

STORAGE OF NUCLEAR WASTES

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, a Conservative promise to have such an inquiry was made before Chernobyl and therefore could be lived up to before the results of any investigation into that accident are forthcoming.

Does the Minister consider the recent statements by AECL with respect to its offer to store wastes, from mini-reactors that it wants to market, at Pinawa in Manitoba to be a violation of the promise she made to Manitoba that radioactive wastes would not be stored in Manitoba?

• (1440)

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows, that question is hypothetical. It is provided that before any sites are selected in Canada, there will be full public hearing processes. No nuclear waste will be stored in the facility that he discusses.

Mr. Blaikie: Why did they make the offer?

Miss Carney: He is yelling across the floor with his usual grace asking why they made the offer. May I point out that no offer was made.

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CAPE BRETON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

ANNOUNCEMENT OF LAY-OFFS

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister in the absence of the Acting Minister of Regional Economic Development and concerns the Cape Breton Development Corporation. In January, 1985, there were 4,000 employees but today there are 2,800 and the union has been notified that next March 479 additional employees will be terminated. In the absence of the Prime Minister I would ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he believes this to be fair in view of the unprecedented high unemployment rate that has besieged Cape Breton Island.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. gentleman knows, there have been 1,000 new jobs in that area due to the formation of the Atlantic Enterprise Program by the Government. As a matter of fact, in my observation from sitting in this House, more has been done in the last 20 months, for that area of the country, than in the entire time I have been here.

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, the situation is so serious that one could conclude

that the Deputy Prime Minister is either intentionally misleading the House or—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member knows he must withdraw that and just put his question.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that but I remind the Deputy Prime Minister that the facts do not say—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member knows he should just put a question.

Mr. Dingwall: Will the Deputy Prime Minister give a directive to the Cape Breton Development Corporation pursuant to Section 99 of the Financial Administration Act to ensure that those workers are not terminated next March in view of the fact that Government policies have seen the unemployment rate increase from 15 per cent in 1984 to a high of 26.8 per cent now?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate, particularly in Atlantic Canada and specifically in that region, is at a level that does not make any of us happy and makes all of us strive to improve it. We believe that our record in improvement in Atlantic Canada is a heck of a lot better than that displayed by the Government the Hon. Member supported when it was in office. We will continue to seek that kind of improvement and job-creation activity that will ensure a secure future for the people of Nova Scotia and specifically that region.

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TRADE

IMPOSITION OF TARIFF ON IMPORTED BOOKS—REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance who will be aware by now that many Canadians, including readers and not just book store owners, are very unhappy with the Government's decision to impose a tariff on periodicals and books. On reflection, will the Minister agree to withdraw a tariff that Canadians are beginning to consider a tax on reading?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let me repeat what I said on Monday afternoon. I took no pleasure in announcing the actions the Government would take in response to the U.S. shakes and shingles action. This is something that, as I said, was a necessary response to indicate quite clearly to the Americans that we did not agree at all with what they had done. It is very important that we make that response in order to avoid having that sort of thing happen again in the future.