

be developed in order to accelerate the process of regional economic development.

PROMISES MADE DURING ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): The ongoing review and flexibility to which the minister referred has been going on for a decade. Meanwhile, unemployment in Cape Breton remains at about 25 per cent and is unacceptably high throughout Atlantic Canada.

I should like to address my final supplementary question to the Prime Minister. In view of the failure to deliver on promises, not only by the Minister of Finance when he was in the opposition but by the Minister of Employment and Immigration, by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, and a series of others—including promises made by the Prime Minister himself—would the Prime Minister tell the House what he will say to the people of Canada, who will view his colleagues' and his own statements made before the election as totally unacceptable cynicism, simply guaranteed to win them office instead of producing action for the people of Canada?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I think the hon. gentleman's comments are quite unfair. If he looks at the Speech from the Throne which was read to this Parliament less than ten days ago, he will see that, on the contrary, the Speech from the Throne is a composite of the promises that this party made during the last election. That is the program for this session which we intend to carry out.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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PUBLIC SERVICE

CRITICISM IN REPORT OF AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. John Gamble (York North): Madam Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. In light of the Auditor General's report, tabled in this House last week, referring to deplorable public service inefficiency, and in view of the mini non-budget of last evening of the Minister of Finance, forecasting an additional \$3.7 billion in deficit for this year, will the President of the Treasury Board, in pursuing a policy of restraint, explain to the House what specific steps he proposes to take so that the oppressed taxpayers of Canada can receive a fair day's work from their public servants?

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, first of all, the report of the Auditor General will be in front of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and the hon. gentleman, who I hope will be an active member of that committee, will have ample opportunity to question the representatives of the Auditor General who can

Oral Questions

explain how the efficiency studies in question were conducted, and he can make his own evaluation with respect to them.

At the same time, the comments of the Auditor General must be placed in context, and the context is one of over-all management of human resources by the Government of Canada. The hon. member is aware of the existence of the D'Avignon report. We are looking very carefully at the steps we will be taking to improve human resource management, including job retaining, and so on, with specific reference to the D'Avignon report. I hope that in that manner we will be able to improve remarkably the efficiency, or correct some of the inefficiencies that we see. It is a mistake, however, to place the inefficiencies, as the hon. member suggests, on the backs of hardworking public servants themselves.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnston: The problem must be placed in the greater context of human resource management, and that is what we intend to do.

● (1130)

Mr. Gamble: Madam Speaker, we now know what "action, and action now," referred to in the Speech from the Throne, means.

An hon. Member: Question.

Mr. Gamble: Given that the Auditor General stated that a possible 85,000 public servants could be eliminated from the public payroll without reducing service in the public service, has the minister established targets and target dates for public service reductions and, if so, what are they?

Mr. Johnston: Madam Speaker, let it be noted in this House that I have no intention of being known as the happy slasher or a closet slasher. I think it is a mistake—

Mr. Kempling: Do you know how to subtract?

Mr. Johnston: —to set targets, particularly those extrapolated from one study, as the hon. member has done. I think this is unfair both to the public service and to the report of the Auditor General.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

LAMBERT REPORT—FIVE-YEAR PROJECTION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta): Madam Speaker, my question is also addressed to the President of the Treasury Board. Does the President of the Treasury Board have at his disposal a five-year projection of federal government spending which is an important expenditure control mechanism as recommended in the Lambert report?