

*Oral Questions***EMPLOYMENT****CREATION OF JOBS**

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about that area in which the Conservative Government excels: jobs, jobs, jobs. Five hundred and seventy-four thousand jobs have been created since the election, including 437,000 in the past 12 months. The unemployment rate has declined to 9.6 per cent compared to the 11.7 per cent it was on election day. The number of unemployed has fallen by 227,000 since September, 1984.

Since the election, employment has increased in every Province of Canada. By George, Mr. Speaker, if we get any better at creating jobs we will never be able to find sufficient people to fill them all!

Mr. Speaker: There being no further statements, we will move to Oral Question Period.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**UNITED STATES-LIBYA CONFRONTATION—SAFETY OF CANADIAN CITIZENS**

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Prime Minister on the Libyan crisis. He said in a statement this morning to Canadians that his prime concern all along has been the safety of Canadians. What did he do between one o'clock yesterday afternoon when he first learned of the intended American action and seven o'clock last evening, our time, when the action was taken in concrete fashion, to assure the safety of Canadians in Libya?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to respond to my right hon. friend, but inasmuch as the Minister of National Defence and Deputy Prime Minister had specific responsibilities in that area, perhaps he might accept a response from the Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, our putting in place of contingency plans started happening a good deal before one o'clock yesterday afternoon at which time I met, in the absence of the Prime Minister, with the President's special envoy. I can assure the right hon. gentleman that those plans are in place and have been for some days.

[Translation]

INQUIRY WHY GOVERNMENT DOES NOT ADVISE CANADIAN WORKERS IN LIBYA TO RETURN TO CANADA

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this question is directed to the Prime Minister. For perhaps three or four weeks now he has been telling Canadians working in Lybia that the decision was entirely up to them. Now, here is my question to the Prime Minister: In light of the present situation, why does he not advise Canadians working in Lybia to return to Canada?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has been saying that for three or four weeks. Indeed, if my memory serves me right, I made a statement on January 10, 1986, saying that "according to our best information, Canadians in Lybia are not under threat for the time being, but the Government feels that those who work there would be well advised to assess their own situation in light of current events, with a view to determining whether they might justifiably fear for their security".

Since then we have had an opportunity to consider our position in that respect and to urge all Canadian citizens to take any means deemed appropriate. We were also fully aware of the question of security of Canadian citizens, and we have set up security measures to assist them.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, on the basis of the statement just quoted by the Prime Minister, Canadians in Lybia are quite free to make their own decision. I would suggest that perhaps the time has come to ask Canadians to return to Canada. In any event—

• (1415)

[English]

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC MEASURES

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): My third question is directed to the Prime Minister. In his statement this morning he talked about a negotiated settlement to reduce tensions in the Middle East. Why does he not propose international economic measures which would act as a better substitute for future military action?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, indeed we have done precisely that. If my right hon. friend will take the time to consult the statement of January 10, 1986, he will see that the Government of Canada set out a number of economic measures that it was taking as a way of conveying to Libya its disagreement with any kind of terrorist activity directly or indirectly associated with that state.

Canada as a civilized country sought to convey in a peaceful and, we hope, thoughtful way our deepening concern with actions taken by that state. We considered that these were, as my right hon. friend would agree, important conditions prior to any other avenues being explored. We took those measures because we believed they were an important but non-bellucose