

Oral Questions

I hope that these funds indeed will lead to the employment of young people as well as adult Canadians all across the country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

FORECAST OF JOBS TO BE CREATED

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, God knows we need better Search and Rescue in this country. But we need jobs, and we are not going to get them this year according to the Minister of Finance.

I want to ask a question of the Minister of Employment and Immigration, who has to share the responsibility for this cruel hoax that has been perpetrated on the unemployed. That is what the budget is, a cruel hoax. I want to put a question to that Minister who has to bear responsibility for advice given to the Minister of Finance. Given the fact that at the end of 1985 we will have more people unemployed, three years on into recovery, than at the end of 1982 when there were more people unemployed than at any time since 1933—given that disgraceful fact which I take from the forecast of the Minister of Finance—will he tell the House how many jobs we can expect from the program brought in by his colleague, the Minister of Finance, last night? When can we expect these jobs? There are two million Canadians out there who are waiting.

● (1425)

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, before the Hon. Member gets himself worked into a frenzy, it might be useful if he went back and read the budget documents that were tabled last night.

Mr. Jarvis: Which ones?

Mr. Axworthy: The Minister of Finance indicated that over the next two years 600,000 jobs will be created in Canada. That will be an average labour growth of between 3 and 5 per cent over the next two years to provide major stimulus in the economy. Those 600,000 jobs will come from a combination of jobs provided in the private sector and direct employment jobs.

The Hon. Member seems to be suffering from a major learning disability in not being able to read properly. I would point out to him that the fact of the matter is that the \$1.6 billion that is being put into direct employment jobs will create something like 300,000 jobs directly by the Government, through this Department, over the next two years. Before he goes into his wild, frantic outburst, it would be well for him to go back and read those facts so that he can provide proper, straight information to the Canadian public.

1983 UNEMPLOYMENT FORECAST

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, first of all I would say to the Minister who has just spoken that I have read the documents. Now I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

Given the fact that there are two million Canadian men and women who would like to get a job, how can the Minister of Finance describe his budget as a recovery budget when he notes in his budget documents that there are going to be fewer jobs in the Canadian economy in 1983 than in 1982?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, at the end of 1984 I said there would be 600,000 more Canadians employed than there were at the end of 1982.

Some Hon. Members: 1983.

Mr. Lalonde: At the end of 1983 we will have an improvement in the job situation. We have a very high level of unemployment at the present time. I have never indicated that we would get out of the unemployment level that we are facing at the present time just by the wish of the Leader of the NDP Opposition. I have indicated that the situation would improve gradually. This is what we are working on as fast and as urgently as is possible.

It is true that we have a high level of unemployment at the present time and that it will stay with us for a while. The question is whether we should get together and try to improve the situation, as was proposed in the budget, or just go on raving and ranting like the Leader of the NDP. I do not follow that line.

REASONS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT FORECAST

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I want to give the Minister a chance to correct the record before the House. I listened with care, and he just said that there is going to be an improvement in the job situation in 1983. Is he changing the budget once again, or will he admit that what he just said contradicts what appears on page 16 of "The Economic Outlook for Canada" document, which clearly indicates that there are going to be fewer jobs in the Canadian economy on average this year than there were last year? Will the Minister clarify that situation?

If he agrees that what I have said is true, then I come back to my first question. How, in heaven's name, does he have the nerve to call this a recovery budget when he knows that we are going to have about two million unemployed at the end of this year just as we have now?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, the record shows that there will be more jobs at the end of this year in the Canadian economy than there were at the beginning of the year. That is what is going to take place. The average for this year is forecast to be about 12.4 per cent. We start from a high level and it will go down gradually. At the end of this year we will be in a better position in terms of numbers of jobs in this country than we are at the present time or than we were in January. That is what is happening. That is what will continue to happen gradually over the next two years.