

sion, but in his absence I will direct it to the Deputy Prime Minister.

On July 23, 1980, a disastrous fire destroyed the National Sea Products plant in Lockeport, Nova Scotia, causing a direct loss of 305 jobs. The plant represented more than 50 per cent of the economic base of the Lockeport area and the payroll for 1979 was approximately \$2.5 million. I am sure the minister is well aware of the facts of this case. They were made known to the government on August 27, 1980. In the interim officials of National Sea Products have provided government officials with detailed plans for a new plant at Lockeport. Is the minister in a position to indicate when a DREE grant will be made available to assist the company in re-establishing this much needed facility?

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Madam Speaker, the minister is well aware of the hardship this loss has imposed on the community of Lockeport and the Nova Scotia office of the department has looked into this matter quite carefully. A proposal will be made to the advisory board of the department within the next few weeks, and shortly after that the minister will be able to give a decision to the hon. member.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Crouse:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary for that response. My supplementary question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, since I believe he is also involved in a matter of this type.

Prior to the fire, the National Sea Products plant purchased some groundfish and sold bait to some 30 other companies from as far away as Liverpool, Queens county to Chebogue, Yarmouth county, representing most of the Nova Scotia south shore. Is the minister aware that the 30 companies directly affected are served by some 522 boats, which are mostly inshore boats, employing 1,257 fishermen? Will the minister encourage officials to speed up the application for this construction grant as expeditiously as possible and give it top priority, since the impact on Nova Scotia's economy is more far-reaching than appears on the surface?

● (1450)

**Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Obviously, Madam Speaker, any loss of sales encountered by fishermen is seen as serious by my department. However, in relation to this type of application, our job is to indicate if the resource can justify a plant expansion or if just a replacement of the existing capacity can be justified. We did indicate to DREE that we felt there was no room for expansion in this area. There is already a fair demand for the fishermen's product. However, we did indicate that we are ready to recommend a replacement of the capacity which existed before the fire. That was our job. We have done it. I hope this problem is resolved very soon.

### *Oral Questions*

### **EMPLOYMENT**

#### SKILL-TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Madam Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Figures released today show there are 368,000 young people out of work, 45 per cent of all the unemployed. The rate of unemployment among young people is more than twice the rate for those over 25. The economy is not expanding. In view of these facts, will the minister consider an early aggressive program to train many of these young people in the skilled jobs in short supply of labour in this country and for which there is a great need?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, the proposal put forward by the hon. member is a very valuable one. It is being carefully examined by the parliamentary committee of which he is a member. I look forward to the recommendations to be made by that committee, which I understand will be meeting very soon to bring forward an interim report. As well, we are looking within our department at additional training measures which could be introduced during the next calendar year and which would provide the very incentives the hon. member talks about.

I would point out to him that our economy, like other economies, is going through a very tough period. There is a general recession throughout the industrialized world. However, job creation within Canada is still the strongest of any of the industrialized countries, and we created well over 280,000 jobs last year. In particular, the growth rate of employment for women was at 6 per cent, the highest record of any country in the industrialized world.

**Mr. Orlikow:** Madam Speaker, a program to train people will take some considerable time to start. Despite the minister's claims regarding job creation, there is more unemployment at the present time than in any period since the dirty thirties. It is not much consolation to the 368,000 unemployed young people to be told that 200,000 others have found jobs. Will the government give serious consideration to an expanded job-creation program so that young people who want to work will be able to, rather than being unemployed and possibly drawing unemployment insurance?

**Mr. Axworthy:** Madam Speaker, I would like to correct some of the statements of the hon. member. We have about the same unemployment rate that we had this time last year. In fact, the unemployment rate in this country has been stable over the past three or four years. Furthermore, the employment ratio of workers to number of jobs available has been rising substantially. That does not give us any satisfaction because we would like to create even more work. That is why this government reintroduced a number of job-creation programs and why the Minister of Finance in his budget indicated that additional moneys will be set aside for new industrial programs, including major incentives for training and job