

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: The hon. member is obviously correct in suggesting that various other areas of action could be envisaged. I am reminded by the Minister of Supply and Services that there are two specific operations of access for businessmen in those regions of Canada so that they can make greater use of the budgetary requirements of the Department of Supply and Services; in other words, they can sell a much higher proportion of goods and services to the federal government.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN ATLANTIC REGION—MEASURES TO
INCREASE PRODUCTION IN REGION

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): I wonder if the Prime Minister can indicate whether either he or perhaps the Minister of Supply and Services has responded to the recent declaration by the Atlantic provinces chamber of commerce at their annual meeting in Charlottetown last month with respect to a major program to achieve more production in Atlantic Canada, both related to the private sector and the public sector, and whether or not the federal government will give significant assistance to this commendable initiative?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I do know that the Minister of Supply and Services was meeting a couple of weeks ago in Halifax with boards of trade and chambers of commerce. If the hon. member wants more details of the results of that meeting he might either ask a question or contact the Minister of Supply and Services.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

MEASURES TO AID INDUSTRIES IN ATLANTIC REGION

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. In line with the figures referred to for Atlantic Canada by the hon. member for Egmont, and in view of the fact that Newfoundland has a rate of unemployment of 15.7 per cent, and more probably of over 22 per cent, and in view of the fact that one of the main industries in the Atlantic region, particularly in Newfoundland, is the pulp and paper industry which is suffering from marketing and cost production problems, what action is the minister taking to pinpoint these particular industries to help them in rehabilitating their operations, and to avoid lay-offs which are occurring causing suffering to the employees in Atlantic Canada?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Lessard (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, we have done all we could to help those industries. Surely the trend on the international market is largely responsible for the rather weak economic situation of the pulp and paper industry in particular. Of course, our department is limited in its means of action, but we give those industries the maximum technical and scientific assistance; we are also working with the province to conclude other agree-

[Mr. MacDonald (Egmont).]

ments in other areas in which we can take direct action in conjunction with the province to give a new impetus to its economy and create new jobs. We are now negotiating with the province in two or three areas where we might help and I hope that in the next few weeks we will be able to announce the outcome of our negotiations.

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[*English*]

MANPOWER

GOVERNMENT ACTION TO AVOID LAY-OFFS IN INDUSTRY

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the fact that figures for June show the lay-offs of 6,000 employees in various industries across Canada—the minister referred some time ago to using the emergency response factor in the Canada Works program—what action is the minister taking now in view of the figures released by his own department in order to prevent the lay-offs and to provide alternative employment?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, at the initiative, for example, of the government of New Brunswick, we did in fact provide some \$600,000 in that region as an emergency response. Where initiatives are taken or representations are made, we look at them to see if the emergency response factor is applicable to that situation.

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[*Translation*]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

MEASURES TO CURB UNEMPLOYMENT IN QUEBEC

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question to the right hon. Prime Minister. Given the fact that the economic measures put forward by his government did not produce the anticipated results and are largely responsible for the high level of unemployment in this country, would not the Prime Minister believe that this situation has a close relationship with increasing unrest between Quebec and the federal government? If so, would he have new proposals or programs for the province of Quebec he could announce today?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the answers which I have given a few moments ago apply also to the province of Quebec regarding, for instance, the lower taxes in the case of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion as well as the Department of Manpower and Immigration programs and the budgetary measures announced by the Minister of Finance.

I do not see why the hon. member should think that the province of Quebec deserves to be treated differently. Would it be because its government has generated uncertainty among