

*Oral Questions***THE ECONOMY**

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister.

Northern Ontario certainly feels like a voice in the wilderness, a forgotten region of Canada. Unemployment statistics are at record levels, welfare case loads are up 50 per cent in Sault Ste. Marie, and this year there have been 81 business bankruptcies and hundreds of personal bankruptcies in my community alone.

The Sault experience is not alone. Dozens of communities across northern Ontario are facing similar circumstances.

Northern Ontario deserves to be heard. I ask the minister: What economic package will come forward to address northern Ontario's problem of getting out of a recession that this government created?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is a New Democratic Party member of this Parliament.

The New Democratic Party government of the province of Ontario, together with myself and the Minister of Forestry, announced a program just four weeks ago of \$95 million for restoring the economic health and diversifying the base of the economy of northern Ontario, an agreement that was celebrated by the NDP Government of Ontario as well as this Parliament.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, 75 per cent of all jobs lost in this recession have been lost in Ontario, chiefly southern Ontario.

Windsor is typical. It has the highest unemployment rate in the country, 13 per cent. Like the rest of southern Ontario its welfare case load has increased by 24 per cent. Because of the deindustrialization of southern Ontario and because of cross-border shopping, our retail sector is in a terrible state of affairs.

My question to the minister is: Are there funds in the reserve fund or some action this government plans to take to correct the situation in Windsor, Chatham,

Sarnia, Brantford, Kitchener, Waterloo, Hamilton and the rest of the cities in southwestern Ontario that are hurting?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, we know what the hon. member is trying to do. He is trying to imply that to do something for Quebec and Montreal in particular is somehow wrong. That is really what he is trying to say.

Let us now take a look at southwestern Ontario. We have lower unemployment in southwestern Ontario than we have in other parts of Canada, but also southwestern Ontario has benefited in large measure from a number of federal programs: duty remissions on automobiles. We have just had an opening of a third line at Chrysler in Windsor. Duty remissions on manufacturing equipment, defence spending, this is largely concentrated in southern Ontario. Southern Ontario has been well treated by Parliament for many decades and continues to be.

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GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my good friend the Minister of Fisheries.

As he knows, the farmers got \$800 million and they deserve that and more. Quebec today gets \$160 million and deserves it. He also knows that Atlantic fishermen and plant workers are getting \$39 million only.

I ask the minister how he can justify this unfairness, this pittance, this almost sick joke, in his type of language and will he now agree to go back to the well one more time, to go to bat for those fishermen and plant workers and get them the kind of dollars they deserve?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, there is no element of unfairness at all. Never in Atlantic history has so much assistance for fishermen been arranged and given to them as in this present year. The amount is \$57 million; \$18 million in ice compensation, that has never occurred before and \$39 million more to assist those who are suffering from a catch failure.