

Oral Questions

find business in a very important part of the world, a part of the world where we can find good new business.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, I suppose the minister is suggesting that he should stay abroad and bring the Prime Minister home. Perhaps that would help.

On November 24, 1988, the Prime Minister in Toronto promised: "to ensure innovative and generous adjustment and retraining programs with the chief priority being the well-being of the individual Canadian worker and his family". Yet today tens of thousands of unemployed Canadians are waiting for retraining.

When will this government honour this promise? When will this government start retraining these unemployed Canadians so that they can be part of Canada's future and not part of its past?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): It is a bit ironic, Mr. Speaker. That member's party in this House fought Bill C-21. It targeted over \$800 million which we wanted to invest in the work force of Canada and is exactly the kind of thing the member is calling for.

I can tell him that the labour force development strategy board is having its first meetings yesterday and today. It has been entrusted with finding ways where we can apply these hundreds of millions of dollars and invest in our work force so as to improve its skills and performance.

What he is asking for is already happening. He should come of age.

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NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, the Acting Prime Minister was quoting Mr. d'Aquino in support of the Prime Minister. Of course Mr. d'Aquino was part of the delegation. It was the Prime Minister who said: "You dance with the one who brought you".

My question is for the minister in charge of national unity. The premier of Ontario has said that the Prime Minister should speak on behalf of all Canadians and not as leader of the Conservative Party.

Does the minister believe that the words and actions of the Prime Minister overseas are a contribution to his efforts to strengthen national unity?

• (1440)

Right Hon. Joe Clark (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister Responsible for Constitutional Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, although it is obviously important that Canadians who are interested in national unity and in the strength of the economy read what the Prime Minister said and not simply listen to the cast put upon his words in this House.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

Millions of Canadians have heard about the Prime Minister's morbid premonition and of his efforts to solicit the votes of 4,000 Vietnamese refugees. They have also seen him bad-mouth Ontario in Hong Kong and Japan, then blame the press, and then have the gall to ask the premier of Ontario for an apology.

Is it appropriate for this man who has so obviously lost control of himself to be in charge of a country?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the hon. member that there is absolutely nothing wrong with the province of Ontario or the people of Ontario. What is wrong is that the Government of Ontario is mortally flawed in its attempt to deal with the pressing economic issues.

Quite frankly Ontario happens to be, through the leadership of its government, the odd province out. At a time when all governments, with the exception of Ontario, are attempting to deal with the fundamental problems affecting our economy, namely inflation and deficit reduction, it is going in the other direction. That does not augur well and does not look well in the eyes of international investors.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.