

Oral Questions

Mr. Gagliano: Can you define what is "streamlined accounting"?

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): The hon. member cannot keep his mouth shut while someone is speaking.

• (1450)

Mr. Speaker, it is a lot easier to hear if you keep your ears open and your mouth shut.

In addition to that, Canada has the lowest corporate income tax rates for small business. We reduced those in income tax reform in 1988.

The hon. member is shaking his head. These are all precise examples of how we have helped small business. If the hon. member keeps shaking his head he will not be able to hear anything and he will not be able to learn anything.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

The members of this House are aware of a bill passed in the other place yesterday concerning the unemployment insurance program. The deliberate delay of Bill C-21 by an appointed body is an unacceptable frustration of the democratic process.

This government has put forward changes which will make this country more competitive and will give unemployed Canadians better access to job training. All reasonable Canadians will see that this game must not continue.

Could the minister advise the House of how the government intends to respond to this legislation?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, it is the intention of the government to treat what has gone on in the other place as a frivolous and silly interference with the good policies of this government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. McDougall: Let me point out to the hon. members opposite, including those who were on the legislative committee, that the members of the Senate committee are now studying Bill C-21. They are studying

it one word at a time. We are not sure when they will finish.

The legislative committee heard 200 witnesses in four weeks. The committee in the other place has heard 15 witnesses in six weeks. This is not serious study as far as I am concerned.

What this bill that they have passed over there does is ignore all the other benefits, not just the variable entry requirements, but the benefits for older workers and the benefits for women. You hear the women over there all booing and hissing. What about the extension of maternity and adoption benefits?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. McDougall: For the rural areas of Canada, what about the fact that our bill does away with the penalty for seasonal workers who repeat on unemployment insurance? They are going to be penalized.

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PANAMA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Crosbie: The Noriega lover is up.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg Transcona has the floor.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, the military action by the American government in Panama is a very serious matter. It is taken seriously by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, even if it is not by some of his back-benchers. It is taken seriously by the opposition.

It seems to me that there is a great deal of room for legitimate criticism of what the Americans have done and that is what we are engaged in here. It is not a question of anybody being a Noriega lover or any of the kind of heckling coming from members opposite.

No one approved of the Noriega regime. It is a question of whether the end, which we all shared in this case, the restoration of democracy in Panama, justified the means in this case.

We are suggesting that what the American government has done sets a dangerous precedent, as the minister himself said. We are asking the government, the Prime Minister or the Secretary of State, to say whether or not they appreciate the full extent of what the American government has done at a time when the other superpower has been relinquishing the view that what happens in geographical proximity to it gives it this arbitrary right to intervene. What happens to the overall relationship between east and west when the United