

statement because it would perhaps have misled the House a little since it is very difficult to give an exact figure, but that will involve several million dollars.

With regard to direct employment programs, hon. members will remember that the budget speech mentioned \$25 million for financing labour intensive federal works for the next two years. This has already been adopted within the framework of measures to fight unemployment. As was the case previously, these programs are also under my department's jurisdiction.

We propose to ask departments to provide us with details on works that should be done in the fields most seriously affected by unemployment. They will be asked to submit projects that may be started quickly, that agree with the program's objectives and that require almost no investment so as to ensure that the funds available produce the maximum number of direct jobs.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. minister, but his time has run out.

[English]

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Does the House consent unanimously to the minister's finishing his remarks?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Chrétien: Madam Speaker, I thank hon. members for their courtesy. I should like to deal briefly with the matter of collective bargaining in the public service. It is almost a year now since I became President of the Treasury Board. In that time I believe I have established a very healthy working relationship with many of the public service union leaders. They are hard and tough bargainers but they are reasonable people; they understand that inflation hurts their membership as much as anyone else. I know that they are prepared to co-operate with the government in its policy of restraint.

I can assure them that all sectors of the economy will have to bear the burdens of the fight against inflation. It is not the policy of the government to fight inflation on the backs of public servants; that is why the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) reiterated the long-standing government policy of paying salaries comparable to those paid for similar work outside the federal public service. The policy of comparability ensures that workers inside and outside the public service are treated equally and bear equal burdens.

There are differences between union and management each time a contract is negotiated; but with reasonable people on both sides of the bargaining table, these differences are almost always resolved without resort to a strike. Indeed, since collective bargaining was introduced in the public service in 1967 there have been nine legal strikes. Three hundred and twenty-five collective agreements have been signed without strikes. Man-days lost through strikes in the federal public service, both legal and illegal, have been 0.238 per cent of estimated work time. Man-days lost through strikes outside the federal public service have been 0.35 per cent of total estimated

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work time. Our record in this respect is 50 per cent better than that for the work force as a whole. This is a good record; it is testimony to an attitude of reasonableness on both sides of the bargaining table. I am confident that we can maintain this record even in difficult economic times.

Sometimes a strike is the outcome of honest disagreements which cannot be reconciled. In these circumstances, I want to be clear that the government will accept a strike rather than settle in a manner that is irresponsible. I hope the Canadian people will be prepared to accept the resulting inconveniences. More often a strike represents a breakdown in communications between union and management. In the interests of ensuring close communications, I have been meeting frequently with union leaders in the public service. The purpose of the meetings has been to establish on both sides a better understanding of our problems so as to identify and eliminate situations which can lead to confrontation. I can assure the House that both the unions and Treasury Board are doing everything possible to avoid situations which cause what are, really, unnecessary strikes. In the times ahead I intend to be very firm, but reasonable, at the negotiating table. I have every reason to expect the same from the other side of the table.

● (1610)

These cuts will be criticized as being unnecessarily harsh. They will be criticized by those who usually say that government spends too much. Madam Speaker, we have decided that restraint is necessary. In order to exercise restraint we had to cut back on planned expenditures. Our critics say we should cut back somewhere else. "Somewhere else" is not good enough. I had to cut somewhere, and I did. I hope this information will be satisfactory to the House. In order to make it even more specific, I should like, with permission of the House, to table two tables, one in French and one in English, naming every department affected, together with the amounts of money they have been instructed to cut, set out under various headings: capital, grants and contributions, and non-budgetary expenditures.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I believe the minister merely asked to have these documents tabled. Would he also ask that the documents be made an appendix to *Hansard*, so that all of us can see them?

Mr. Chrétien: I have no objection. I should like the documents to be made as public as possible, and I will ask Information Canada to assist in this objective.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[Editor's Note: For tables referred to above, see Appendix "A"]

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, following the revelation by the President