

Oral Questions

We were told then that there were 844 projects that had already been approved. What are they? To what constituencies were they awarded? If the Minister is not trying to cover up something, will he table that list today?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly draw the Hon. Member's request to the attention of the Minister of Employment and Immigration when he returns to the House. But I would like to draw to her attention that, to my knowledge, she is one of those who got one of the very first projects approved under that particular program.

Some Hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Lalonde: I am told that the project had been recommended by the City of Kingston.

Some Hon. Members: Table the list.

Mr. Lalonde: I have said the Minister would table the list as soon as he is in a position to do so.

TREATMENT OF UNEMPLOYED

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, the Minister obviously does not know one program from another or he would not have made the statement he did. I want to tell him that last Saturday a man who had been out of work for one and a half years came into my constituency office. He is in desperate straits. He cannot keep up with his rent payments and he has to withdraw one of his children from college. That man, and thousands like him, should have the same access to employment programs as any other job hunter in this country. In what possible way can the Minister justify that unemployed people in one part of the country are treated differently from unemployed people in another part just so the Government can play cheap politics with their lives?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if that were the rule I would be surprised at how the Hon. Member could have had so many projects approved in her own riding—

Miss MacDonald: Tell me what they are.

Mr. Lalonde: —to deal with the unemployment situation under various program of the federal Government. As far as the unemployed are concerned, she knows there are many programs under the Minister of Employment and Immigration dealing with the unemployment issue, and that those programs have criteria which have been made public, and that the Government has, over the years, allocated those funds to deal with the unemployed across this land.

The Hon. Member refers to a particular individual in her own riding.

Miss MacDonald: There are many others like him.

Mr. Lalonde: Yes, and I can refer the similar individuals in my own riding who are facing difficult situations. The Hon.

Member knows there is a high unemployment situation and in every riding there are cases similar to the one she mentions. She is not the only one in that situation. It is a very sad situation and we are trying to deal with it fairly and effectively across the land.

SASKATCHEWAN IMMEDIATE EMPLOYMENT STIMULATION PROGRAM

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Finance. I have recently found out that in Saskatchewan a program called the Immediate Employment Stimulation Program has been in existence since January 1, 1983. It is a \$4 million project, and the only access to that fund is through Senator Hazen Argue. Apparently groups approach him directly, and his office then either approves or does not approve a project, and it is rubber stamped by the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Why are officials from the Department of Manpower and Immigration not involved in processing the applications? Why have Members of Parliament from Saskatchewan not been informed of this \$4 million slush fund in Senator Hazen Argue's office?

• (1450)

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to challenge the statement made by the Hon. Member that the officials of Manpower and Immigration are not involved. On the contrary, they are the ones who are examining the programs. They are examining the project proposals that have been put forward. They are examining whether they are meeting the criteria of the various programs of Manpower and Immigration or of other Departments. If my friend has proposals or suggested projects to put forward, why does he not put them forward to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration or to the Minister who represents Saskatchewan in Cabinet? This is the normal procedure. Or he could put them directly to the Department and they will be examined.

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO SASKATCHEWAN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I and others in our Party from Saskatchewan have approached the Department of Manpower and Immigration for capital funds. I did that for the Endeavour school gymnasium and for the Doukhobor Heritage Home in Verigin, and I was told by the officials in Regina that no such programs exist for capital funding. I found out that I was misled; indeed one can go to Senator Argue's office and get funding for those kinds of projects. Why were Members of Parliament misled by officials of his Department, and why has the public of Saskatchewan been led to believe that no such program exists? Is this just a slush fund, or what is it?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I again refer my hon. friend to the fact that the program itself has been mentioned in two Budgets and that the Minister of