

*Oral Questions*

question should be asked of the Minister of Employment and Immigration who administers the program, not me.

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Employment and Immigration, then, whether he can explain why it has taken so long to get the forms out. The eastern townships of Quebec got them only late this week. Can the minister also tell us what programs he intends to put in place for advertising and militant promotion in order to maximize the return from this measure which is all we have from this government?

**Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that my department did, in fact, meet its deadline, contrary to what the Leader of the Opposition was propounding at the beginning of this week. The forms were in place with respect to Quebec. We wanted to make certain we got the forms out in bilingual fashion. They were all available on Monday and were moved out by bus to the various regions.

I am also pleased to say that initial indications are that there will be a positive and solid response to this particular program. The forms are in place. There may be one or two outlying offices where for one reason or another they have not been received, but the vast majority of Manpower offices have the forms. Employers can hire now and fill out the forms retroactively.

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Speaker, given the fact that this program is being handled by Canada Manpower centres which, let us face it, do not have a real presence in the business community, can the minister tell us how he intends to reach the business community? More particularly, when will the minister start his promotional campaign, and does he intend to promote the program actively in business journals and through chambers of commerce?

**Mr. Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that the business community is much better informed than my hon. colleague gives it credit for, because it is in fact aware of the program. There has been some impatience on the part of the business community. It has been waiting for us to get the forms out and the necessary regulations passed. However, preliminary indications are that the business community is aware of this opportunity and is, in fact, moving forward to take advantage of it. It is a splendid program and I am pleased to see that we are getting the appropriate reaction.

ALLEGED INEPT FORECASTING OF ECONOMIC SITUATION—  
EFFECT ON BUSINESS AND CONSUMERS

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. We have noticed that there has been inept forecasting regarding growth, inflation, unemployment and cash requirements, which destroys the confidence of business and consumers. How can the minister tell us that he can rely on the expertise he has, and is it not about time he started to question competence?

[Mr. Chrétien.]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I am very glad that this question comes this morning because yesterday, with grand fanfare, the opposition proclaimed that Mr. de Cotret of the Conference Board of Canada had joined them. The Conservatives claim that that is a great acquisition. I am glad to say that the prediction of the Conference Board of Canada for growth in 1978 was 5 per cent, exactly the same as that of the Minister of Finance. Perhaps now hon. members opposite will have someone who will tell them what the reality is, something which they cannot understand themselves.

**Mr. Alexander:** Mr. Speaker, all indicators seem to show that we will need more than 2.5 per cent growth. We will need something over 5 per cent, and that is a fact.

**Mr. Andras:** He said 5 per cent.

**Mr. Alexander:** When the minister went to Washington in March of 1978, he indicated that we would have a \$7.7 billion cash requirement, yet last night the figure jumped to \$8.8 billion. How can the minister reconcile this? It is one thing to mislead the House of Commons and the Canadian people; it is another thing to go to Washington and mislead the people there.

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, speaking of misleading, I have not been to Washington in the last three years, so I think the hon. member has his facts wrong.

**Mr. Alexander:** You got my message, though. Answer my question.

**Mr. Chrétien:** With regard to predictions, I said very clearly yesterday that the increased cash requirements are caused by the fact that we have to pay interest and bonuses on the special Canada Savings Bond issue which comes to maturity on November 1, 1978. For normal operations, the cash requirements will be almost the same this year.

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## HEALTH

### REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF BAN ON SACCHARIN

**Mrs. Simma Holt (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Now that the courts have ruled that the sugar companies of Canada are joined in a monopoly, and therefore hold tremendous power and influence to block and prevent competition, and in light of this finding which, incidentally, might influence some members of the fourth estate to retract some of their invective against the former minister of consumer and corporate affairs, who alone tackled the monopoly—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Holt:** —will the minister have an independent investigator from outside her department review the ludicrous research upon which Canada alone banned saccharin, with the possibility of reversing that ban?