

## LABOUR CONDITIONS

### ANNOUNCED LAY-OFFS BY BOWATER CORPORATION IN NEWFOUNDLAND

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West):** My question, Madam Speaker, is directed to the Minister of State for Economic Development, and is with regard to the West Coast of Newfoundland. The Bowater mill announced yesterday they were shutting down No. 7 machine, which will result in a permanent loss of 746 jobs. The company stated they do not expect things to improve until 1985. The plant will have to close for eight weeks in the first quarter of 1983, in any event.

I point out to the Minister that the unemployment rate in Newfoundland is 19.2 per cent, and in the West Coast area 10,000 people are out of work out of a work force of 51,000, a rate of 20.3 per cent before this shut down happens. It is a devastating blow to the City of Corner Brook. Given this situation, will the Minister and his Department of the Government initiate steps immediately to see what can be done to persuade or to assist Bowater to change that situation? If the situation cannot be changed, are there other Government programs or projects which could be put in place on the West Coast of Newfoundland? Newfoundland, economically, is a wasteland from one end to the other, and the seriousness of this situation now on the West Coast cannot be exaggerated.

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Madam Speaker, we are all very concerned with the situation described by the Hon. Member. The matters which have been raised will certainly be taken up by the Economic Development Committee of Cabinet. I am sure that my colleague in Industry, Trade and Commerce and my colleague in Employment and Immigration are already seized of the problem and undoubtedly will have recommendations to bring forward to their colleagues.

### REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL ACTION

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West):** Madam Speaker, this is not a problem which can be solved by the Minister responsible for employment. The unemployment insurance payments in Newfoundland this year are going to be doubled. The amount is simply fantastic and staggering. These are people who have had permanent jobs since the 1930s in this mill in Corner Brook.

Someone is talking to the Minister. I would like assurance that he can hear me. What action can the Government take, apart altogether from the normal processes, to assist western Newfoundland? Can the Minister hear me? One of the Liberal Members is harassing the Minister.

In addition, Madam Speaker, is the Minister taking action in connection with the closure of the Burin fish plant on the south coast of Newfoundland, and the tragedy that hangs over that industry? Is the Minister going to take action on the Kirby Task Force to do something to save the fishing industry

as well? We have two disasters, at least, at the moment in Newfoundland.

**Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Madam Speaker, contrary to what the Hon. Member stated, the Government of Canada has been a little bit in advance with respect to Bowater. As a matter of fact, in July of this year, after discussion with Bowater, we signed a DREE contract for over \$14 million in an effort to ensure that Bowater would be competitive, assuming the international markets would turn around, to provide jobs for the people in that particular area.

With respect to Corner Brook, perhaps the Hon. Member would be willing to talk to his political colleague, the Premier of the Province, concerning the possibility of locating the Fisheries College in Corner Brook. We made representations that we would like to have the Fisheries College located in a community outside of St. John's, such as Corner Brook, and the Premier of the Province insisted that it be in St. John's.

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## TRADE

### UNITED STATES SUBSIDIZATION OF WHEAT EXPORTS

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of State for International Trade, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. I am sure he will understand the question because of his role at the recent GATT ministerial conference in Geneva. Last month the United States announced the Blended Credit Program, which is a new program for subsidizing the exportation of wheat from that country. It is worth about \$1.5 billion over the next three years, and is in contradiction to the position which they took at GATT.

• (1440)

Has the Government or the Prime Minister petitioned the United States asking them to withdraw that very destructive program? If they have, and the answer is no, can he assure us there will be a similar program for Canadian farmers so we do not lose our world markets?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows, all these particular problems were discussed at the recent GATT ministerial meeting. One of the problems not solved was the question of ceasing subsidies. It was the most difficult part of the conference. But there is a work program established to deal with trade in agricultural products over the next year or so, and it is hoped that out of that some common effort will be made to deal with the problem the Hon. Member has mentioned.