

Oral Questions

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Hon. Member has raised the question. I enjoy telling the House of the progress being made in Cape Breton. The report of the advisory committee includes no less than 34 recommendations and, as the Hon. Member has correctly indicated, it does suggest certain spending commitments which it would like to see the federal Government and the provincial Governments undertake. I know that the Hon. Member and Members of the House will be pleased to learn that I have been discussing the matter with the Premier of Nova Scotia. Within weeks, we certainly anticipate being able to come out with some important concrete results and answers to which I am sure the Hon. Member will give his support.

REQUEST FOR EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same Minister. I ask the Minister is it fair for Canadians in this particular region to wait for such an extended period of time for some form of financial assistance when, in fact, the Government has jumped into the bail-out of two western banks and uninsured depositors, and when it has provided a tax haven in the amount of \$1 billion for Gulf? Will the Minister stand in his place today and make an affirmative announcement with regard to this particular program?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, surely the Hon. Member does not have such a short memory as to forget that the people of Cape Breton waited 15 years under the former Government for some meaningful help with respect to their unemployment situation. The fact is unemployment went up during the past decade.

Mr. Dingwall: Do not mislead the House.

Mr. Stevens: Give us a little time to make sure we can obtain some permanent jobs for the area so that the people can live in a much more viable condition than the Liberals left them in.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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SOCIAL SECURITY

FAMILY ALLOWANCES—MINISTER'S COMMITTEE STATEMENT

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare who talks about the importance of families while taking away their benefits. Will the Minister confirm publicly what he indicated in committee yesterday, namely, that he has no plans to reindex family allowances even if the economy improves, and that by 1990 this will mean that he will have taken over \$1 billion from families as the family allowance is devalued?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to answer the question from a member of the Opposition who attended the committee meeting yesterday.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: Where were the Liberals?

Mr. Epp (Provencher): I give her the same answer as I gave her yesterday. As the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Employment and Immigration have said today, economic trends are improving, which is a good sign. She should rejoice with us and other Canadians with respect to this happening. As the developments continue further, obviously this Government and its members will be looking to other social programs to be put forward to the House.

[Translation]

REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF CHILD TAX CREDIT

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Is the Minister aware that the child tax credit is going to be reduced by de-indexation, just like family allowances? How can the Minister claim that temporary increases in the child tax credit will replace family allowances, when both are going to be reduced?

[English]

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member has read the Budget and Bill C-70 she will have seen that the child tax credit will be increased. I suggest she look at those figures.

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FISHERIES

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF NEW BRUNSWICK FISH PLANT

Mr. George Henderson (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Fisheries. The latest announcement is that the Star-Kist plant in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, will be closing down temporarily, throwing over 400 people out of work. This is no surprise in light of the way the Government has handled the whole tuna issue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Henderson: Will the Acting Minister of Fisheries tell the House about the Government's involvement with the Star-Kist plant concerning these problems? What are he and his Government doing to protect these 400 jobs? What is the Government doing to get that plant into full production?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: What a hypocrite.

An Hon. Member: Both sides of the fence again.