

about-face and provide some help for the people and the resources in this country which really need help the most?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the two rhetorical questions, to each of them, is no. This Government is considerably concerned about the state of the forest industry. Indeed, if the Hon. Member will think back, he will recall the over-all forest strategy which we have prepared and presented in conjunction with the Provinces, dealing with reforestation, marketing, and the need for highly qualified manpower personnel. However, in answering the question in this way, Mr. Speaker, as his question really demands, I am trespassing on the responsibilities of my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, who is responsible for the forestry service.

SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES PROGRAM—
NON-ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO OPPOSITION HELD RIDINGS

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Everyone has been speculating today about the Prime Minister's resignation. I cannot for the life of me understand why the Minister did not resign at least 35 minutes ago, in view of some of the statements we have been getting.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): I would like to ask the Minister about one of his statements this morning. He said: "There is nothing politically partisan about spreading around the Special Employment Initiatives Program." If that is true, how can the Minister explain 10 projects in the four Liberal held ridings of Niagara Falls, Welland, Lincoln and Hamilton East, and in exactly the same area, three Conservative held ridings, Burlington, St. Catharines, and my own riding of Hamilton-Wentworth, get zip. Along with the riding of Hamilton Mountain, represented by the House Leader of the New Democratic Party, these ridings receive not a whisper for job creation. If that is not "operation slush" in action, I do not know what is.

I would like an explanation from the Minister of why the Liberal ridings in an area which is suffering from a high number of unemployed, as well as all of southern Ontario, by staggering coincidence, got all of these millions of dollars for job creation?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member says he cannot understand, and I can understand that he cannot understand. Comprehension was never his strong point.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Roberts: What he should be looking at, as we have reminded him again and again, is the total impact of the program. If he had bothered to do that he would have noticed that in the Erie constituency which, if memory serves me correctly, is represented by a Conservative Member of Parlia-

ment, something like \$19 million worth of federal funds has gone in to create jobs—

Mr. Crosbie: Not on that program.

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Talk about the slush fund, John.

Mr. Roberts:—in the Fleet aircraft industry.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Roberts: The simple fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that what has happened here is that the Hon. Members of the Opposition somehow sensing a conspiracy everywhere—here a plot, there a plot, everywhere a plot, plot—believe that something nefarious is going on.

Mr. McDermid: Everywhere an oink, oink.

Mr. Nielsen: Old McRoberts had a farm.

Mr. Roberts: What they in fact found out is that there are 50,000 job-creation projects all across this country—

An Hon. Member: And they did not do that.

Mr. Roberts:—allocated, on the whole, fairly.

Mr. McDermid: Project Oink, Oink.

Mr. Roberts: There may be I doubt not, that in 50,000 projects there are some which will look, when taken out of context, to be dubious. I cannot argue that in 50,000 cases we always made the right decision. However, what we have in fact done, to that Party's surprise, almost to its dismay, is bring into the open that there is a tremendous amount of effort on the part of this Government to create meaningful jobs all across this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roberts: They seem unhappy about that.

Mr. Nielsen: Oink, oink.

Mr. Roberts: Those Hon. Members would rather that the figures showed some kind of political manipulation, because what they are really interested in is not the passion for creating jobs, Mr. Speaker. That is not their passion. Their passion is a lust for power.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Brian. Brian.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the Minister that truth obviously is not the Minister's strong point.

An Hon. Member: Right on.