

right now that this practice of enforcing this Bill stop immediately, at 2.27 p.m. this afternoon?

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Member for Yellowhead that the Senate is a part of Parliament. It is not unusual to introduce legislation in Parliament. There has been no attempt to enforce this Bill. There has been no need to enforce this Bill. I can assure the Hon. Member that the Bill, of course, would not become law until it has passed through both Chambers.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER CITE PRECEDENT

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister cite one example, in the whole history of Parliament, where this has been done before?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair has some concern about questions that involve an interpretation or a level of detail.

Some Hon. Members: She needs all the help she can get.

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that a number of Bills have been brought in with effective dates which do reflect a certain amount of retroactivity. I will undertake to find all of the precedents and bring them to the attention of the Member.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL WILL TO CUT UNEMPLOYMENT IN HALF

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Yesterday the Chairman of the Economic Council of Canada, the Government's own economic advisory body, while appearing before the Labour Committee of the House of Commons suggested that unemployment could be cut in half if the Government of Canada possessed the political will to accomplish that. Do the Minister and his Government have the political will to cut unemployment in Canada in half within the 1980s?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT SET UNEMPLOYMENT TARGET

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, considering the strategies that the Minister of Finance has raised in this House, that answer is completely unacceptable. The Minister's colleague, sitting behind him, who is the Minister of State for Economic Development, while appearing before the Macdonald Commission, as well as before the Finance Committee last night, indicated that it was absolutely

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necessary for the Government to set performance targets in order to measure its performance.

● (1430)

The Government has set targets for research and development. It has set targets for inflation. It has set targets for the growth of the Gross National Product. However, there is one obvious and glaring omission. The Government has failed to set a target for reducing the level of unemployment. Will the Minister now continue on in that tradition, support the vision of his Cabinet colleague, and set a target for unemployment in this country so that we will have something to shoot for in the months ahead?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I shall consider the Hon. Member's question as a suggestion and take it under advisement. I may remind the Hon. Member that under the 6 and 5 program, the Government set a target, and that we were able to meet this target and even to go beyond it, that is, we have succeeded in bringing inflation in this country down to even lower levels.

Regarding specific projections for inflation, unemployment and so forth, I would remind my hon. colleague that in my last budget I gave a number of projections covering a period of five years. If and when a budget is brought down in 1984, I should be pleased to revise these projections, and the Hon. Member will be advised of such revisions at the same time they are announced to the Canadian public.

[English]

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I believe we are all encouraged to hear that the Minister will now consider setting a target for unemployment.

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THE ECONOMY

REQUEST THAT MINISTER ORDER REDUCTION IN INTEREST RATES

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister be prepared to consider one other item? With the huge balance of payments surplus now, a number of analysts have suggested that the Canadian dollar will remain firm if real interest rates were reduced. A number of organizations and agencies have suggested to the Minister of Finance that the best step he could take to bring consumer and investor confidence back would be to reduce the real interest rates in this country. Will the Minister consider approaching the Governor of the Bank of Canada and directing that real interest rates be reduced, to allow more investment and consumer spending in an effort—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member is going beyond a supplementary at this point.