

Oral Questions

When we see such advertisements or activities of this kind in Canada we do investigate them with a view to seeing whether action under the Immigration Act to stop them is appropriate. I very much regret the activities that he is describing taking place. These consultants cannot provide better information or better access than that which is provided by the officers of my Department.

APPLICATION OF GOVERNMENT'S POLICY

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister. He might also want to know that the embassy has even countered some advertisements which claim that for \$250,000 you can get into Canada.

A number of immigration consultants and lawyers, including the Hon. Minister's predecessor, Ron Atkey, the Conservative Minister, have been to Hong Kong to take advantage of this bonanza business. Does the Minister think that our immigration policy, which favours business investment over family reunification, can lead to inequalities, and encourages these sharks to go to Hong Kong and say that you can in fact buy your way into Canada, at a time when the Hong Kong people are very uneasy over the renewal of the British treaty with China? Is not the policy itself inherently inequitable when it leads to this kind of situation?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): No, Madam Speaker, I do not think so, for two reasons which I would like to underline. First, it is not true that anyone can buy their way into Canada. It is possible, using the entrepreneurial class, for people to come to Canada bringing investment and their administrative skills. However, there are qualifications which are attached to that, requirements which they must meet in terms of the amount of money they invest, their participation in the enterprise, and the creation of jobs.

The second point which I would like to emphasize to the Hon. Member is that in the announcement of the desirable levels of immigration quotas, we have not reduced the size of the family entrance group. There has not been an increase of projected numbers in the entrepreneurial class at the expense of family reunification. I hope that is understood. I think that the assumptions which he presented in his question are not entirely accurate and would not lead to the conclusion that there is an injustice in the way in which the system is operating.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

APPLICATION OF SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The national economic analysis prepared by the federal Minister of State for Economic and Regional Expansion,

which has been referred to by my colleague from St. John's East, states clearly that current federal job training efforts in Prince Edward Island are "largely directed at off-Island employment opportunities".

According to the Government's own information and analysis, such programs rob the Island of its skilled young people in favour of other parts of Canada. What specific steps is the Minister prepared to take to correct this most serious deficiency in job-creation programs and job-training programs at the federal level?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the report to which the Hon. Member is referring is one which dates back to last February and I therefore am not sure that the description which he cites is entirely accurate or appropriate to circumstances which we now face. He posed his question originally in terms of Prince Edward Island and then concluded with a more general question. I will write specifically about the Prince Edward Island situation.

We do have the Skills Growth Fund and other programs which are oriented towards creating the technological skills which he touched upon in his question. I have said to the House in the past that we have been a little bit disappointed in the take-up of some of those programs over the last year or so, since the private sector has been unwilling to accept the overhead costs which are implied in those programs. Our anticipation is that with the continuation of the recovery and the strengthening of the economy the private sector will be more anxious to take advantage of those programs which we have put in place. That is the general answer to his question, and I will return to him more specifically on the question of Prince Edward Island.

SUGGESTED CO-ORDINATION OF PROJECTS

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same Minister. The same Government analysis to which I have made reference states that the major federal projects in Prince Edward Island have been poorly scheduled leading to "over-expansion in boom periods followed by over-capacity and unemployment". Given the millions of dollars which the federal Government is spending on Prince Edward Island on such projects as the national headquarters for DVA, the Charlottetown airport, the convention centre, and other programs, how does the Minister propose to co-ordinate those different projects to ensure maximum advantage to the local economy, especially to workers in the construction industry?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I am a little bit puzzled. I am not sure whether the Hon. Member is suggesting that it would have been preferable if those projects had not proceeded. It is my impression that those projects are both active and of benefit to the Prince Edward Island economy. There are continuing discussions between the Government of Prince Edward Island