

Oral Questions

disadvantaged groups are not even aware of the program.

Can the minister tell us how the government plans to inform Canadians about the existence of this important program?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I find the hon. member's question very interesting because when we seek to inform Canadians about something as important as tax reform, her party gets very incensed about it. Is the hon. member saying that she approves of expenditures by the Government of Canada to advertise its programs?

Ms. Clancy: That's what she asked.

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SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for the Older Worker Adjustment Program. Members will recall that many Canadian workers lost their jobs as a result of the privatization of CN Route and then the dismantling of the private company that resulted from that privatization.

In Winnipeg, 94 people lost their jobs as a result of the closing down of Transport Route Canada. None of these workers are eligible for the Older Worker Adjustment Program because the limit set for the application of that program in Winnipeg is for companies of 100 workers or over. By falling six short of this 100-person limit many people who have lost their jobs through the privatization of Route Canada are not eligible for the older worker adjustment.

Is it not possible that the government could find a way to be flexible in this instance and make it possible for these older workers who lost their jobs as a result of that government initiated sequence of events to qualify for that program?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the hon. member that all the components of the program to help older workers were negotiated by the federal government with each province. We have established a criteria that must be respected across the country, but

certainly we are willing to look at anything that could be helpful to these people.

I think the member will understand that in large cities all across the country we have to set a minimum under which we have to make exclusions. Nevertheless, our program has been very effective so far, because a very large number of older people have been helped by this program.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that people who lost their jobs from the same company, because they live in a different province, for example, New Brunswick, have become eligible for that older worker adjustment, whereas workers in Winnipeg, because of this 100 worker limit, have been deprived of the same benefits even though they worked for the same company. Is there not a way of taking into account, when people lose their jobs as a result of a national company going under, to make sure that everyone who worked for that company gets the same benefits no matter where they live in Canada?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I hope that the hon. member will understand that a lay-off of ten people in a small community is, at times, much more important than a lay-off of 50 people in a much larger community.

Mr. Lapierre: Try it yourself. You'll see.

Mr. Corbeil: We would not be treating the older workers fairly if we did not have a different criteria, depending on the location, because the possibility of finding new jobs after being laid off in a large city is much higher than finding a new job in a much smaller community.

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AIRPORTS

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, since his appointment the Minister of Transport has visited a number of Canadian airports and has witnessed firsthand the air traffic problem in southern Ontario.

Given the minister's statement that, "Hamilton Airport is a proven facility" and that "the expansion of Hamilton Airport as a solution to Pearson International" is a priority. He also knows that a comprehensive study released by his department earlier this year concluded