

my case. Therefore, I very much appreciate the remarks of the hon. member.

On the LEDA program, I agree fully. It is one of the most important things we are trying out. If it works, it has the opportunity to create long-term jobs where there are not jobs now. That is the real trick to it and that is what we are trying. We want to move away from short-term annual job creation to something which will allow communities that have not had much hope to be able to do it on their own. They can use government to assist them in their own job creations, working with small businessmen and non-profit organizations in their own areas. That is the basic formula behind the LEDA program.

At this point all we are able to do is to try 15 or so projects across Canada. That is all the money available under this year's estimates. I can state the initial success in take up. We have already received approximately 40 applications for these projects, and more will be coming in. Again it will be seen that this is a very tough job.

The criteria are not exactly as it was stated by the officials. In fact, decisions will be made—I hesitate to say this because there will be some pressure—by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion and myself. We will personally review each application to try to get a mixture of projects across Canada so that we have a variety of circumstances that we can judge. We will try to determine whether something can work in a small community as opposed to a downtown area of a city.

We will try to determine where the programs work most effectively. We want to try different kinds of cases and approaches to see how we can get a basis or formula for a more extensive program in the years ahead, if it works. If it proves to be successful, we will go forward with additional requests for more money. In the meantime, I hope the hon. member will continue to make speeches as he just did encouraging my colleagues to support us in adding further fuel to the fire.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, I would like to talk to the minister about the immigration offices at Douglas and Pacific Highway. I have already given him notice. I hope he got the note so that he will have the file ready and be able to talk about it.

I hope the minister is aware that that office, which is a border crossing point on the Pacific coast, is the busiest west of Toronto. I hope, too, he is aware that the traffic at Douglas has increased many, many times over the past five to ten years. I suspect he is aware that the man-hours allocated to those offices have not increased at all in spite of the incredible increase in traffic. In other words, though the traffic has increased five or ten times in the past ten years with people coming across the border, the customs officers, who are the first line of defence at the border point, have not had their man-hours increased. I doubt whether the staffing of the immigration office at Douglas has been increased in the past five to ten years.

I begin by asking the minister some statistical questions. First, how many entrants per year have there been in the past

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five years at Douglas or Pacific Highway, or a combination of the two if he would like to combine those two offices? How many applications for sponsorships, permanent residence, whatever the classification may be, are being processed per year at Douglas? Is the minister aware that at Douglas there is now a three-month waiting period for an interview at that point? Will the minister answer those questions for me?

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Chairman, I would very much like to give an immediate response to the hon. member. I will ask my officials to check on the conditions at the Douglas port of entry which he raised and report to him as soon as we can. At the present time we just do not have the specific figures that he requested on the table. We will get them for him as soon as possible.

Mr. Friesen: If the minister does not have the exact figures, is he aware that the increase in volume is phenomenal at that border point? Will he concede that point? He nods his head and admits that he does.

I come to the second point I would like to make. I hope the minister is aware that in 1977 the immigration officers at all border points were classified as PM-1s. At that time, officers at Dorval and Toronto were reclassified as PM-2s. Their salaries were increased retroactively to October, 1976, over one year. I concede to the minister that traffic increased at Toronto and Dorval. The minister has already agreed it increased at Pacific Highway and Douglas and Vancouver international airport. I ask a simple question. If the officers at Dorval and Toronto warranted a pay increase retroactive for over a year, why was not the same done for those doing the same kind of work at Douglas and Vancouver international airport?

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Chairman, I am very much aware of that condition. The last time I was in the British Columbia region, I spoke with the director general of the region about that problem. All I can say to the hon. member is that we are looking at it. We hope to be able to rectify it within a short time. It is now going through the machinery. We will try to correct it, but we first have to do an assessment of the volumes and make the calculations based upon the actual numbers and present that to Treasury Board.

Mr. Friesen: That really is not good enough. I do not know if the minister is aware that a month or six weeks ago an officer was shot at Douglas. They have regularly to deal with dangerous people at that point. The danger level there is just as high and possibly more than at airports. They face those issues—problems and volume. As I have already indicated, they are three months behind in interviews at Douglas.

The minister talks about putting this through the machinery. It is my understanding that a task force was appointed in July, 1980, to look into this and to review the duties of PM-1s. Their survey is to be completed in April, 1982. I wish to ask the minister whether it will be April, 1982 before the task force will have its report for him.