

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**ASSISTANCE TO BANGLA DESH—RESUMPTION OF AID TO PAKISTAN**

Mr. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Since the government recognized the state of Bangla Desh during the parliamentary recess, would the Minister state whether the government intends to provide assistance to this new state to help them with their severe economic problems; and would the minister also state whether the government intends to renew economic assistance programs for Pakistan?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the answer to both questions is yes. We have tentatively set aside a sum of money for Bangla Desh that would otherwise have been available to the whole of Pakistan in order to assist in the reconstruction effort being made. We are now in the process of once more discussing with Pakistan the new projects that we would otherwise have been discussing with them had it not been for the war.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**DELAY IN PAYMENT OF BENEFITS—SUGGESTED REOPENING OF LOCAL OFFICES**

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Is it the intention of the government to reopen unemployment insurance offices in small and medium-sized industrial cities in Ontario and elsewhere which were closed about two years ago?

Mr. Ray Perrault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, a number of new offices have been opened depending on the need that exists in various parts of the country. As well, phone service has been very much increased in order to expedite telephone inquiries. If the hon. member has some specific suggestions along this line, I hope he will make them available to the department where they will be given due consideration.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION**REDUCTION OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ESTIMATE AND ACTUAL JOBS CREATED**

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. What steps or procedures does he intend to adopt to reduce the difference between the estimated number of jobs created under the Regional Development Incentives Act and the actual number of jobs created which, as he knows, now stands at an unacceptable 25 per cent?

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, there is no evidence of a difference such as the hon. member mentions practically everywhere without foundation and when the plants are completed and jobs are created the number projected will probably turn out to be precisely the number achieved.

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[English]

FAMILY INCOME SECURITY**PROGRESS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH QUEBEC—EARLY INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION—MEETING OF MAY 1 DEADLINE**

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the fact that the government has announced as a priority item the family income security plan legislation, the former Bill C-264, and in view of the fact that in this House on Friday it was said there are still ongoing discussions being had with the province of Quebec, when will the minister announce to the House what progress has been made, why did he not introduce the bill today, and what is his plan to meet the May 1 deadline for the increase in benefits?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the fact that discussions with Quebec and other provinces are going on and will continue to go on should not prejudice the introduction of the bill. Changes can be made in the bill, as the hon. member knows, after it is introduced. Certainly the intention of the government at the first convenient opportunity is to bring this bill forward.

• (1230)

Mr. Marshall: Mr. Speaker, would the minister answer the question concerning whether the government expects to meet the May 1 deadline for increases in the benefits as announced in the bill?

Mr. Munro: Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated to the hon. member during the last session that the mere fact that the bill had been delayed until this session made it impossible to meet the May 1 deadline in terms of payments to people.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION**CLOSING OF PULP MILL, TEMISCAMINGUE, QUE.—SUGGESTED MEETING BY MINISTER WITH COMMUNITY, LABOUR AND MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. Because of the anticipated closing of the pulp mill in the company town of Temiscamingue, where all the people are entirely dependent on this one industry for survival, will the minister agree to a meeting with representatives of the community of Temiscamingue, Quebec, and labour and management representatives to explore