

Oral Questions

a very valuable type of work through investing in the development of those very critical natural resources. We are quite aware of the situation and are trying to respond to it as well as we can. We have introduced a number of solutions. I will be very happy to provide the hon. member with the information so that he can update himself.

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary. Given the present situation, I assume the minister realizes the importance of the question and the growing concern of the Canadian people. However, the minister has failed to answer my question. All these programs do not provide the slightest assurance that thousands of Canadians will be able to re-enter the labour market by December 31. In the circumstances, can the minister confirm to the House how many thousands of Canadians will lose their entitlement to unemployment insurance by December 31? That is a question the minister should be able to answer. According to his department, there will be more than 500,000, and if that is the case, it would be an absolute disaster, and the minister probably realizes this, but in any case, I feel the Canadian people have a right to know whether the minister at least realizes that thousands of Canadians stand to lose their entitlement to unemployment insurance, because there is no evidence that government action will provide work for 500,000 Canadians by December 31.

[English]

Mr. Axworthy: Madam Speaker, I would prefer to leave the whole occupation of forecasting doom to the members of the Conservative Party because they are so good at it. We are much more interested in putting people to work and in trying to find solutions rather than engaging in that kind of wild speculation which serves no purpose.

• (1430)

One cannot predict those kinds of figures because, under the Unemployment Insurance Act, workers on benefits can develop or acquire a certain number of weeks of benefits for work during that period of time to re-establish their benefits during the work period. The hon. member should know that because he has been doing it long enough. It would be a much greater service if he engaged in trying to help us to help the unemployed rather than simply engaging in that kind of forecasting in the realm of prophecy.

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MEDICAL CARE

FEDERAL SHARE OF EXPENSES

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for the social policy envelope. In light of the fact that the Minister of National Health and Welfare has been asking provincial ministers to expand the health care that is available to Canadians under insurance principles, can the minister say where the money is

going to come from for the federal share? Will we get an expanded envelope, or are we going to steal from one purpose to pay for another?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, the minister is not here to answer but I would like to say there are some programs in the book, voted by the House, and accordingly we are of the view that the best medical services should be given to Canadians and we ask the provinces to collaborate to achieve this.

PROVISION OF FUNDS FOR SERVICES

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, I would ask the Minister of State responsible for social policy, responsible for the social policy spending envelope, whether or not he has given the Minister of National Health and Welfare a commitment for increased spending that will allow for the increased services which he is saying should be provided by the provinces? Will there be more money for more service, yes or no?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, I think that the estimates of the Minister of National Health and Welfare are in front of the House of Commons and the hon. member should ask these questions of the Minister of National Health and Welfare who is responsible for health services, to the House of Commons.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): I thought you were the big cheese—le gros fromage.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

LEGAL COSTS OF NURSE EXONERATED ON MURDER CHARGES

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Madam Speaker, I have a question to put to the Solicitor General. On Friday last Susan Nelles was discharged on four counts of murder and exonerated at a preliminary hearing as a judge found there was no evidence upon which a reasonably instructed jury could convict. There is no way to compensate Miss Nelles for 14 months of embarrassment, anguish, and worry as a result of the charges, but there must be a way in which she could be compensated for her legal costs, which will run to between \$150,000 and \$200,000. In light of the fact that Clifford Olson could be paid \$100,000 as a convicted murderer, by the government, will the Solicitor General consent to compensating Miss Nelles for her legal costs when she had to fight for her life when she was obviously innocent?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General): Madam Speaker, as the House knows, the administration of justice is a provincial matter. The investigation and the charges that were laid were