

particular matter raised by the hon. member. As far as the indexation rate is concerned, we will be announcing soon the rate that will apply to the current year.

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[English]

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

LOCKEPORT, N.S.—REQUEST FOR TEMPORARY OFFICE TO HANDLE CLAIMS

**Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore):** Madam Speaker, I have a question which I should direct to the minister of manpower and immigration, but in his absence—

**An hon. Member:** He is here.

**An hon. Member:** He is half here.

**Mr. Crouse:** I am sorry. My question is directed to the minister of manpower, who was hiding behind the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Some four months after the destruction of the National Sea Products plant in Lockeport, Nova Scotia, unfortunately only 33 per cent of the displaced work force have found new employment. Since an estimated 200 former National Sea Products employees have filed for Unemployment Insurance Commission benefits, and some 25 of these workers have yet to receive a cent of assistance in the last four months due to bureaucratic red tape, will the minister take steps to open a temporary office in the town of Lockeport in order to handle the claims of these citizens who are really unemployed through no fault of their own, through what is really a disaster?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, although the hon. member was a little late in recognizing who the minister is, the name of the department is the Department of Employment and Immigration and it has been that way for two years.

**Miss MacDonald:** Lloyd who?

**Mr. Axworthy:** I would answer the hon. member by saying that we have a procedure whereby we establish consultative committees in towns affected by industrial change, strikes or lay-offs. We are quite prepared to establish such a committee to work with local citizens and provincial authorities to respond to the conditions the member described. I will ask my officials to look into it right away and give him a report.

**Mr. Crouse:** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister. Since the only recourse of many of these people is municipal social assistance, which will cost the county of Shelburne an estimated \$40,000 per month from now until spring of until some employment opportunities are provided, what special steps is the government planning to take to help ease this financial burden?

**Mr. Axworthy:** Madam Speaker, I would point out that welfare payments are already covered to the extent of 50 per

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cent of the cost by the federal government through the Canada Assistance Plan program, but I indicated to the hon. member that we will be looking into the situation, establishing a Manpower consultative committee if it is required, and working with local authorities to provide for any remedial solutions. As soon as I have a proper assessment of the conditions, I will give him a report and make sure that we take the steps that are necessary.

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● (1500)

#### RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

INQUIRY RESPECTING LONG-TERM FUNDING PLANS

**Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Science and Technology. It has become obvious that there is a tremendous need for long-term strategy as it relates to research and development. Not too long ago the chief research director for the Lamontagne Senate committee estimated that if we had had 1.5 per cent of our gross national product devoted to research and development we would have generated 1.52 million new jobs and \$15.4 billion in additional exports.

Research and development requires long-term planning and there is none. The minister stated not too long ago that he would tell the country in a few weeks when the government will be prepared to bring in its long-term funding arrangements. Could the minister inform the House and the scientific community in this country when the government will be prepared to lay out its long-term funding plans in order to bring research and development to 1.5 per cent of the gross national product?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment):** Very soon, Madam Speaker. I look forward to some opportunity early in the new year to be able to present our proposals in this regard.

**Mr. de Jong:** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister. He mentioned in committee it would be two weeks, and that was a week ago. I have noted in another press release that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce suggested spring, 1981; I hope it will be sooner.

My supplementary question also relates to research and development and university funding. The universities are in a state of—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. It is not necessary for the hon. member to respond to the minister's answer before asking his supplementary question. The hon. member should go directly to his question.

**Mr. de Jong:** Madam Speaker, I will go immediately to my question. Will the government commit itself to a review of existing fiscal transfer arrangements with the provinces to ensure that Canadian universities will in the future receive provincial support at a level commensurate with national