

Oral Questions

Mr. Crosbie: Our position is that we are totally opposed to martial law in Poland.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Crosbie: We think this government should represent Canadians and condemn it, and not approve it as the Prime Minister did.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: The hon. member is going beyond what is permissible during a question. I cannot be any more lenient with him if he does not put his question in five words, and not more.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Will the Prime Minister now condemn the imposition of martial law and send a stern diplomatic note to the U.S.S.R. and to Poland opposing any continuation of martial law?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: Let's have a five-word answer.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I think it is clear that the hon. member's position is indefensible, even from the point of view of the Polish people. I quote him. The hon. member for St. John's West said that in his opinion what was happening in Poland was the worst scenario. I do not believe that. I believe the worst scenario would have been for the Soviet army with its tanks to have marched into Poland and crushed the Polish people. That, I think, would have been worse.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**FUTURE OF INCENTIVE PROGRAMS**

Hon. J. Robert Howie (York-Sunbury): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Now that the Prime Minister has announced the intended dismantling of DREE so there will no longer be a department of government concerned solely with regional economic development in Canada, will the minister tell the House whether, under his new department, the regional development incentives, formerly administered by DREE, will be available all across Canada, or will they be restricted to certain geographic areas?

● (1440)

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):

Madam Speaker, what is happening is not in any way a downgrading or downplaying of the efforts and focus of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. At the present time, and until there is appropriate legislation, the department continues to offer its help and incentive in specific areas across Canada.

I anticipate that once the activities of DREE and the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce are integrated there will not be any lesser focus on the regional imperatives followed by DREE. If anything, there will be an enhancement of that in the interest of those areas and therefore of the entire country.

PAYMENT OF INCENTIVE GRANTS

Hon. J. Robert Howie (York-Sunbury): Madam Speaker, it is difficult to see how the enhancement will take place when the Prime Minister announces that there will be no more money. Is it the intention of the minister to pay development incentive grants to Canadian-owned firms only?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, FIRA will follow the law in this regard to offer grants to those who will offer net economic benefits to the less advantaged regions of the country. That is the purpose, to enhance economic activity and permanent job creation in less advantaged areas of our country. This is what we are doing now and will continue doing, and our intention is to do it in a more effective and focused manner than before.

* * *

MANPOWER**FORECASTED SHORTAGE OF SKILLED WORKERS IN ONTARIO**

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton-Lawrence): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The minister is probably aware of a report from the Ontario government, the Manpower Commission, which forecast that Ontario faces a shortage of between 38,000 and 48,000 highly skilled workers in the next five years. Could the minister indicate what our government is prepared to do to prevent this provincial forecast and overcome this critical shortage?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the report that was prepared for the Ontario Manpower Commission simply enforces findings that were put forth by the parliamentary task force that was chaired by our colleague, the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East. It simply indicates to us that it is a major priority, and in response to that task force and other representations we put forward in the first week of January a proposal for a new national training program which would shift the priority of federal support into those areas where the skill shortages are greatest. At the same time, the proposal is to