

Oral Questions

[English]

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS

OPPOSITION TO BILL C-96

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to Bill C-96, legislation which will cut federal contributions to provincial health care programs by over \$4 billion over the next five years. According to the Canadian Medical Association, the cuts will create a two-tier health care system in Canada where one quality of health care will exist in richer provinces, and second or third-rate services will exist in the poorer provinces.

The New Brunswick Medical Society agrees with the Canadian Medical Association and has expressed its concern over the effects the cuts will have in our province where health care programs are already approaching a crisis due to a lack of funds. New Brunswick does not have the money or the taxing ability to raise its share of health care costs, and the Conservative Government, obsessed with slashing, should realize that and withdraw—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Sixty seconds.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

LOSS OF JOBS IN QUEBEC—MEASURES GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO TAKE

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, yesterday hundreds of workers came to Parliament Hill to ask the Government to take action and help them save their jobs in Lauzon. This morning, we hear that 44,000 people in Quebec lost their jobs during the month of February, and that 23,000 young people have lost their jobs in this country. My question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. What does the Minister intend to do to help the 44,000 Quebecers who lost their jobs in February, and especially the employees at Davie Shipbuilding in Lauzon who were laid off, or will be in a matter of weeks?

[English]

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to see once again that the employment level is keeping to below 10 per cent. This is the second month in a row where the rate of unemployment has been below 10 per cent at this time of year. We know that some 52,000 jobs have been created in the Province of Quebec over the last year. We know as well that that is not good enough. The programs that we have put in place are working. That is why we will continue to move in this direction. We

want to make sure that job creation in Quebec is at the same level and rate as it is elsewhere in the country.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, the Minister did not answer my question. I will try with another one, and I may be luckier. My supplementary is directed to the Minister of Youth. As I said a moment ago, 23,000 young Canadians lost their jobs in February. Does the Minister think that she can be of any assistance to the unemployed youth of the country since she has no budget, no program? What can she do for the youth of this country with a chauffeur and a limousine?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, there are some \$700 million in employment and training programs directed to young people in this country. It is having an impact. Certainly we want to see more done. I have said that time and time again. With the Job Entry programs, Challenge '85, Challenge '86, and the institutional training programs for young people, these are having an impact. That is why there are far more young people working today than when we took office in 1984.

Mr. Garneau: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Minister of Youth does not even have the responsibility to answer the question in this House.

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[Translation]

THE BUDGET

INQUIRY WHY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENVELOPE FUNDING HAS BEEN REDUCED

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the Minister responsible for regional development. This morning's figures indicate that unemployment is very high in a number of regions across the country. Could the Minister explain, considering the high unemployment rate in these regions, why the Budget papers tabled by the Minister of Finance show that the regional economic development envelope has been cut by \$15 to \$9 billion for the years 1984-85 to 1987-88?

[English]

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, clearly this is one more opposition MP who has not understood the facts. Perhaps we can get through to them this way—in the hour that they intend to question the Government negatively, another 70 Canadians on average will be added to the work force of the country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!