

Oral Questions

Is it essential to his budget objectives that unemployment rise in Canada during 1990? Does he have to ensure there is unemployment in order for his budget to have any chance of success in reaching its objectives?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let's put this into perspective. When we came into office in 1984 the unemployment rate was 11.7 per cent.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I hear groans on the other side of the House. I know they don't like to be reminded of the bad old days, but that is a fact.

Mr. Mulroney: Liberal days.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Over the course of this year and into next year we do expect that there will be some increase in the unemployment rate, but the underlying employment will be growing. It is just because the growth in the labour force will be faster than the growth of employment. That leads to some increase in the unemployment rate, but this is going to be just this year and into next year.

Through this whole period there will be an increase in employment, unlike the substantial drop in employment, the huge drop in employment we saw in 1981 and 1982.

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FISHERIES

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, just moments ago the Minister for International Trade announced that an agreement has been reached allowing 20 per cent of B.C. herring and salmon to be exported to the U.S. prior to landing in B.C., for this year; for the next three years, 25 per cent; and then further review.

Some hon. members: Shame, shame!

Mr. Stupich: The minister and his colleagues have repeatedly said that no jobs "historically established" would be lost as a result of any decision reached under GATT or under the free trade agreement. Would the minister mind explaining exactly how Canada can allow up to 25 per cent of our total catch of fish to be exported

before processing without losing processing jobs in Canada?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has not advised the House that while this agreement may pose some difficulties it is a necessary agreement in order that Canada can live up to her international trading obligations and maintain access to our markets.

All Canadian fish, salmon or herring, are caught by Canadian fishermen. We have the most competitive processing industry in the world if we were to hear the workers and processing companies talk. Therefore they are just going to have to sharpen their pencils and keep being competitive.

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same minister.

This agreement totally breaks all the promises made by this minister, previous ministers, the Minister for International Trade and the Prime Minister.

How does the minister intend to monitor the repercussions of this ludicrous agreement? How is the minister going to count up to 25 per cent of an unknown quantity when he knows that currently fish are being landed secretly? He knows this cannot be policed.

We have given in more than the free trade panel recommended. It said up to 10 per cent or maybe 20 per cent. Now we are going up to 25 per cent for four years, and after that who knows how high? How much more are we going to give to the U.S. just to get it to accept our largess?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is not telling the House that under the recommendation of the panel 10 per cent to 20 per cent of the product could be exported uninspected.

Under this arrangement 100 per cent of all salmon and herring caught in Canadian waters will be subjected to examination, counting, and weighing by Canadian fisheries officers on Canadian vessels.

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister.

The Minister for International Trade sold out Canada on the softwood issue. With respect to the fisheries we