

Oral Questions

Congress, the American President and the American administration stand by their statements. I think the bill introduced in Congress is clear evidence of the interest of the United States in seeing that project go.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS**SEPTEMBER UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Employment and immigration figures for September show that 20,397 additional people were laid off across Canada and that in Ontario 16,284 people were laid off in the month of September. This means that 1,000 people every working day in Canada are now made unemployed. It means that over 800 people in the province of Ontario every working day are being laid off. How can the minister say that this is not the time for panic, that we have to wait another month? What kinds of programs does he now have which will give those people an opportunity to find gainful employment, either in the short or in the long term, to meet their commitments to their families?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the reason we counsel that it is not time for panic is that any attempt to create that kind of hysteria does not lead to effective long-term solutions to the problem. We on this side of the House prefer to deal with matters in a careful and effective way rather than the rhetorical and hysterical way the hon. member apparently endorses. What we are really trying to do, as we did this summer, is establish direct job-creation programs so that 1981 and 1982 will provide additional work for well over 80,000 Canadians in a variety of ways to ease those areas where high unemployment is expected. The approach taken by the government is a careful and effective one, rather than the rhetorical and panic-ridden approach which his party oftentimes adopts.

MASSEY-FERGUSON LAY-OFFS

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, by way of supplementary question let me ask the minister, in the careful and considerate approach which he is taking, whether he can offer some guidance for the 600 people who are about to be laid off next Friday at Massey-Ferguson in Brantford. Where should they go to find employment? How will they be able to find employment in an area where, within a 20 or 25-mile radius there is massive unemployment in almost every community? What kind of reasonable thinking will come from the minister to give those people some help?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the federal Department of Employment and Immigration, along with other departments, has a number of programs in place designed to deal directly with the problem of lay-offs. We establish, in co-operation with the

unions and local business corporations which may be affecting those lay-offs, manpower consultative services that deal with each individual employee. If they want to provide for retraining or for new job applications, they are given the available information, the available counselling, and the available job opportunities in the same area. I suggest the hon. member speak to his leader. In the area of Oshawa where lay-offs occurred, we were able to place close to 80 or 90 per cent of those persons laid off. We cannot control individual decisions by individual businesses affected by the cycles of the business economy.

Mr. Andre: It is not cycles, it is government policy.

Mr. Axworthy: But we have a number of programs in place to ensure that the workers are helped in the circumstances.

PROGRAMS TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, let me be quite specific with the minister. Indefinite lay-offs are currently taking place in Welland, London, Tillsonburg, Scarborough, Brantford, Downsview, Hamilton, Stoney Creek, Midland, Kitchener, and again in Brantford with Massey-Ferguson. Where are the specific programs for those 2,000 people who will be laid off as of next Friday in those communities? Where are the specific programs which will enable them to find either short-term or long-term employment in order to meet their commitments this winter, given that the minister has known since the summer, by his own admission, that massive unemployment figures would be showing up by the end of this fall?

● (1430)

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I would remind the hon. member that it was the action taken by this government in supplying a guarantee to Massey-Ferguson that maintained the employment for the entire work force at Massey-Ferguson and has kept them in the work force. The decision taken on November 6 was for a temporary lay-off and was in response to business conditions that the company must face. Without government action there would not be any work for people at Massey-Ferguson at all.

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POST OFFICE**APPEARANCE OF MONARCH'S PORTRAIT ON POSTAGE STAMPS**

Mr. Bud Bradley (Haldimand-Norfolk): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs who is responsible for the Canada Post Corporation. I was pleased that last week the Prime Minister chose this place to renew his allegiance to the Queen and to reassure us that the Queen's portrait will in fact appear on the 1982 stamps. My concern is not with the 1982 stamps, however, but with the 1983 program. Since the minister is still