

Oral Questions

NDP last year. They were recommending us to do as the French Government has done. Last month unemployment in France went up rather than going down.

In regard to the specific point raised by my hon. friend concerning the Bank of Montreal, I raised this matter with the President of the Bank of Montreal at the time they were entering this purchase of an American bank. I was assured that the funds used for this purpose came out of money they had earned in the United States and they would not use any revenues coming out of their Canadian operations for that purpose.

An Hon. Member: And you believed him.

Mr. Lalonde: These were funds that had been earned in the United States and were used to make a purchase in the United States.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS**YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I would like to quote to him from a speech that the Prime Minister made in January, 1980, at the University of New Brunswick. The Prime Minister said:

As we enter the 1980s, we have to remind ourselves that there is no greater challenge facing this country than that fundamental requirement of creating jobs, especially for Canada's young people.

When the Government returned to office there were 312,000 more young people with jobs than there are today. How does the Government account for this complete failure?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the Prime Minister's comments as quoted. I disagree with the hon. gentleman that there has been a failure in this regard. While I do not take much heart from it, the fact is that in the last month youth unemployment declined rather than increased.

At the time of the Speech from the Throne the Government announced a variety of measures, including the addition of well over a quarter of a billion dollars of new funding directed to providing increased job opportunities and enhancing training opportunities for young people. There are a variety of other steps the Government has taken, notably the appointment of my colleague, the Minister for Youth. In a variety of ways the federal Government is focusing on and tackling the problem of youth unemployment. We have established a youth opportunity fund of well over \$1 billion to be focused on these efforts. At the present time the Government of Canada is spending roughly \$2.5 million a day to assist young people who face problems in obtaining employment in our society.

TAX CREDITS URGED FOR EMPLOYERS

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same Minister. There are 370,000 fewer young people employed in Canada today. That is a failure by anybody's measure. Many of those jobs were lost in Ontario. Will the Government give consideration to a greater emphasis on employment programs which will lower the cost to employers who hire young people rather than these grandiose schemes? Will the Government put greater emphasis on plans for employers who will hire young people through tax credits, and thus get at the real source of the problem in Canada today?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has just displayed his rather tenuous knowledge of what in fact is being done. We instituted the Career Access Program last September. At the time of the Speech from the Throne we doubled the funding for that. There are hundreds of millions of dollars which are flowing into exactly that kind of program. I can tell the Hon. Member that it is working.

The Hon. Member suggests that we should look at tax deductions to achieve that purpose. We have looked at that, and I have explained several times to Members of the Opposition in the House that that is a less effective way of proceeding than the one we are following. It is less effective because it means that the benefit to the employer flows to him a year late when the tax return is done. A subsidy to the employer is much more stimulating, and this is exactly how the Career Access Program works. It contributes a subsidy of up to 50 per cent of the wage of a young person for up to six or 12 months. Since that flows directly and immediately into the employer's hands, it is much more successful in stimulating employment than the policy to which his opposition Party seems to be attached, which is that of encouraging businesses through the tax credit system. That is simply less effective than the procedure we are using at the present time.

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FISHERIES**FUTURE OF GEORGETOWN SEAFOODS PLANT IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and relates to jobs. At a time when the Minister of Finance is boasting about economic recovery across the country, the unemployment figures for the Atlantic Provinces are locked at 14.8 per cent. That is almost 4 per cent above the national average. Given the particular plight of the unemployed in Prince Edward Island, does the Minister have any specific plans to enable Georgetown Seafoods in Georgetown, P.E.I. to open in time for the new fish season in May, so that fishermen and fish processors can get back to work?