

ennial and is ignoring this important legacy given to Ontario and Canada. It is just this type of partisan extravagance that turns one part of Canada against another, one Canadian against another. With the unfortunate unemployment situation in southeastern Ontario, and with the tourist industry in need of promotion, it would only seem fair to create employment and offer a much needed boost to this area on an equal basis.

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IMMIGRATION

IMMUNITY PROGRAM FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS— ANNOUNCED TERMINATION DATE

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, on June 29 the previous Minister of Employment and Immigration completed a year spent studying a thousand briefs from the public, by announcing a program of case-by-case review of long-term illegal migrants in Canada. He aimed to bring them into compliance with the law where possible, by encouraging them to come forward and be legalized, so as to reduce lawbreaking, human suffering and breakup of families, and to avoid the mammoth legal hassles of 50,000 deportation cases and appeals. This was welcomed by the churches and the other voluntary agencies serving immigrants.

However, the present Minister seems intent on destroying this program. After a brief and quiet press statement made in early August, no instructions were sent to immigrant-serving agencies and lawyers for over two months. By November 17 less than 1,000 out of an estimated 50,000 illegal migrants had applied under this program. Less than a quarter of the applications had been reviewed, and less than 6 per cent of the anonymous applications were given approval in principle.

• (1115)

Clearly, illegal migrants were cautious and were waiting to see how well the program would work for them. However, the Minister then announced that he would cut off the program on March 30. He sent out questionnaires requiring the re-examination of applicants, even demanding the passport number from anonymous applicants, thus making a mockery of the program. No wonder the illegal migrants are cautious.

I call on the Minister to cancel his cutoff and to give serious encouragement to the good program started by the previous Minister.

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TRADE

CANADA-RUSSIA IMBALANCE—IMPORTANCE OF EXPORTS TO WESTERN CANADA

Mr. Bill Yurko (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, Canada is a trading nation. Western Canada in particular owes its very economic vitality to international trade. Its economy is based on the export of grain, coal, natural gas, forestry products, minerals, et cetera.

Oral Questions

Our trade with Russia is substantial. On an annual basis Russia buys almost \$2.25 billion worth of Canadian wheat, and about \$150 million worth of oil field equipment and technology. Canada, in exchange, buys a paltry \$45 million worth per year of Lada cars and trucks from Russia. This is a distorted balance of trade, and the Russians are certainly looking to close the vast exchange gap in trade. Other international markets for wheat and technology are available to them.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I was indeed perplexed to hear and understand the revulsion in this House recently over the statement by the Minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board that we may have to buy a few more Lada cars in order to maintain our trade with Russia. I am concerned. Is the interest of western Canada again to be sacrificed to the political sensitivity of central Canada? I trust that cooler minds will prevail, as they have on several issues, such as the Manitoba language issue and the recent health care issue, and that western Canada trade with Russia will be maintained.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

CROWN CORPORATIONS

NEED FOR CONTROL—REQUEST THAT COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATION BE INTRODUCED

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. He will know that within seven months of coming to office in 1979, the Progressive Conservative Government introduced to Parliament a comprehensive Bill to control Crown corporations. Since that time all the Minister has been able to do is introduce a Bill that was so bad it had to be withdrawn, and to allow a series of scandals to take place which have cost taxpayers over \$2 billion.

When will the Minister introduce to Parliament a comprehensive Bill dealing with Crown corporations, which will come to grips with the issues which have been pointed out by the Lambert Commission, the Public Accounts Committee, and the Auditor General, among others?

Hon. Herb Gray (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I do not accept the premise of my hon. friend's remarks. The Bill that was introduced by my predecessor, not by me, was a very important response to the need for a stronger accountability framework. Be that as it may, we said in the Throne Speech that we intended to introduce new legislation on this matter. It is my intention early in the New Year, I hope, to introduce a Bill which will be comprehensive and will have as its objective, responding to a range of important and, I think, legitimate concerns about the objects and content of the previous draft legislation.