

Shipping Act and other acts in consequence thereof with amendments to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

MEASURES TO PROVIDE JOBS—RESPONSIBILITY OF PROVINCES

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Prime Minister, and it is framed in the knowledge that on this day television is first reflecting the debates of the House of Commons. Among the Canadians who are watching us here today are a large number of the army of Canadian unemployed who, because of the policies of this government, have nothing else they can do with their time today.

Since the Prime Minister's and the government's forecasts in the last two budgets have been dead wrong concerning economic growth and job creation, will the Prime Minister tell the House right now what specific programs the government will introduce this month to bring jobs to the more than one million Canadians who are out of work today because of the policies of this government?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is the government's intention to address this question of high unemployment, which has given us great concern, immediately. We will be doing it tomorrow on the first day of the new session. We will make an announcement in the Speech from the Throne, and it will be followed up by more specific recommendations made by my colleague, the Minister of Finance, who will participate very early in the debate. Of course, we will also be anxious to hear from the opposition which always has such constructive measures to propose.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, the country has been waiting for nearly a decade for some economic policy from this government. We will wait with interest one more day to see if in fact there will be a clear proposal in the speech tomorrow which will provide jobs for the more than one million Canadians put out of work by the policies of this government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: But may I ask the Prime Minister now whether the Minister of Finance was expressing government policy when he said in Washington at a press conference that it was his view that the major responsibility for dealing with unemployment, particularly in the province of Quebec, lies with the provinces of Canada and not with the national government?

Mr. Trudeau: It has never been the intention of this government or of the ministers to indicate that the problem of unemployment could be solved by any or each government

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acting alone. We believe that all governments acting together must tackle this problem. We believe particularly that since jobs are created overwhelmingly by the private sector the private sector should join in the effort to stimulate the economy.

DATE OF TERMINATION OF CONTROLS

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): I think it is clear to most Canadians that a disturbing number of job creators in the private sector, because of the policies of this government, have left this country with their investments and are creating jobs and promoting growth in other countries.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Part of that is due to the determination of this government, despite the promises of one of the former ministers of finance to announce an end to controls, to keep controls in. Will the Prime Minister tell the House of Commons now that the Minister of Finance this week or the throne speech tomorrow will give an explicit date for the termination of controls and will spell out the program by which the government of Canada intends to move this country out of controls?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I can give the undertaking that the Minister of Finance will address this question in his statement on Thursday of this week. I must say that there are some aspects of the question of the Leader of the Opposition with which I must disagree in that controls were brought in in order to make the Canadian cost and price structure more competitive. They have been successful in bringing inflation down from two digit inflation to something around 7.5 per cent.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: We do not think that inflation will continue to come down if the controls are lifted unless there is a general agreement among Canadians to do their utmost to continue pressing down on the rate of inflation, and this calls for more than just the bland statement by the Leader of the Opposition.

● (1420)

Mr. Clark: Not wishing to compete with the Prime Minister for blandness—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: —may I ask him whether it is the intention of the government of Canada to announce this week a date and a process for the termination of controls?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I have just said that the Minister of Justice would address this question.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: If it pleases the opposition, I can have the Minister of Justice address this question.