

Axworthy) in the matter of granting ministerial approval for Canada community development projects.

It has come to my attention to date that so far in Manitoba only 12 projects submitted by local advisory boards from the whole province have been approved. Each and every one of these 12 projects originated from the Winnipeg ridings of St. Boniface and Winnipeg-Fort Garry. Coincidentally, these are the only two ridings held in Manitoba by the Liberal party. I submit that such action is inexcusable. How can the minister, at a time of tremendously high unemployment—indeed, we heard questions earlier this afternoon about the state of unemployment in this country today—play petty partisan politics with job-creation programs?

It is not bad enough that we learned today that the only projects so far approved come from Liberal ridings, but we also learned that for some reason there will be a further delay in approving the remaining projects in Manitoba. Under the guidelines established by his department some of these projects were to have started on November 17. I am willing to accept the delay of a few days, or perhaps a week to a week and a half, but it is now reaching beyond an acceptable length of time. By the time these programs are approved it will be after Christmas and the new year before work will be started on those projects.

This is not the first time this has happened. Last spring my colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie), asked the minister to explain delays in approving Summer Youth Employment projects. At that time we were told that because some members had not followed the rules which the minister had laid down we, the members of Parliament, were the cause of the delay. However, we found upon closer scrutiny that this was not really the case and it was an unfair charge. What cannot be the subject of debate at this time, though, is that members of Parliament from Manitoba have played by the rules. Some local advisory board recommendations have been sitting in the minister's office since at least November 12 but we have not heard a word on these projects, other than those few projects I mentioned earlier in the Liberal ridings.

How can we members of Parliament be expected to perform our jobs if ministers of the Crown engage in, what seems to me to be, seemingly petty activities? The minister and his department set up the rules, and in Selkirk-Interlake we followed those rules. We set up the local advisory board. They met and held two or three meetings. They made their recommendations. We received good co-operation from his officials in Winnipeg and I understand that they have forwarded the recommendations of the local advisory board to the minister's office. At this point we come to the foul-up. The minister seems to have thrown a spanner into the works.

● (1510)

Today we learn that there are a further 3,000 people unemployed in Manitoba. My riding of Selkirk-Interlake has an unemployment rate of 8.2 per cent, the highest rate in Manitoba. Unemployment rates in Winnipeg North Centre,

Winnipeg North, and the Churchill riding are all very high. Yet the minister has seen fit to approve projects for Manitoba in the wealthy suburbs of Winnipeg, such as St. Boniface and Fort Garry, where, by his own department's calculation, unemployment is the lowest.

What are the priorities of this minister? Why has he chosen to put partisan interests ahead of the economic well-being of his own province? Among my roles as a member of Parliament is the selection of applications for the Canada community development programs. This role was defined by the minister. By subverting this process and by not approving the programs until much after the start-up date, he is denying me the right of properly fulfilling this role. I submit that this violates my privileges as a member of Parliament.

I am sure, Madam Speaker, that you understand how important this matter is, and I hope your ruling will allow us to straighten out this unfortunate situation and get people to work in the province of Manitoba and, indeed, in other provinces where there may be these same kinds of hold-ups. There are areas in my riding which have unemployment rates at the present time of some 95 per cent, due mostly to the closing of the fishing season. For the minister or his department to hold up these programs at this time is unconscionable and I would ask, Madam Speaker, that you give a favourable ruling on the matter.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Madam Speaker, I rise on the same question of privilege. I want to point out to the minister that two years ago Canada Works in Manitoba was allocated \$9.5 million, under a Liberal government. This year, two years later, when unemployment is higher, the allocation is \$2.5 million, less than 30 per cent of what we received two years ago. Two years ago in the two constituencies represented by myself and my colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), the allocation for Canada Works programs was over \$2 million, and half of that was for native employment. This year the allocation for the Canada community development program is just over \$400,000. That is less than 20 per cent of what we received two years ago.

We are told that the reason for the reduction is that the rate of unemployment is low in our city and that in my constituency there are only 904 unemployed native people. I do not know from where the minister or his department collected these figures, but I am sure that the minister knows that the survey done by the Winnipeg school division showed unemployment rates of 50 per cent in the core area of the city.

I refer the minister to an article written by Val Werier, respected Winnipeg columnist, which appeared recently in the *Winnipeg Free Press*. He quotes the comments of some of the school principals in charge of schools in the core area, and I would like to take a moment to put some of them on the record. The principal of David Livingstone School said:

The unemployment rate among the school parents is 53 per cent.

That is in his school. The principal of the Aberdeen School says: