

Oral Questions

may get some benefit from the hundreds of millions of dollars spent on the Canadian Manpower Centres?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would dispute the figure of 11 per cent noted by the hon. member. Off the top of my head, Mr. Speaker, I believe about 30 per cent go through Canada Manpower. That is not to say that, as the minister responsible, I am satisfied with the performance. In fact, we are now moving into what I consider a breakthrough by establishing, based on the pilot project in Ottawa-Hull and the pilot project in Hamilton, the results of which are very encouraging, job information centres across the country which I think will give the country a far more effective program. I share the hon. member's view that there is still much to be done.

● (1440)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member for Richmond wish to ask a supplementary?

Mr. Beaudoin: No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I shall recognize the hon. member in a moment after having heard a few other supplementaries on this subject.

[*English*]

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE INCREASE—GOVERNMENT INTENTION RESPECTING INTRODUCTION OF PRODUCTION INCENTIVES

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance. As neither inflation nor unemployment will be improved until national production is materially increased, is it the intention of the government to introduce in the near future production incentives aimed at inducing the additional production that is necessary and, if so, when may we expect to have these production incentives introduced?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I read with great interest the hon. gentleman's speech that he made on the west coast.

Mr. Nielsen: You might learn something.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I always learn something from the hon. member. I would like to remind him that as a result of the corporate tax measures passed by the House investment intentions by business in equipment, materials and plant has risen 19 per cent over last year, which indicates a tremendous increase in productive capacity.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, as the minister obviously did not make any attempt to answer my question I might ask him this: is it the intention of the government to require the country to put up with the same policies the government has introduced in the past, which have landed the country in the horrible economic mess it is in today?

[*Mr. Lewis.*]

Mr. Speaker: Order. A question asked in those terms is irregular. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Richmond and then return to the hon. member for St. John's East and others who have supplementaries on this subject.

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[*Translation*]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

QUEBEC—NEGOTIATION OF NEW PLAN TO REPLACE DESIGNATED AREAS

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, but in his absence I should like to get an answer, if possible, from the Minister of Finance.

I have already asked the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion if he thought that the Sherbrooke area should be considered a designated area. He replied that there would no longer be designated areas in the future and that, with his counterpart or the Minister of Finance in Quebec, he was thinking of developing a new format. I would like to know if this format has been developed and when it will be announced to replace the special zones.

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I understand that there is a certain excitement concerning the designation of Sherbrooke as a special area. Under the circumstances, it seems that everybody is talking about it in the Sherbrooke area. I merely wish to say to the hon. member that the definition of special areas will be an issue greatly discussed in the future between the federal government and the various provincial governments. If an answer was to be given in the near future, it would come from the provincial government following some consultation with the federal government.

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[*English*]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

EMPLOYMENT—POSITION OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND COMPARED WITH 1972

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. If the employment situation in Canada has improved to the extent that the Minister of Finance claims, may I ask the Minister of Manpower and Immigration if he can explain to the House why the unemployment insurance fund is worse off now than it was in 1972?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I will be making a statement on this in more detail at a later time, but I would point out to the hon. member that there are many forces at work which are involved in that situation, not the least of which is the maturation of the maternity benefits and the special benefits, the fact that the act itself calls for an increase in the eligible income, and the fact that the average weekly