

Oral Questions

United States has shown some economic activity is because it has been investing heavily in its war industry in preparation for war. As a result of that, money is circulating in many of its communities and economic growth is taking place.

The Minister asked for some suggestions. Would the Minister consider declaring war on our number one problem in Canada, that is, unemployment? Would the Minister take some independent action right now to provide jobs for Canadians in an effort to get money circulating in our Canadian communities by investing, let us say, in reforestation projects and in fishery enhancement programs?

An Hon. Member: We have done that.

Mr. Riis: You have not done that. Where it has taken place is on a very measly level. If the Minister is serious about getting people back to work, why does he not show some leadership and get on with it? Will he declare war on unemployment in this country and get money circulating in the communities of Canada?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I was asking for positive proposals—

Mr. Riis: Reforestation. I just gave it to you.

Mr. Lalonde:—and I received rhetoric. Unfortunately that is what we are accustomed to receiving from the New Democratic Party. I suggest to the Hon. Member that if he looks at the federal programs he will find, for instance, that we have signed agreements with a number of provinces which include reforestation programs. The Hon. Member knows, or he should know, coming from the Province of British Columbia, that those resources belong to the province and to the provincial Government. We cannot just walk in and tell the provincial government: "We are going to plant trees in your forests". It requires the co-operation of the provinces for this. Some provinces have co-operated. Others are dragging their feet. If the Hon. Member has something to complain about, he should go to his own provincial Government—

Mr. Riis: That is hopeless.

Mr. Lalonde:—which has been dragging its feet in that regard.

Mr. Riis: The Socreds are hopeless.

Mr. Lalonde: The Hon. Member says it is hopeless. Well, he should not blame the federal Government for the situation which exists because of the action or inaction of his own provincial Government. That is the situation.

I invite my friend to realize what this federal Government has done in federal-provincial agreements on forestry. I invite him to look at the hundreds of millions of dollars which we have put into helping the fishing industry, and at the measures which the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is due to introduce in the next few days to help the fishing industry in British Columbia. I will look forward to seeing what the New Demo-

cratic Party is going to do when we bring forward those proposals to help the British Columbia fishing industry.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CORRECTIONAL SERVICE

HARASSMENT COMPLAINT AGAINST OFFICIAL IN VICTORIA

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General, and I have given him notice of it. The Minister has known for 11 months about a case alleging harassment by a senior official of the Correctional Service's parole office in Victoria. That case, aided and abetted by the outrageous procrastination demonstrated by his Department, has resulted in serious morale problems for all staff members. Can the Minister now, after 11 months, advise the House when we may see an end to this matter? When will he stop postponing the full disciplinary inquiry which has been called for?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I want the Hon. Member to know that I also very much regret the length of time it has taken to reach a hearing on this matter. The Hon. Member will know that a large part of the delay, in fact, the delay presently being experienced, is the result of a court order that no hearing occur until the fall. Therefore at present my hands are tied. However, I have indicated to the Correctional Service of Canada that I would like the matter to be proceeded with as quickly as possible. I have its assurance that it will be proceeded with by the middle of October. I hope that is satisfactory to the Hon. Member.

In the meanwhile, so far as disruptions of the office are concerned, I have taken steps to ensure that the office continues to be run and is running in an orderly way and that business as usual continues as much as possible under the circumstances.

Mr. McKinnon: I point out to the Minister that there were four postponements of the disciplinary inquiry before the court order.

DELAY IN CONVENING INQUIRY

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. The terms of reference for the preliminary inquiry included: "It has been alleged that Mr. Murray Gaw, the Director of the Victoria District Parole Office, has been involved in activities related to: (1) harassment; (2) sexual harassment; (3) police harassment; (4) public mischief; (5) discrimination against union members; (6) counselling the commission of unlawful acts; and, (7) improper staffing activities." This stonewalling has made a farce out of the Human Rights Act and clearly demonstrates we either have a weak-kneed Solicitor General or that his Department is completely out of control in its stonewalling activities in this case.