

Oral Questions

President of the World Bank did not volunteer any particular advice to the Government of Canada in that regard.

I understand that the President of the World Bank was asked a question in a press conference and volunteered some information, to which the Hon. Member is referring. But I can tell my hon. friend that the purpose of the meeting had to do with the problem of financing the World Bank, particularly its aid program, and how developed countries could take steps to ensure that they could continue to support the World Bank in its activities relating to the problems of developing countries. This was the purpose of Mr. Clausen's trip, and these were the issues discussed in the course of our meeting. At no time was there any discussion with me as to what was an appropriate policy for the Government of Canada in the current circumstances.

INQUIRY RESPECTING GOVERNMENT'S BUDGETARY
INTENTIONS

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, despite the fact that certain institutions and people, including the Government, are saying that there are signs of recovery in the present year, there are others such as, most recently, the Conference Board, who have indicated, quite accurately, that unless there is a significant change in Government policy the current high levels of unemployment will be maintained or they may actually get worse this year.

In preparing his budget will the Minister assure the House that there will be two kinds of distinctive measures in that budget—one set of specific measures to create immediate jobs in the short run, and another set of measures which will deal with serious structural problems in the Canadian economy and provide for some long-range changes guaranteeing long-range job security?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I should tell the Hon. Member that forecasters both here and abroad expect the unemployment rate to remain high not only next year but for a number of years after that, be it in the United States, in Europe or in Canada. According to most forecasters, the recession has brought about not only a high level of unemployment but also some structural changes which make it difficult for workers to adapt themselves. This phenomenon is now common to all industrialized countries. I can tell my colleague that it is an issue which causes me serious concern in the preparation of my budget and that I will try to find solutions.

As to whether the measures proposed are likely to meet the two objectives indicated by my colleague, again I urge him to wait for the budget, and I hope that the measures I will announce then will satisfy him and meet his objectives.

• (1430)

[*English*]

LONG-RANGE POLICY

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, my last question concerns the long run. In 1980 the Liberal Party promised an industrial strategy, but shortly after the election it was abandoned and, in its place, there was a series of ad hoc measures which, to understate it considerably, have not produced the kind of job opportunities that Canadians desire. Is the Minister, when he answered as he did just a minute ago, now telling the people of Canada that when we get the budget after Easter he, as Minister of Finance, will lay down for the first time in Canada a long-range policy whose purpose is to deal with the serious structural problems in the Canadian economy?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): What I have said, Madam Speaker, is that the Hon. Member will have to conclude for himself, when he hears the budget, whether it meets that objective or not. However, I have already indicated in several answers in the past that, in my view, we were risking looking for the Saint Graal if we were hoping for the development or presentation of a totally integrated industrial strategy. I felt that probably the better solution for Canada and most other countries was to work on industrial strategies, that is, we had to work at various sectors, identify our strengths, and try to build on those strengths and propose policies which would further strengthen those strong elements of our economy. I think this is probably a more realistic and more effective way of addressing this particular issue.

As to whether the budget will address this appropriately, I again invite my hon. friend to reach his own conclusion when he hears the budget.

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[*Translation*]

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS

GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO VARIOUS PROVINCIAL
PROGRAMS

Mr. Gérald Laniel (Beauharnois-Salaberry): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Right Hon. Prime Minister.

In view of the joint statement made last week-end by Messrs. Jacques Léonard and Jacques-Yvan Morin, respectively Minister of Municipal Affairs and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs in the Quebec Government, to the effect that Quebec municipalities will not be allowed to receive direct subsidies from the Federal Government, I would like the Right Hon. Prime Minister to give Hon. Members the assurance that federal subsidies will always be identified with the Government of Canada and paid directly, so that Canadians living in the province of Quebec or elsewhere in this country may know of the Federal Government contributions to various provincial