

to see last year's experiment, in other words to see the new technique as well as the old so that they can compare the two sets of figures because they were carried out over all of the past 12 months, then that can be arranged at very short notice by Statistics Canada through reference to my office.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

UNEMPLOYMENT—MEASURES TO DEAL WITH WIDENING DISPARITY BETWEEN ATLANTIC REGION AND OTHER PROVINCES

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, normally my question would be for either the Prime Minister or perhaps the Minister of Finance. It relates to the same labour force statistics released today. I am sure the minister is well aware that in 1975 these figures showed that while the number of people employed increased by roughly 3½ per cent in both Atlantic Canada and Ontario the number of unemployed dropped 6 per cent in Ontario and rose by 9 per cent in the Atlantic region. Since this would indicate a further widening of the disparity between the Atlantic provinces and Ontario, and since there has been no announcement in recent months by the Prime Minister or the Minister of Finance of effective programs to deal with this regional disparity, I should like to ask the minister if he has taken into account the new figures and whether he would indicate what steps are to be taken by the government.

● (1430)

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would have to say that we do acknowledge there has been a shift in regional employment. I suppose a recent decision with a negative import perhaps is that we have decided not to take the suggestion of the treasury of Ontario that DREE might be cancelled.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): I am a little surprised that the minister should deal in this frivolous way with this very serious matter inasmuch as his government has in effect, frozen or continued to reduce the profile and effectiveness of DREE.

Perhaps I could ask either the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion or the Minister of Finance, specifically with respect to the Atlantic economy where employment in the manufacturing sector has increased by 7 per cent but in the primary sector decreased by 18 per cent, in view of this further weakening of the primary sector in the Atlantic provinces and with respect to the recent changes announced by the Minister of Fisheries—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Oral Questions

INDIAN AFFAIRS

GOVERNMENT ACTION IN CONNECTION WITH BOOK ENTITLED "BENDED ELBOW"—REQUEST FOR REPORT

Mr. Wally Firth (Northwest Territories): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is not in the House, may I direct a question to his parliamentary secretary? Last spring I asked the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development about a piece of hate literature called "Bended Elbow". I wanted to know if his department had considered laying charges under the existing hate literature legislation. He said his department was "looking into the matter to see what action should be taken". Last week the same book turned up in the mail box of one of my colleagues. What action, if any, is being taken in this regard?

Mrs. Iona Campagnolo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I regret that I do not have that latest item here for the hon. member for the Northwest Territories, but the minister will be in the House on Thursday when, I am sure, he will be pleased to respond.

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HEALTH

REQUEST THAT EXPORT OF BLOOD BE CONTROLLED—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to follow up a question put by me last week to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the fact that Connlab sold blood abroad through export order at a time when Canada had a shortage of blood, can the minister assure the House and the Canadian people that before any future export orders are issued they will come before the Department of National Health and Welfare for discussion so that the Canadian people can be assured that when they donate blood it will be used by the proper agencies?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise the hon. member that at the end of last year regulations were enacted under the Export and Import Permits Act to control the export of blood. This particular act comes under the jurisdiction of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce. These regulations are currently in effect and are designed to ensure a supply of blood in this country.

With regard to the safety of blood to be exported, this would be a matter coming under the Food and Drugs Act. We are presently examining whether there is any possibility of enacting regulations under that act to ensure that blood which is exported from this country meets the same standard of safety that is applied in Canada. But this is another related matter.

Mr. Rynard: I think the minister is referring to the plasmapheresis centres that are across Canada. Can he assure the House that where these centres are established across Canada proper tests will be made to ensure that this