

recovery, I think we could give these people some hope. It is quite clear from the recent statistics that private sector investment will be down this year over last year, and it was down last year over the year before. The only hope of recovery in the short run is the massive involvement of the Government.

Is the Government prepared to take that inventory of public works that it claimed some months ago it had undertaken, and authorize the various municipalities and provincial agencies, together with federal agencies, to go ahead and begin the projects in order to create the economic stimulation necessary to put tens, if not hundreds of thousands of people, back to work?

● (1450)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Madam Speaker, I am agreeing with the Hon. Member. As a matter of fact in one of my more recent statements on the economy I said that that was one of the ways in which we could create jobs, using federal money to lever the municipalities, the Provinces, and also the private sector into investments now which otherwise would be made at a later date. I am in complete agreement with the Hon. Member. I can only say that hopefully the budget will bring down the kind of mix which the Hon. Member will find fit to approve.

* * *

ENERGY

OFFSHORE SAFETY OF NEWFOUNDLAND WORKERS

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. The Minister of Energy was wired on Saturday about a meeting which is taking place in St. John's today in connection with safety in the offshore. He was wired by the Minister of Mines and Energy of Newfoundland, Mr. Marshall. There is a meeting with Mobil Oil and all companies involved in the offshore. The Newfoundland Government says that, after a prudent assessment of all the facts, it has concluded that winter drilling should be halted for the remainder of the season, and it invited the Minister to a meeting of all these companies and the Government which is taking place this evening.

Could the Prime Minister tell the House whether his Minister is attending, or whether arrangements have been made to have somebody else attend with respect to this very important situation?

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member is correct. There was a telex forwarded to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. He has responded to that telex of Mr. Marshall and, yes, there will be a senior official of the COGLA office attending the meeting this evening in Newfoundland.

Oral Questions

CLOSURE OF SATELLITE SURVEILLANCE STATION AT SHOE COVE, NFLD.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister was sent a telex by Premier Peckford in connection with the closing of the satellite surveillance station located at Shoe Cove on the east coast of Newfoundland in St. John's East. That is a federal station. As a result of that closure Canada will no longer be able to track down properly the weather or ice conditions on the East Coast offshore. The replacement station in Churchill, Manitoba, will only reach across part of the Island of Newfoundland, not the offshore oil and gas area. Premier Peckford has offered to pay part of the costs of that satellite receiving station, if necessary.

In view of the very dangerous situation in the offshore now and the importance of developing oil fields offshore the east coast of Newfoundland, is the Prime Minister prepared to agree to that suggestion and stop the disgraceful dismantling of this satellite tracking station which is under way now?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I believe I had occasion, in my answer to Premier Peckford, to deal with that matter. The Hon. Member is incorrect in stating as he does that the closing of that satellite tracking station will result in less information. On the contrary, we are doing that so that we can have better information on the whole area.

Mr. Crosbie: Nonsense. You are being misled, Mr. Prime Minister.

Mr. Trudeau: The Hon. Member has a different opinion on that. That, of course, is his right. I am not an expert in satellite tracking, but I understand that this question has been looked at very carefully. It should not be a question of territorial possession. It should be a question of where the best information can be obtained from, and that is what the Department is doing.

* * *

ESTIMATES

INCREASE IN MAIN ESTIMATES

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. Now that we have all had an opportunity to review the Main Estimates for fiscal year 1983-84 and to compare them with the Main Estimates of the previous year, would the Minister agree that the Main Estimates this year are up over 17 per cent in total expenditures compared with last year?

Hon. Herb Gray (President of Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, certainly the Main Estimates for this year compared with the Main Estimates for last year are up in the area my hon. friend has mentioned. On the other hand, if one wants to compare total outlays, total expenditure by the federal Government in the 1982-83 fiscal year, which includes more items