

Oral Questions

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**FORGET COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Today I received petitions which represent 100,000 Canadians who indicate their opposition to the Draconian measures included in the Forget Commission Report on unemployment insurance. We have had commissions and studies. We have had committees studying the commission reports.

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Rodriguez: We have reports on the committees studying the commission reports.

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Rodriguez: Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to put it to the Minister—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rodriguez: —and call upon him to stop playing politics and start—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rodriguez: —dealing off the top of the deck with the unemployed. Will the Minister stand in his place now and not only reject Forget's major recommendations but also announce improvements and strengthening of the unemployment insurance program when he makes his statement tomorrow?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): At noon tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, the Minister is as decisive as the Liberal caucus.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blaikie: He is not that bad, is he?

Ms. Copps: Gallup all the way, John.

Mr. Nunziata: Rise and fall.

Mr. Blaikie: Order.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair cannot help but note there seems to be an attempt here to kill two birds with one stone.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: I wonder if the Hon. Member would put his question.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): I want to apologize to the Minister. He is not that bad.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rodriguez: Now, having softened up and buttered up the Minister, maybe he will see fit to give me a positive response. Is the Minister prepared to stand up now and tell us that tomorrow, when he makes his announcement, he will not only be setting himself up as the great hero who saved the unemployed from Forget but he is prepared to make some positive changes along the lines suggested by the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration, which was dominated by Tories?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I shall not move as much as the polls have moved since yesterday.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bouchard: Seriously, I want to tell my hon. friend that tomorrow I think will be an important day for U.I. I will try to give the best answer we can to the unemployed in the country, in those circumstances where we actually have unemployment in the country.

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AGRICULTURE**OECD MEETING—SALE OF UNITED STATES SUBSIDIZED WHEAT**

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I will address my question to the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board. I note the Leader of the New Democratic Party has disappeared overnight. I thought he might have been here to take a bow, but he is not.

An Hon. Member: Tell us where rabbit John is? What burrow is he hiding in?

Mr. Foster: Yesterday the OECD declared its opposition to the dumping of surplus grain onto world markets at subsidized prices. I wonder if, as a result of this agreement to which the United States was a party, the Minister has a commitment that the United States will not raid our traditional Canadian markets as it has been doing in the Russian market for wheat and in the Saudi Arabia market for barley. Has the Minister, as a result of this proclamation yesterday in Paris, received a commitment from the United States that it will stop this raiding of our traditional markets?