

LABOUR CONDITIONS

FORECAST UNEMPLOYMENT—ADVICE TO UNEMPLOYED WORKERS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, the minister says he keeps hearing the same questions. Regrettably we on this side keep hearing the same answers and they are totally inadequate. I would like to hear what the Prime Minister has to say on this question. I point out to the minister that Statistics Canada reports, and I quote:

There is no significant change in labour market conditions compared to the previous month.

● (1425)

Statistics Canada recognizes the real numbers of more than one million unemployed and the minister should acknowledge that. On the weekend the Prime Minister gave advice to Canadians who could not afford the high cost of food by telling them to change their priorities. Would the Prime Minister tell the people of Canada, since it is estimated that one out of four in the labour force is going to be out of their job some time next year, what advice he would give to those people who will be unemployed?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I will take notice of the question, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Broadbent: I am sure the unemployed in Canada will take great consolation from the Prime Minister's indifference as revealed in that answer. The Minister of Finance, in spite of his boasting, has forecast an increase in unemployment going upwards of some 150,000 next year. Since factories are operating at the lowest level in two decades, bankruptcies are up and housing starts are down, will the government recognize at long last the serious problems in the Canadian economy, show some concern and bring in some programs which will create jobs instead of higher levels of unemployment?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, if the hon. member would refer to the budget he would realize its main impact is to create jobs—

Mr. Crosbie: Which budget? How many years?

Mr. Trudeau:—through the \$15 billion it plans to raise through the energy package over the next three years. For that reason we wish to have the support of this House in passing these budgetary measures as soon as possible.

Mr. Crosbie: You said that yesterday.

Mr. Broadbent: If the Prime Minister will re-read the budget with care he will note an unemployment increase forecast of more than 1 per cent, which means an increase of 150,000 unemployed. Since the Prime Minister has expressed recent concern about the problems of the Third World, which are indeed real, does he not think there is just more than a little hypocrisy in that expressed concern when he ignores the real human problems here in Canada?

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, do I understand from the Leader of the NDP that I should stop being concerned about the poor in the Third World?

An hon. Member: What about here?

Mr. Trudeau: Then what is his suggestion, Madam Speaker? The difference between his party and ours is that we can deal with both subjects. We do not have a one-track mind like the NDP.

* * *

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

CHARGES RESPECTING EXPORTATION OF NUCLEAR COMPONENTS

Hon. Allan Lawrence (Durham-Northumberland): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. It relates to the allegations made in this House and elsewhere last week regarding the export of some critical and crucial nuclear components to a banned country, namely, Pakistan, by three Canadian citizens. I understand more serious charges have now been laid against these three Canadian citizens.

Why, when the police investigation ended two and a half months ago, after the media raised the question and after the question was raised in this House, have the more serious charges only now been laid?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General): Madam Speaker, the hon. member will understand it would not be proper for me to comment on charges which have been laid and on a case which is now under way.

Mr. Lawrence: Obviously I am not asking the Solicitor General to comment on the merits or the demerits of any prosecution now taking place. I am not talking about that. I am talking about the serious allegations that pressure from the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce and the Department of External Affairs, through the Solicitor General, caused the minor charges to be laid in the first place. That has nothing to do with the case. This concerns improper pressure on the police of this country.

Did the Department of External Affairs and the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce withdraw their pressure on the minister so that these charges have now been laid, or did the RCMP lay these charges in contravention of any direct instructions from the Solicitor General?

Mr. Kaplan: Madam Speaker, no pressures were put on the RCMP working on this particular case. The laying of charges is a police decision made on the basis of whether adequate evidence is available to sustain charges.