

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

ment debate of March 17. The reason he did not receive a reply at that time was that the question was referred to the wrong department, and it was not noticed until afterwards that his question was addressed to this department. I think the hon. member will agree that after someone from the department spoke to him it was decided that we should give an answer, but then he had to go to his riding. Only since that time have we had an opportunity to consider this matter. The hon. member may consider himself very lucky in that he has raised this subject four times. That is quite a record.

I hope to make amends by convincing the hon. member and the house of the wisdom of the government's decision not to renew the municipal winter works program in 1968-69. The program was becoming less and less effective and inevitably inefficient, and even abuses, were cropping up. The many examples of abuse quoted by both provincial and federal auditors are well known to the public. During the last few years, attempts were made to salvage the program as an effective economic tool. The last attempt was made in the fall of 1967 at the federal-provincial meeting of the ministers concerned. The provinces were invited to suggest viable alternatives but none came forward.

It also became quite evident that municipalities had fewer useful projects to propose for federal assistance under the program. If the hon. member has any doubts about this trend, I would remind him that last winter, 1967-68, only 6,532 workers were hired for winter works in the hon. member's own province of British Columbia. This was almost exactly half the 12,944 workers so employed in 1963-64.

The hon. member referred to his home municipality, the district of Coquitlam. Our records indicate that in 1964-65, approved winter works projects resulted in 590 additional jobs. Last winter, that is in 1967-68, the comparable figure was 170 jobs. For the city of Port Coquitlam, the corresponding figures were 189 in 1964-65, and 23 in 1967-68. It is quite clear, therefore, that the municipal winter works incentive program was no longer as effective as it might be.

When the municipal winter works program was introduced in 1958, there was no other national program of any significance designed to cope with seasonal unemployment. In that year, the federal government subsidized the training of only 3,500 unemployed persons, with a total expenditure of half a million

[Mr. Loiselle.]

dollars. Since that time, the retraining of adult members of the labour force has become a major economic tool of the federal government. In the current fiscal year, the federal government will finance the training and retraining of some 300,000 adult workers, the great majority of them during the winter months, with a cost to the federal treasury of \$200 million.

In the winter or 1967-68 the federal government spent some \$25 million on the municipal winter works program. This amount is not forthcoming to the provinces and municipalities during the current winter. But in its place, the federal government is spending \$50 million more on training of adult workers, a substantial proportion of them being unemployed in the winter months.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the parliamentary secretary but the time allotted to him has expired.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT—EFFECT OF
INCREASED RATES ON PRINTING
INDUSTRY

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, my question was based on the submission by the Graphic Arts Industries Association, an organization representing 525 producing companies. This is the most serious analysis of some of the damaging fallout from the Postmaster General's (Mr. Keirans) actions and decisions. It is also a warning, and a cry for help. It sets out a painful litany of the economic and social damage consequent upon the stiff hikes in postal rates and the processes of reclassification. This is a statement from people in the industry, people who should know.

For a long time, the minister told us how happy the letter carriers were with the new sorting procedures. Even when their spokesmen were proclaiming publicly that they were not satisfied, we were told that the measures really were popular. It appears now that the minister knows that not all is rosy in the garden. We have been told for a long time how slight the effects on publications will be. The minister told us this. But those in the publishing business have an entirely different story. Again I say, perhaps they might know. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) is interested in the encouragement of industrial growth and the preservation of existing industry. What will happen to all sorts of allied industries, from pulp to machine parts, if there is a decline in the