

Oral Questions

regardless. However, if there is any conflict between these two programs, I will certainly look into it because clearly the NEED Program is not meant to do that. The information I have at the moment is that there is no conflict between the two programs. If the union would like to make formal representations to me, I will receive them kindly and look into the matter very seriously.

NEED PROGRAM—REPLACEMENT OF EMPLOYEE

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, the union of National Defence employees has certainly made representations. I will pass them on to the Minister so that he can examine them.

Meanwhile, may I appeal to the Prime Minister in the case of one of the employees involved? His name is Stephen Dent. He is a married man with children, including a four-week old child. On March 25 he was dismissed from his employment in the Department of National Defence. He says, and I believe him, that a person was subsequently employed last week under the NEED Program, who is providing the same work services. Does the Prime Minister agree that this kind of activity in the name of job creation in a Government Department, the Department of National Defence, should not happen? And will he undertake to look into this case and make sure that this misunderstanding is clarified and that no employee, Stephen Dent or any other person, will have to suffer the hardships of unemployment in the name of Government job creation?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, if the Hon. Member were genuinely interested in this case, I suspect he would have given me notice or given the Minister notice and we would have been able to look into it. He was not interested in this case. He was interested in making politics.

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EMPLOYMENT

GOVERNMENT JOB-CREATION STRATEGY

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Madam Speaker, we in the New Democratic Party are also concerned that there seems to be a growing acceptance of the high rate of unemployment almost as natural or normal. That is contrary to what the Bishops have said, and it seems to me to be contrary to any notion of a just society. I have a question for the Prime Minister—

Mr. Malone: The High Priest.

• (1125)

Mr. Waddell: Can we keep God out of this, please? My question is for the Prime Minister. One year ago the Government's job-creation strategy seemed to be to have job spin-offs from megaprojects. If the Prime Minister would visit southern Ontario, the industrial heartland, as I have recently, he would see that the Government's job-creation strategy, continued in

the budget, is basically the NEED Program which offers jobs like the raking of leaves, cleaning up of brush, and so on. Is that the message the Prime Minister wants to give to the young people of Canada, that the Government's strategy is raking leaves and cleaning up brush, and that is what we are going to have in the future of Canada?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): The short answer is no, Madam Speaker, that is not the strategy, that is not what the Minister of Finance has been talking about, and that is not what the Minister of Employment and Immigration has been talking about. The Hon. Member, I guess, shows the level of his ingenuity when he thinks that this \$4.8 billion will be spent on raking leaves. He does not have much confidence in Canadians.

In so far as the rate of unemployment is concerned, Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member should be asked to examine his own political and economic thinking on this matter. What is a satisfying rate of unemployment? Is it 8 per cent? Is it 5 per cent? Is it 3 per cent? Or is it less? I remember a great socialist, Nye Bevan, saying that it should be 3 per cent. Now, is not 3 per cent very much unfair for the 3 per cent of unemployed people? How can a well thinking socialist—I am sure admired by the Hon. Member, as I admire Mr. Bevan myself—accept 3 per cent unemployment as not being unacceptable in a just society? The Hon. Member should do some thinking on these problems.

Mr. Waddell: Let me tell the Prime Minister that I have confidence in Canadians, but no confidence in this Government. If the Prime Minister did some reading instead of airy-fairy thinking, he would see that his budget talks about 11.5 per cent unemployment next year, and his own Minister of Finance, as quoted in *The Toronto Sun* yesterday, talks about 7 per cent unemployment. Those figures are totally unacceptable.

INQUIRY RESPECTING CANINE CENSUS

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Madam Speaker, is the Prime Minister aware that in Windsor, Ontario, one of his job-creation programs involves a canine census; that is, the counting of dogs? That is the nature of the program. Is the Prime Minister aware of that, and does he believe, as a reader of socialists and so on, that that is the kind of job-creation program that anyone who is at all progressive would introduce?

Mr. McKnight: Lucky you are not a tree.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member talks about 7 per cent unemployment as being unacceptable. What is acceptable to the Hon. Member? Six per cent? Five per cent? Four per cent? Three per cent? Or what? He could just invent some figure that is acceptable to him. If we knew what his principles were, then perhaps we could discuss the practices.