

Mr. Pierre Bussières (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and Minister of State for Science and Technology): The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, Eldorado Nuclear Limited, Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, Atomic Energy Control Board, National Energy Board and Uranium Canada Limited report as follows: No.

[English]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

MINISTRY OF STATE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ESTABLISHMENT OF DEPARTMENT

The House resumed from Thursday, December 14, consideration of the motion of Mr. Trudeau:

That the following address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To His Excellency the Right Honourable Jules Léger, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

May it please Your Excellency:

The House of Commons, having considered the proposed text of the order in council laid upon the table of the House on December 4, 1978, in relation to the establishment of a Ministry of State for Economic Development, prays that the making of the said order in council be approved.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Horner) has the floor. Before giving him the floor, I should like to indicate to the House that if this debate were to run its full seven-hour course, as has been prescribed by the statute under which we are debating this motion, according to the calculation of the Chair there remains one hour and eleven minutes.

Hon. Jack H. Horner (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, last evening when this proposed proclamation was being discussed, I listened extensively to the contributions of the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) and the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath). I was struck by the differences in the two contributions. The hon. member for St. John's East wanted me to pay greater attention to the economic advisers in the country, but the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain begged the House to give him one more chance to be a minister. Then he would tell those economic advisers, who advised him when he was a minister in the early 1960s where

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to get off. He wanted one more chance to straighten out the economic advisers. The hon. member for St. John's East wanted me to listen to some of the economic advisers, and he claimed that I was not listening. Some of them are perhaps right, but some are perhaps too negative for me.

● (1212)

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not wish to interrupt the hon. member, but he is referring to my colleague, the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie). East is east and west is west, and never the twain shall meet.

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for making that mistake. One is a serious minded Canadian and the other is a joker, and I should have had them straightened out as to which is east and which is west.

I should say that in looking at the economic reports one should study, the vice-chairman of the Conference Board in Canada, with which the Conservative party seems to have some ties, was quoted in the *Financial Post* of about two weeks ago as suggesting that the province of Alberta would have slower economic growth in the year 1979 than the rest of Canada. I do not know where that economist has been or where he learned his economic trade, but he should not expect me to accept that line of reasoning. I do not know whether I would call it balderdash, but it is certainly chock full of nonsense to my mind. The underlying strength of the economic growth in the province of Alberta will, I think, once again in 1979, if not lead the rest of the country, be very close to it.

Certainly the government is taking action when the Canadian economy is showing definite improvement. Members opposite do not like to hear this and complain from time to time when I make some remarks in this regard. They prefer gloomy news. I remember a year ago being accused of not utilizing capacity in the Canadian manufacturing industry. It was then at about 83 per cent and now it is up pretty close to 88 per cent, representing a substantial improvement in the Canadian manufacturing industry.

To me the Canadian economy is verging on the edge of a gigantic step forward. If anyone wants to consider the reasons, certainly the 85-cent dollar helps substantially; there is no question about that. We have greatly improved productivity in relation to our major trading nation, the United States. We still have problems with unemployment and inflation, but I think we have joined with the provinces in the first ministers' meetings to launch an attack on both these problems.

In looking at the question of unemployment, when I think of the number of jobs my department alone has created in the past year in every province of Canada one can readily see that we have made some tremendous steps forward.

Last evening I mentioned the aircraft industry and I should now mention the textile industry. Many people opposite, Sunday economists, believe we should get out of the textile industry completely. Actually the clothing apparel and fibres industry alone employs over 200,000 Canadians. In the city of