

*Oral Questions*

logue about electricity exports to the United States. What is of concern is that this is a back door technique taken by the government.

Would the minister explain to the House, and to those of us who understand the importance of the Candu system and recognize the failing high technology Canadian industry, what his nuclear policy is, or will he tell us why he is afraid to expose that for public review?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, at the first opportunity I would be happy to make the statement for which the hon. member is asking. As a matter of fact I appeared before the parliamentary committee a few weeks ago and there was not one question on the issue. I will find opportunities to give the hon. member any information he requires. Question period may be an appropriate opportunity to do so if he wishes to ask a specific question.

## INTEREST RATES APPLICABLE TO EXPORTS

**Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Bruce-Grey):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Finance. In the spring of 1981 he indicated in a public forum that he was not prepared to consider specifically lowering interest rates in deals for nuclear exports. In the past few months it has become very clear that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has encouraged and convinced him to reconsider that position. He is now offering a Mexican deal which could cost Canadian taxpayers \$300 million a year.

If the Minister of Finance was able to reconsider this and understand the need for support of that Mexican deal, why will he not recognize and reconsider the needs of 350,000 Canadian farmers, hundreds of thousands of Canadian home owners, and thousands of Canadian businessmen who are being crushed by the weight of his high interest rate policy?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, with regard to the particular business transaction to which the hon. member referred in his introduction, he should address that question to the Minister of Trade.

I would say to the hon. member that I did attempt in the budget to provide relief to farmers in financial difficulty through the Farm Credit Corporation. I attempted to provide relief to home owners who were in a very difficult situation as a result of high interest rates, and I attempted to provide relief to small-business men in financial difficulty through the Small Business Development Bond. These were serious efforts to meet the problem which the hon. member has mentioned.

Indeed, if I recall clearly, he was one of the members of the House of Commons who urged me some time ago to apply the Small Business Development Bond to farmers and unincorporated businesses. I took his representations to heart and included those provisions in the budget.

## EMPLOYMENT

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

**Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Petro-Canada is now trying to fill Canadian jobs with workers from England while at the same time 142,000 desperate young Canadians have been trying to find employment during this past year. When can we expect some detailed information, and I emphasize "detailed", about the new National Training Program?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, as I explained to the hon. member's colleague earlier, we have already put forward a very detailed set of proposals which were issued on January 6. We have had very extensive discussions and consultation with the provinces which deliver many of those programs through their training institutions, and with industry, as the hon. member knows.

We are now awaiting the response from the provinces so we can proceed with the introduction of a bill and the signing of new agreements under the training program.

We do have very clear guidelines for oil companies in Canada. They must give preference to Canadian workers when they are available, when they have the appropriate skills. We have been particularly stringent in ensuring that the major resource companies which are developing the big projects give that sort of preference. However, we cannot stand in the way of progress if we do not have the skills here. We must allow them to import workers from abroad. That is why we feel it is important to convince the provinces, and I would ask the hon. member to aid in that respect, to urge his provincial members to work with us in developing a revised training program so that we can ensure that young Canadians will have the necessary skills for existing jobs and so that we do not spend money on training for jobs which do not exist.

## ADULT OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

**Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River):** Madam Speaker, I have looked at the detailed information which has come from the minister's office. I have looked at the proposals which were sent to the provinces. There is not the detail necessary to determine how effective the program will be.

Information which I have received from Statistics Canada indicates that from 1971 to 1980 unemployment insurance benefits increased by almost 500 per cent. Over that same period adult occupational training programs decreased by 75 per cent. How does the minister justify that?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, I do not justify it because I do not believe that those statistics are correct. The fact is that we have been adding a substantial number of positions under the occupational training program. This year alone we will be spending close to \$860 million and training close to 300,000