

Oral Questions

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic and Regional Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I am very disappointed in the attitude of the Hon. Member. I had hoped that during his attendance at the Canada Tomorrow Conference, to which he was an invited guest, he would have educated himself a little better on what the industry and the manufacturing sector want and why they want duty-free zones. In the course of the ensuing debate in this House, I presume we will have the opportunity of exchanging views on the subject.

I would have expected the Hon. Member to say that this is a marvellous, creative idea which can benefit every sector of the country. When he talks about Liberal ridings, do I have to keep reminding him that, under the Special Recovery Capital Projects Program, one of the major beneficiaries is his riding of Richmond-South Delta, with the changes that are taking place at the Vancouver terminal?

* * *

THE ECONOMY**REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT ESTABLISH FULL EMPLOYMENT GOAL**

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Economic Development. One year ago the Catholic bishops said that unemployment was the most urgent problem. Canadians agreed. The last budget established a target of 11 per cent unemployment. We now have a Throne Speech with a five-part program, not one of which was designed to solve the problem of unemployment. Why does the Government not establish a goal of full employment for Canadians, as has been done successfully in many European countries?

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic and Regional Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, it has been clear from statements made in this House and speeches made outside the House by the Minister of Finance, myself, and other Ministers responsible in the area of the economy, that the goal has always been to attack unemployment and to reduce it as quickly and effectively as possible. Every program and every project which the Government has undertaken on the economic development side, certainly in the envelope that I have some responsibility for, has been directed to that very end. In the past year over 350,000 new jobs have been created.

The issue is not to look only at the unemployment statistics. It is important to look at how responsive the economy is and how many jobs are being created. We would all like to eliminate unemployment, but at what cost, and how can it be done? When the Hon. Member speaks of European countries I can look at the Soviet Union and say yes, there is full employment. Under certain systems full employment can be achieved, but at tremendous social and economic costs to society. The Hon. Member knows that.

Ms. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I suggest the Minister look at Austria and Sweden as two examples that might be more relevant. They have much fewer resources than Canada.

* * *

LABOUR RELATIONS**INTRODUCTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY—REQUEST FOR WORKERS' BARGAINING RIGHTS**

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. The Speech from the Throne also emphasizes incentives for business to get into high technology, but gives no consideration to the impact this will have on some 1.5 million workers who will be displaced over the next few years. Will the Government and the Minister undertake actions that will introduce legislation, hopefully in this session, that will guarantee workers that they have the right to negotiate the timing and conditions for introducing new technology?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member was recognized for a supplementary. The Hon. Member is asking a question along another line which goes beyond the traditional supplementary. The Chair will recognize the Hon. Member, but cautions her about introducing another question under the device of a supplementary.

Ms. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, my introductory question on unemployment leads directly—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The Hon. Member for Durham-Northumberland.

* * *

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES**NUNAVAT COMMUNICATIONS INC.—CONTRACT WITH DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

Hon. Allan Lawrence (Durham-Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Justice confirm, in contrast to what he told the House yesterday, that Mr. Jim McDonald, an ex-Liberal candidate and former director of communications for the Prime Minister, has had a \$1 per year retainer from the Department of Justice which also has the cosy arrangement of providing office space, secretarial services, telephone facilities, and even an expense account, all paid for from the allocation of funds for ministerial office expenses? Is the Minister today willing to repeat yesterday's assertion that this is the usual arrangement for governmental public relations contracts?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I owe the Hon. Member an apology for not being in my seat earlier in the Question Period. He may owe an apology for the innuendoes that he is casting.