

*Oral Questions***BUY CANADIAN**

Hon. Alan Redway (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, if we are as concerned about plant closings and manufacturing job losses as we say we are, why don't we buy Canadian?

In 1980, 73 per cent of the manufactured goods purchased in Canada were made in Canada. Today it is down to only 56 per cent and falling.

The Hudson's Bay Company says it wants to import more U.S. goods to compete with cross-border shopping on price and selection. If Canadian distributors do not market Canadian products and if Canadian retailers do not carry Canadian goods, Canadian consumers do not even have the option to buy the fewer and fewer products that we do manufacture. Sure, price and selection are important, but if we do not have jobs we cannot afford to buy no matter what the price and selection may be.

Fortunately Eaton's has announced a buy Canadian promotion campaign. Will the government join it?

announcement today to put thousands of Canadians back to work?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the House yesterday, that issue is under active consideration.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the minister spent his time during the Christmas vacation, but I do know that there are 1.5 million unemployed Canadians, including some who just lost their jobs in Sarnia, and that 700,000 children depend on food banks. We need a program to rebuild this country. The Liberal program for public works will help rebuild roads, clean up the environment and give industry work to do. Is the Minister of Finance prepared to adopt the five-point Liberal plan and put Canada back to work?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member asks what I was doing over the Christmas recess.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

• (1420)

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, in a new spirit of co-operation I would like to thank the minister responsible for housing for doing his part in implementing the Chrétien plan to get this country working again.

My question, however, is for the Minister of Finance because I would like to know whether other ministers are prepared to put partisan politics aside and do their part to put Canadians back to work. Will the Minister of Finance allow the use of RRSPs to finance first home purchases?

We know the minister is looking at the plan. We are even willing to let the minister take credit for this plan if he will just put Canadians back to work. Why is he stalling on adopting this idea? Why doesn't he make the

I was working with my colleague, the Minister for International Trade, putting together a deal that helped bail out de Havilland and put it back on a viable sound financial basis. I was working with my colleague, the Minister of Communications, on a book publishing program. I was working on reform of the equalization program for the provinces which particularly helped the poorer provinces, and I was working on a number of other initiatives that we are announcing on an ongoing basis.

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I asked whether the minister had a chance during his busy schedule to meet with a million and a half Canadians who are looking for work.

The government has found emergency money for massive polling programs and massive advertising programs. Doesn't the Minister of Finance think it would be a lot smarter to get manufacturing and construction back on track with a national public works program rather than sit there while unemployment increases and food banks multiply?