

of the industry, it is the small operator who is being scrutinized, and special care is given to persecute those in the helicopter industry. As a consequence many are finding themselves in court on charges of a very minor or technical nature for practices which have been followed for years. At the beginning of January alone, there were fifteen such cases in British Columbia.

The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the viability of small businesses governed by the air carrier regulations is seriously jeopardized. Why is it that just the small-businessman is being scrutinized, and why is it that the Department only became concerned over possible minor violations after the Dubin Report was released?

To date no progress has been made in reaching a conciliation. The Department, in its mailed first approach, is forcing the independent operator into oblivion. Due to the total insecurity which exists in the industry, applicants cannot even bid for contracts simply because they do not know whether their applications for licences will be approved. Even so, applications are four months behind in processing. As a result the large firms are seizing the small contracts in coastal communities, which were traditionally the preserve of the small operator.

When the economy picks up, these small communities—

Madam Speaker: Order.

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PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS

CONFERENCE BOARD FORECAST OF GROWTH IN SASKATCHEWAN

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Madam Speaker, two weeks ago the Conference Board of Canada came out in its latest quarterly provincial economic forecast with the tragic prediction that our economy would grow by only 1.2 per cent in 1983. But even more shocking, Madam Speaker, if you can imagine it, is the fact that the growth rate in Saskatchewan will be 0.4 per cent, or about one-third of the national average. That is lower than any other Province in Canada.

In 1981 Saskatchewan had the highest growth rate in Canada, but after only eight short months of a Tory Government in that Province it has fallen from number one to number ten.

Mr. Epp: Try Manitoba for size.

Mr. Nystrom: Tory times are tough times. I see the Tories are objecting.

● (1415)

Another interesting fact is that bankruptcies are up by 116 per cent in eight months; unemployment has gone up from 4.6 per cent to 7.7 per cent, and that also is in eight short

Oral Questions

months. History is repeating itself. The Tories are campaigning in our Province that they are open for business. Ross Thatcher and his Liberal Party did the same thing 20 years ago and those were seven long, lean years of liberalism that made our Province a have-not Province.

I ask, if this happens in eight months, just think what would happen to this country if that Party were in power for four years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

BROADCASTING

PUBLICATION OF STRATEGY—GOVERNMENT INTENTIONS FOR CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Communications and it arises from his vague national broadcasting strategy which he announced outside the House yesterday. One can now see why he chose not to announce it in the House; it was because it was embarrassing because it contained so little.

The broadcasting strategy contains nothing on radio, and the Government's policy for the CBC is to tell it to study itself. In view of the fact that it is proposing major new competition to private broadcasters, how does the Government expect private broadcasters to plan for the future when the Government is incapable of making up its own mind about what to do with the CBC?

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): In reply to the hon. gentleman I notice, for instance, that the Canadian Cable Television Association labels the strategy a significant turning point and the beginning of a new era for consumers and entrepreneurs alike. Yesterday was a significant turning point, particularly in relation to the development of Canadian programming. The Government announced that it would be making a fund of some \$60 million available to the private sector in Canada to produce quality Canadian programming. This in turn will bring another \$120 million of production funds into the hands of private program producers. What happened yesterday was not only a major advance in the area of program production for the Canadian creative community, it was indeed a quantum leap.

FUTURE OF PRIVATE BROADCASTERS

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, perhaps now that the Minister has unburdened himself of that little speech he can answer the question. How are private sector broadcasters expected to plan for the future when the Government itself is incapable of deciding what it wants to do with the CBC?