

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, I will go right to the Prime Minister. In spite of the continuing decline in the level of the Canadian dollar, in spite of the fact that we now have the deepest recession in Canada since the 1930s, I have been told that the Prime Minister made it clear to the Liberal caucus meeting this morning that there would be no basic change in the economic policy of Canada. I should like to ask the Prime Minister if this was or was not the case.

● (1425)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the hon. member should know better than to ask me to comment on what goes on in caucus. I do not ask what goes on in his caucus.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, the people of Canada know better than to ask the Prime Minister to comment on anything, because they get no answers at all.

QUERY RESPECTING GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, considering the expectations the Prime Minister raised when he was in Versailles, and the deep feelings all over this country that something serious needs to be done to change economic direction, will the Prime Minister give us his assurance that he argued before his colleagues, whether in caucus or not, about the need for a shift in economic policy, and that he will have specific policies to bring before the people of Canada in this Chamber which will indicate a significant change to a new economic direction?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, yesterday the Tory spokesmen were asking me what was going on in cabinet; now the Leader of the New Democratic Party wants to know what I argued in caucus. Surely the two opposition parties might get together, and maybe between them they could come up with some ideas of their own.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, that deep, arid and cynical sense of sarcasm the Prime Minister has—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: —is what endears him so much to the hearts and minds of the people of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT TAKE ACTION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, considering that the Conservative Party has made some suggestions, and the New Democratic Party has made some suggestions—

Some hon. Members: What?

Mr. Broadbent: I will put forward suggestions, Madam Speaker, because obviously the backbenchers in the Liberal

Party have had nothing to say. Will the Prime Minister consider doing something about the fisheries in Canada, the logging industry, the lay-offs in the automotive industry, and do something about all the businesses which are shutting down? Suggestions have been made on this side of the House in all those areas; will the Government of Canada finally act?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Madam Speaker, just a few days ago the hon. member was making suggestions concerning some of those industries. I dealt with them and I suggested, in so far as the representations of the Leader of the New Democratic Party were concerned, I would consider them seriously.

* * *

SMALL BUSINESS

DEVELOPMENT BOND PROGRAM

Mr. Otto Jelinek (Halton): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance knows that the Small Business Development Bond program in its original form assisted thousands of small businesses in Canada to cope with the government's high interest rates, and at the same time increased the net revenue to the federal treasury by \$77 million in the first year of operation alone, as a study by Infometrica concluded. In light of that, can the minister justify his taking the "development" out of the bond, thereby reducing it to nothing more than a useless empty disguise, at a time when small business needs that assistance the most?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I explained that situation in some detail, I believe it was last week, in the House.

REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN PROGRAM

Mr. Otto Jelinek (Halton): Madam Speaker, we want some definite answers from this minister. He knows there are thousands of bankruptcies taking place every day in the small business sector which add to the record level of unemployment. Is the minister now prepared to reinstate the bond program to its original form, before the end of the month? If not, will he tell us why he is not prepared to do that?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I have already answered that question within the last seven sitting days. The same two questions have been put and answered. But I will tell the hon. member that if any decision is made about an alteration to the bond, I will be pleased to advise him when that decision is taken.