

## PUBLIC SERVICE

## RELOCATION AND DECENTRALIZATION

**Mr. Hugh Poulin (Ottawa Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Public Works. In view of the principal conclusions of the main recommendations of the Woods-Gordon report on relocation and decentralization of the public service, and in view of the many representations by individuals and groups to the Minister of Public Works, I should like to ask whether he is prepared to recommend to his cabinet colleagues any policy which would redress in total or in part the adverse effects being occasioned the central core of the city of Ottawa by the relocation and decentralization of the public service.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, would any such policy include a slowdown of the move to Hull until there is a modest rate of growth in the public service, namely, 2 per cent or 3 per cent, and a commitment on behalf of this government to continue to rent at least 50 per cent—

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows we have met with representatives of the Building Owners and Managers Association. We have given an undertaking concerning the space we will continue to lease beyond the completion of the move to Hull. We will do our utmost to try to keep the percentage of occupancy in the various buildings concerned at 50 per cent, but we do not believe we can stop the move. We think we would be accused by the Auditor General of irresponsibility if we held Crown-owned buildings vacant when leases had in fact expired.

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## THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

## TAX CREDIT PROGRAM—REASON PROGRAM NOT IN PLACE

**Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Employment and Immigration, I will direct my question to the Minister of Finance. Notwithstanding the assurance the minister gave the House that the employment tax credit bill would be in place by March 1, we now know that because of technical difficulties the booklets designed to assist businessmen to take advantage of the program will not be ready until the end of April. Can the minister please explain why this bill, so important to the one million plus unemployed Canadians, is not ready and in place now in accordance with the assurance he gave the House when the bill was passed?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Employment and Immigration gave the House of Commons the assurance last week that the program was in place and that applicants could file their applications with the department; and as well as that, there are officers in every

## Oral Questions

branch of his department to give explanations to the people who want to take advantage of the program.

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that senior officials of the Department of Employment and Immigration have informed us that these booklets, so necessary to assist businesses that wish to take advantage of this program, will not be ready until the end of April because of technical difficulties, in view of the fact that application forms are only now going out into the field, and because of the importance of the bill to the unemployed people of this country, I ask the minister whether he is now able to give the House his assurance, for what it is worth, that the bill will be in place before the end of March?

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, of course I can give that commitment to the hon. member: the bill has been in place since March 8, two weeks ago.

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Speaker, I ask the question again. The minister is playing with words. I am talking about the implementation of this important bill. We know it has been passed by parliament. That places the onus upon the government to implement it. Would the minister give the House the assurance that this bill will be implemented before the end of March, or give an explanation as to why not?

• (1442)

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I said the bill has been in place since March 8. People can file applications if they want to benefit from the program. This is the word received by the House of Commons from the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

## GOVERNMENT CASH REQUIREMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1978-79

**Mr. Bill Kempling (Halton-Wentworth):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. My colleague, the hon. member for York-Simcoe, asked the minister on March 17 about the level of Crown corporation borrowings in the coming fiscal year in addition to the government's cash requirement of \$11 billion. Now that the minister has had an opportunity to inquire, could he tell the House the anticipated borrowings of Crown corporations for the next fiscal year?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I do not have the figure available at this moment. Some of the financing for Crown corporations is not decided as yet, and I am not in a position to give the final figure.

**Mr. Kempling:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. We are endeavouring to determine the total indebtedness of the Government of Canada, given its tendency to monetarize the increasing amount of debt in the country. We have noted that Statistics Canada, in a recent release, indicated that our balance of international payments was \$42.3 billion, or over \$2,000 for every man, woman and child in Canada.