

Oral Questions

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR ISSUANCE OF WEAPONS

Hon. Allan Lawrence (Durham-Northumberland): Madam Speaker, the point I am trying to make here, and I do not care which particular Minister answers it, is that it is not a question of ministerial discretion as to whether or not a person in the employ of any Government in this country can be "issued weapons". There are very strict legislative requirements at both the provincial and federal levels. My question simply, and that is why I directed it to the Minister of Justice, is: what is the legislative authority for granting weapons to a Fisheries inspector?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Madam Speaker, I will have to take this question as notice. I encouraged my hon. friend, who is answering for the Minister of Fisheries, to answer out of his knowledge because I had no knowledge of this matter which is raised by the hon. gentleman until he mentioned it. I will certainly get an answer for him.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

IMPACT ON WORKERS—ASSESSMENT OF JOB LOSSES AND LAY-OFFS

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Madam Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. Yesterday the Minister of Employment and Immigration said in a speech that rosy expectations for high technology had given way to widespread fear and outright panic about job losses. Last week there was a report leaked that two million jobs in the manufacturing sector are likely to disappear as a result of technological change. Would the Minister tell us whether his Department, and the Department of Employment, are giving consideration to convening meetings with representatives of the provincial Governments, the federal Government and with management and labour, to assess the whole question of job losses which are resulting from technological changes? And can he also tell us what steps can be taken to cushion the shock of lay-offs for workers, with more equitable severance pay, and to retrain workers who are likely to be adversely affected and lose their jobs in the plants?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, I have just completed a round of consultations which began in late February, with both labour and management, on the whole question of technological change. The Hon. Member may recall that we initiated a study which was produced by Margaret Fulton last November, entitled "In the Chips", with recommendations flowing from it. The consultations to which I am referring were based on the recommendations in the report.

● (1150)

Finally, may I also draw the attention of the Hon. Member, whose concern I welcome, to the fact that in the budget there is a proposal for the institution of a centre which would deal

with productivity and employment growth, with a clear attempt at coming to grips with the whole question of the management of technological change. We will certainly welcome the support of the NDP in this particular matter.

APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF CANADA LABOUR CODE

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Madam Speaker, I am sure the Minister knows by now that workers and their unions do not consider discussions about a general question to be consultations when, later on, the Government works out a policy and brings in legislation to which they have really had no input. However, I would like to ask the Minister a specific question flowing out of this problem. Would the Minister introduce amendments to the Canada Labour Code to provide adequate notice for workers who are displaced by technological change, and to provide workers with a clear right to bargain over the introduction of such technological changes?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, I am surprised that the Hon. Member does not know that that clause already exists in the Canada Labour Code and has also been the subject of discussion on a number of occasions. As to meaningful consultations, may I draw to the attention of the Hon. Member the fact that the top officer of the Steelworkers Union agreed several months ago to serve on the McDonald Commission. That would reflect the importance and understanding that labour gives to consultation and consensus reaching processes.

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NEW EMPLOYMENT EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PROMISE OF JOBS FOR REFUGEES

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Employment and Immigration my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. As the Government knows, in October of 1982 it cut off financial aid to over 400 refugee claimants in Montreal, men, women, and children. Since then these refugees have had to survive with about \$180,000 from the Quebec Government and non-governmental organizations, and \$50,000 from the federal Government in March.

Given the fact that the Minister of Employment and Immigration promised in February that there would be 200 jobs created under the NEED Program for the assistance of those destitute people, and given the fact that he reiterated that promise last week and said to the labour committee that those jobs would be starting last week, will the Acting Prime Minister tell us why the jobs have not yet started and when they will start, or when the Government will give some aid to those destitute people?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, in reply to the Hon. Member's question, in the