

There can be no worse time to enter into a free trade agreement such as the one this government wants with Mexico than during a period of crippling unemployment. Those who are at the greatest risk are the middle aged who are without training and the young who have no employment history. NAFTA as it is is a bad deal for Canada.

Why is this government compounding its failure? Why is the government refusing to bring in adjustment measures now to help those for whom Mexico represents the greatest threat? Or, was last week's budget indeed the government's final response to NAFTA? That would be the unkindest thrust of all.

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member just said that the moneys we had raised for training unemployed Canadians would not last. I do not know how long he said, but it is not enough. This is the party that opposed the activation of this passive fund within UI.

If the Liberals and the House are ready today to pass a unanimous resolution to increase that activation of the UI fund, I am ready to do it today.

\* \* \*

#### MANITOBA

**Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

Last week, as the minister will know, the Prime Minister took his travelling show out to Winnipeg, but instead of being greeted by rousing crowds of enthusiastic supporter he was greeted by very angry Manitobans, including the premier of Manitoba who could not even be bothered to stay for dinner.

Given the opposition in Manitoba to the scorched earth policy, again reconfirmed in the Wednesday mini budget, could the Prime Minister not come back and instruct his minister to rewrite the budget and give something, one little thing, to Manitoba?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, there is something in the economic plan that I outlined last week for every province and every region of the country.

#### Oral Questions

**Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

So far this government has not committed itself to a proper highway construction project in Manitoba, has not confirmed that it is going to support the core area initiative despite three years of promises, and has not even found a site for the virology lab which was first publicized four years ago.

When are these promises going to be lived up to? When is the government finally going to do something for the province of Manitoba?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, the member is dead wrong. It is in his riding. It is at the corner of Tecumseh and William. If he does not know where Tecumseh and William is, I will take him to his riding some time.

\* \* \*

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of employment.

Last Wednesday after the finance minister's mini budget, one of the delegates at the B.C. Federation of Labour Convention explained that he had been fired for representing a union member in a grievance. It took months, with the help of the union, to reinstate him.

During that time he survived on UI. When he won reinstatement, he was granted \$20,000 retroactive pay from which he repaid UI. Under the proposed new rules, he would be unable to collect that UI. Will the minister acknowledge that the disqualification of those fired for cause is unjust, unfair and will he reconsider this cruel proposal to ensure that people have an opportunity to appeal their firings?

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, in 1991-92 there were 225,000 Canadians who quit a job without reason. They are the only people who will be affected by these changes, those who voluntarily quit a job without just cause, not those who have a good reason, those who have a just cause. This government in amending the Unemployment Insurance Act put those reasons in the act.