that we know will fail.

Will the Minister of Finance recognize and acknowledge that if he wants a serious job creation program he has to get the government off the backs of the private sector, reduce the deficit faster than he has been doing and reduce taxes? Each of these things is opposite to what the government has been doing so far.

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if one looks at the trend of interest rates since the last budget, one would see those interest rates have come down and will understand the very clear linkage between deficit reduction, lowering interest rates and job cre-

ation. That is more than likely one reason that over the course of the last year and half there have been over 500,000 new jobs created in Canada.

The President of the Treasury Board told me that the proof the infrastructure program has been such a great success is that the member for Simcoe Centre keeps writing to him for more money.

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BOSNIA

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

On November 21, with the historic signing of the peace accord in Dayton, Ohio between the warring parties in the Bosnian conflict, would the Minister of Foreign Affairs comment on any new role the Canadian government may play in support of the peace process in war torn Bosnia?

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are all pleased to welcome the Dayton peace agreement, bringing an end to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

I think I speak on behalf of everyone in the House when I say we congratulate all of the participants who had anything to with helping bring about this peace accord.

The peace accord is one thing but a lasting peace, the post-peace accord period, is sometimes as important or more important than the peace settlement itself. There will now be a period of reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation. We will be monitoring this post-accord period very closely to see what part Canada can play together with its allies.

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[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT CENTRES

Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Last July, the Minister of Human Resources Development announced a major restructuring of his employment centre network and decided that the regional management centre for the Mauricie would be located in Shawinigan, in the riding of Saint-Maurice, instead of Trois-Rivières, the regional capital.

Since then, 25,000 people have signed a petition condemning the government's decision and 40 municipal councils in that region have adopted resolutions to that effect.

In this context, what is the rationale for establishing this regional centre in Shawinigan instead of Trois-Rivières when the public wants exactly the opposite?