

Oral Questions

economic policy of this government will create new jobs, my question is: Will the minister make available to the House of Commons the information on which he bases his projection, so we can be sure the minister correctly understands that information, that he is correctly presenting the views of his officials, and so that all Canadians, including this parliament, will have some reason for confidence—something more than the word of this minister that we can count upon for that kind of rate of real growth in the country? Will he make that information available to the House of Commons?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I made an economic statement on October 20, 1977, in which I explained why we believe the growth will be 5 per cent. There is no information at present which will force me to change that projection. I stand by what I said. Before I made those projections, I had long discussions with the very able advisers of the Department of Finance and the Bank of Canada, and to date they have not asked me to change my position.

Mr. Clark: Will the Minister of Finance agree, right now, to resign if he is wrong in that projection?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I can understand that the hon. member would like me to be out of politics. I would like to be out of politics, but when I see that we could be replaced by a party which will be led by him, I have reason to stay around.

GOVERNMENT ADVICE TO JOBLESS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the soon-to-be unemployed Minister of Employment and Immigration. I ask him this question: Given the fact that according to the latest figures of Statistics Canada, there are 26 job seekers for every job opening in this country, and apart from the frivolous and irresponsible advice he gave to the group he calls the mommas and poppas of the country not to send their kids to university, as well as a million dollars worth of offensive advice he has given to unemployment insurance recipients, what advice does he have for the one million Canadians for whom there are no job openings?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, with that preamble we have seen an unusual phenomenon: the hon. member's mind stopped working and his mouth kept functioning.

An hon. Member: Tell that to the unemployed.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wants to constantly misquote what in fact was said by myself, I suppose that is appropriate enough, if that is the kind of hyperbole that he wants to use. Let me suggest to him that in addition to being the official crepe-hangers over there, some consideration should be given to the fact that in villages and small communities such as Pembroke an industrial park has been opened, and Shell are talking about embarking upon a \$200 million expansion.

[Mr. Clark.]

The hon. member has said there is no hope for the people who are unemployed. I say that is just not the case. Shell management have indicated they are expanding; they are moving into a Syncrude project. When we hear all the blues being cried about not being able to lease buildings in Ottawa, we should remember that Metropolitan Life, with its large building, says they are having no difficulty. There are all kinds of opportunities and optimism alive in the country.

LEADERSHIP FROM DEPARTMENT TO IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. If we are to go by the irrational statements of the Minister of Employment and Immigration, his mind is certainly not working. My question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce is this: Given the fact that in the month of January there were more than 7,000 plant lay-offs, affecting every region of the country, mainly because of lack of orders, what direction or leadership can we expect from the minister and his department with respect to the plants which are being forced to close down and lay-off Canadians because of lack of orders?

● (1127)

Hon. Jack H. Horner (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that at any given time in a normal year, 25 per cent of the labour force change jobs.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Horner: I hear members saying "Oh, oh!" Some move up the ladder, some move laterally, and some move to new locations. I would also like to state that my department, through the enterprise development program, is assisting industry every day. In fact, in the month of January we probably substantiated 7,000 more jobs.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

MCDONALD INQUIRY—EVIDENCE THAT PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE INSPIRED RCMP BREAK-IN

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. I congratulate him on his appointment and on assuming this new responsibility. I wish him luck: he will probably need a lot. The evidence given before the McDonald inquiry yesterday was that the break-in at the offices containing PQ files was inspired, not by the RCMP security service but by information given from the Privy Council Office to the RCMP to the effect that the PQ was being funded from a foreign source.

Can the minister confirm that it was the PCO which gave the information to the RCMP before that activity against the PQ? Also, can he advise what evidence the PCO had, that the