

Oral Questions

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): That is not an answer, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND—AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURES

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):

Let me put another question to the Prime Minister because he has been listening to the Minister of Employment and Immigration just as I have. I am sure he has been listening carefully.

The Minister said that the overall amount in the Unemployment Insurance Fund remains the same. She also said in the House that women will now receive more money. She said that men will receive more money. She said that younger workers will receive more money. She said that older workers will receive more money. She said that visible minorities will receive more money, and urban centres will receive more money, and rural communities will receive more money. She said all of that in the House of Commons.

• (1420)

I want to ask the Prime Minister, if the amount of money remains the same, as his Minister insists, and all those people listed in the House receive more money, who is going to get less?

Would the Prime Minister ask his Minister to produce the document so we could have a balance sheet of who gets more and who gets less?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Mr. Speaker, the people in the regions that I represent will get more: more programs and more training. The reform we announced last week is designed for the labour force and was introduced in response to the various committees that came to see us and deplored the fact that the Unemployment Insurance Program was too passive. We have made it an active program, and the Canadian worker will be the winner in this process. We must put a higher value on work and that is what we are doing.

REQUEST THAT FINANCIAL DATA BE TABLED

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): At the personal level, Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for the Minister, but in the absence of her colleague, the Minister of Employment and Immigra-

tion, and especially because the Prime Minister refuses to answer my question, I will put a question to the Minister.

The policy followed by her colleague, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, seems to be the following: Every time there is a provincial election, she says that that particular province is going to receive more money. When there is no election, as in Québec at the present time, the Minister does not know how much money the province is going to get. My question to the Minister is therefore this: If her colleague is able to give me erroneous figures for Newfoundland, would she give me some figures for Québec? Who will end the suspense? Will she give us the documents today that will tell us who is going to get more and who is going to get less? Can she produce a document here in the House to clarify the situation?

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to set the record straight. Last week we announced our Government's policy. I would also like to say that elections will be held in Québec, perhaps very shortly. The reform we announced is part of an ongoing consultation process with the provinces, something we did not see very often before 1984. When it is time to disclose the figures, we will announce them, as is customary, before the legislative committee.

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[*English*]

TRANSPORT

ATLANTIC FREIGHT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Industry has developed in the Atlantic region over many years with the help of the Atlantic Freight Assistance Program. It is absolutely essential for the manufacturers and the producers in Atlantic Canada. In my Province of Prince Edward Island hundreds of jobs depend on this program.

Can the Minister assure the House that this program will not only be maintained but improved upon even after April 27?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, indeed I cannot give that assurance, in the same manner that I could not give any assurance this week to the colleague of the Hon. Member.