

*Oral Questions*

crown that it meets the requirements of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Furthermore, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on the activities of a committee of the other place before the other place has even made a final decision.

If the hon. member is concerned about this matter he should reflect on why, when this bill was before the House, he was indicating that if it only capped the number of seats at the present level he and his party were ready to support it.

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[Translation]

**INDIAN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Maurice Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead):** Mr. Speaker, we heard this morning that Indian Affairs was about to intervene in order to prevent the Quebec Department of Revenue from revoking the license of 12 aboriginal service stations owing \$3.8 million to Quebec Revenue. Indian Affairs was also rumoured to have accepted that an equivalent amount of \$3.8 million of transfer money granted to the band council be used to pay the amounts owed.

Can the Minister for Indian Affairs confirm that his department is about to take extraordinary steps to prevent Revenue Quebec from revoking the licenses of 12 service stations at fault?

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the hon. member that this is not true. Yesterday and this morning I talked with Mr. Christos Sirros about the service stations. There is a problem, but there is no agreement between us. Even if I had the money I would not do it.

[English]

Our problem is with 12 stations, private businesses, and we have the band year. I am a fiduciary and the government's fiduciary of the funds that belong to the band. Not only can I not do this, I would not use band moneys to solve a government tax problem between basically private enterprise and the government.

[Translation]

**Mr. Maurice Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead):** Mr. Speaker, since the Minister confirms that there is no such transaction or dealings between the Quebec government, his department and the band council, what guarantee does he have that the funds granted to the band council will not be used for that purpose?

[English]

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, there are two guarantees: my word and the law. The hon. member can rely on both.

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister who said in the House just a few minutes ago that 115,000 new jobs were created since February. She also indicated that 74,000 of these jobs were created in Quebec. That is about 64 per cent of these jobs.

Now that unemployment is up to 11 per cent from 10.6 per cent, what has the government done with its infrastructure programs? What has the red book done? What has the sunny sky scenario done for Newfoundland, for P.E.I., for British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I think the member should be very careful about characterizing the issue of employment or unemployment as a Quebec versus Canada issue.

If he will review what I answered, what I said was that there were 115,000 new jobs created since February across the country and that in the province of Quebec since August of 1993 there were 74,000 jobs created. Those numbers are not for the same period: 74,000 jobs in Quebec since August 1993; 115,000 jobs created across the country by the government since February. That is what I said. That is what I stand by.

● (1140)

Unfortunately the member continues this vicious attack on unemployed people, whether they be in Quebec or any other part of the country. We want to find jobs for every unemployed Canadian.

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister has no idea what a vicious attack is.

Quite frankly the government has talked about infrastructure programs, about red book programs. What it has delivered in the House of Commons, to the country, is an unemployment rate that is increasing.

What is the Deputy Prime Minister's forecast for next month? Perhaps in June she will know what an attack is if those numbers go up again.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** Order, order. If the Deputy Prime Minister would care to answer the question I will permit it. But forecasts, unless we have crystal balls, are a little bit difficult.

I will permit the Deputy Prime Minister to answer.

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful that for probably the sixth or seventh time in the last six months the Reform Party has actually stood to ask a question about unemployed people. We are not happy with the statistics.