

NATIVE PEOPLES

NECESSITY FOR SKILLS TRAINING

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The native peoples, as the Minister well knows, experience the highest rate of unemployment of any group in Canada. They need skills training, and they need jobs. The Task Force on Employment Opportunities for the '80s dealt very specifically with this problem. As a matter of fact it made 11 recommendations in this area.

First, is the Minister aware of the specific recommendations made by the Task Force? If so, which recommendations does he support? Finally, has he had discussions with his colleague, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, with regard to the implementation of any of the recommendations contained in the report?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, may I take this opportunity to congratulate the Hon. Member on his appointment as the critic for the Department for which I am responsible. I wish him all the best.

I would say that there has been a great deal done by the Government in collaboration with the Minister responsible for employment and immigration. For one thing, several millions of dollars were set aside and fenced off out of a recent NEED Program to create employment opportunities for the Indian people, and they took full advantage of that, by a marked stimulation, for instance, in the employment generation through the housing area.

As well, in his budget a few months ago, the Minister of Finance indicated an additional \$40 million added to the NEED moneys, which then totalled over \$60 million in new moneys this year for housing over and above the amount that was already there, \$80 million, which almost doubled the entire moneys spent on Indian housing within one year. That created a tremendous number of jobs within the Indian community, as well as addressing one of the most serious social problems facing the Indian people, that being housing which is not adequate in terms of isolated areas where water, sewers and infrastructure and things of that kind are required.

In addition, we now of course have a Minister responsible for the Economic Development Fund, with offices set up in Winnipeg, and now already beginning to consider loans under the Economic Development Fund. Applications from the natives will be coming in very shortly and, I think, decisions made.

Therefore, when one combines all these initiatives with many of the other policies that the Indian people cannot—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I could have gone on forever, John.

Oral Questions

Madam Speaker: Ministers will have to make an effort to be more brief. These answers are really too long.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Madam Speaker, I appreciate getting my briefing on the floor of the House of Commons. The Minister recited, chapter and verse, what he is doing. He did not answer the question. I asked if he was specifically aware of the recommendations of the Task Force on Employment Opportunities for the '80s. None of the subjects which he discussed here on the floor of the House were referred to in this particular report. Specifically, I am asking what recommendations from this report with regard to skills training and the education of the native peoples he has come to grips with.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, I think the Hon. Member would agree that the essence of all those recommendations involves the tremendous emphasis which must now be placed on skills training for native peoples so that they can participate on an equal footing with the rest of Canadians in job opportunities as they open up. I have just enumerated some of the policies that we are now adopting. I could refer to others, in the sense of grant moneys for retraining slots in close proximity to hydro-carbon development. In the Territories we are expending \$20 million in training for natives. All is in keeping with the spirit and essence of all those recommendations to which the Hon. Member has referred. I am prepared to go through each one and send him a progress report.

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● (1440)

[Translation]

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REQUEST FOR INCLUSION OF AMENDING LEGISLATION IN FORTHCOMING SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Mr. Robert Gourd (Argenteuil-Papineau): Madam Speaker, I would like to take advantage of the presence in the House of a group of Swedish parliamentarians, members of the Committee on Culture, to direct my question to the Minister of Communications.

The Minister is well aware of my abiding interest in copyright matters, and I would like to ask the Minister whether the legislation to revise the Copyright Act will soon be tabled in Parliament, and whether, by any chance, Canadian artists can expect to see this new legislation in the next Speech from the Throne?

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, as you did yourself, the Hon. Member mentioned the presence in the House of the Parliamentary Committee on