

*Government Orders*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, you are not quite out of time.

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: The hon. member for Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Pearson International Airport.

**Mr. Gouk:** Madam Speaker, my colleagues are pointing out that I have placed you in a position in which you have to interrupt me to tell me that I will be speaking further after I finish speaking.

I am pretty well wrapped up on this, other than to say that consultation will take place. The very first thing I said when I rose in this House for the first time at the beginning of the session in the spring was that I am not here to oppose for the sake of opposition. I will be the first to applaud the government when it brings in legislation I or my constituents agree with. If I do not agree with its legislation then I hope I would be able to offer some constructive alternatives. That is what we are trying to do in terms of meeting with the people.

I have my own certain ideas. I am not trying to sell these at town hall meetings. I am trying to explore with people what types of alternatives are out there, what the bottom line is that we have to reach, what the government is proposing and then listen the kinds of choices they make. I hope we will have good opportunity for consultation. We will not take an adversarial roles, saying we cannot accept anything you do because it makes less of our plan or vice versa. In the end we want what is going to work for the people of Canada. I trust we are all working toward that goal.

• (1705)

**Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Kootenay West—Revelstoke for his comments on my earlier remarks.

I assure the member that we are sincere. The Minister of Human Resources Development is someone I have watched in this town since 1980. He is someone who respects good ideas. Without ideas we are dead around here.

The members opposite should feel that any good ideas they put forward here, no matter where the members come from, if they will make the fabric of this country better we are going to take them.

I want to pick up on the member's comments about the unemployment insurance ski team member. I have problems with the UI ski team. I have problems for a number of reasons. I think the member said this person was making approximately \$40,000 in three months working in his forestry career. If someone is doing that in three months and then all of sudden going on this unemployment insurance system, I think of the ski

unit, if it happens at a time when it might displace someone else who needs more than the basic minimum wage that a UI cheque would give I think we are putting that other person at a disadvantage.

In other words if I were looking for a job on the ski slopes and needed to get \$15 or \$20 an hour because I did not have the \$40,000 income for the three months, and if all of a sudden I do not get the job because here is a fellow who is volunteering his time and it is not costing the employer a nickel, we are working against ourselves.

Does the hon. member not think that when a firm receives the benefit of having someone contribute toward the health and viability of his business where it is being funded by the taxpayers through the UI system perhaps there should be some accountability so that we are not working at cross purposes?

**Mr. Gouk:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure exactly where we ended up with that question. I am sure the member will correct me if I get too far off the track.

In the case of this particular individual I mentioned in my example, there are both volunteers anyway and full time people they are required to have as part of their licence. This individual by volunteering was just that, a volunteer who would if he had taken the full time job hopefully have been replaced with another volunteer. The full time job that he did not take because he was a volunteer still existed and still had to be filled by someone else. In that particular example he was not taking away someone's job by volunteering while supported by his unemployment insurance benefits.

I think where the problem comes overall is we have taken some of the incentive away. It is not just a matter of policing. Some would argue that if there is no work for this individual and he is getting unemployment in any event he might as well be on the ski hill.

The argument is that one of the things we are looking at in our policy dealing with unemployment insurance is if someone makes \$40,000 a year, should he be able to collect benefits which are paid in part by someone who has a \$27,000 a year job and works 52 weeks of the year paying premiums so that individual can be off.

There has to be some cut through which we say you have made over a certain amount, you have gone beyond what we have guaranteed you would make and therefore you are not eligible for further benefits or at least it would be at a severely reduced point.

• (1710)

I am sure the hon. member is aware of our concept of old age pension for people with high income. If we applied the same type of principle to the unemployment insurance program, the saving would run to quite a few billion dollars.