

*Oral Questions*

**Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova):** The people don't want to hear that any more. They want action.

**Mrs. McDougall:** Maybe the hon. member would like to listen to the answer.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mrs. McDougall:** Mr. Speaker, the people whom we listen to are the people we serve through unemployment insurance and through our own offices across Canada. They themselves are telling us that they believe they are unable to get the jobs that are available because they do not have the skills. That is why this bill is important, because it is going to give them the skills.

**Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same minister. I would like to say to the minister, in all sincerity, that people in Atlantic Canada do not want any more surveys. They do not want her personal experiences. They do not want StatsCan statistics. What they want are jobs. That's what they want. Jobs.

In light of the fact that the minister has admitted that there are no jobs in Newfoundland, that there are no jobs in Nova Scotia, and that there is no industrial infrastructure there, will the minister agree that she will withdraw Bill C-21 rather than exacerbate an already deplorable situation?

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the man is misquoting me right in front of my very eyes. Let me point out to him that in 1989 over 8,000 jobs were created in Newfoundland outside the St. John's metropolitan area. That is true in every region of Canada.

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

**Mrs. McDougall:** The workers of Canada do not want more rhetoric and more shouting about this bill when they know that this bill is going to provide them with the skills and training that they need, to say nothing of the other benefits in this bill which include women in Canada who are expecting babies who are asking for parental benefits and people over age 65 who are looking for their benefits.

All of that is in this bill, and I am surprised the hon. member is not ashamed of himself for paying no attention to them.

**Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary question is for the same minister. The people in Newfoundland are now trembling in anticipation. They are really fearful that with the fish plant closures and the cut-back in the quotas for fishing about 4,000 people will be added to the unemployment rolls.

Will the minister not admit that in fact there is high unemployment in Newfoundland and that there are not the jobs in Newfoundland for these people to take? Will she not admit that putting Bill C-21, the changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act, into effect will exacerbate an already serious situation? Will she not take the advice, dare I say it, from the other place and withdraw the bill?

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** No, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that I will not withdraw the bill. He is failing to notice that in the higher unemployment areas of Canada this bill is very sensitive to those needs.

One of the things that we do for people involved in the fishing industry is that we remove the penalty for seasonal workers who repeat through the system. That is good for the people of Newfoundland as they are going through a difficult time. It will help us in terms of both training and regional development, which go together. You cannot have one without the other.

That is what this government recognizes, and that is what the NDP always fails to recognize.

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**GOODS AND SERVICES TAX**

**Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Finance, my question is for the Minister of State for Finance.

Electricity is vital. Its uses and users are limitless. The minister was sent a resolution from the municipality of Nepean which outlined the injurious effects a GST on electricity would have on the poor, on industry, and on the economy.

Given that taxing electricity is inconsistent with the government's own stated objectives of exempting standard municipal services, how can the minister justify taxing this essential service, yet another blow to the poor in this country?