

Oral Questions

for the 650 people laid off who live some 500 miles north of Winnipeg and who do not have the means to move to other jobs. As the minister knows very well, jobs are very scarce in northern Manitoba. We just received the biggest grant of any constituency in Canada of \$4.6 million under Canada Works. Is the government just going to keep adding Canada Works projects in a country that is alive with resources? What immediate action is the minister going to take to assist these 650 people?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, obviously the measures that I have indicated are equally applicable to Thompson. One aspect of the Thompson situation is—and I have discussed this in some detail with International Nickel management—that the turnover rate there is about 600 in the course of a year, which is about the work force affected. To some extent, attrition will play its part in that particular operation. The hon. member indicated that we recognize the difficulties in northern Manitoba. That is why his constituency received the \$4.6 million. We would also look at the application of the emergency fund aspect of Canada Works and conceivably add to those figures if it will do anything to ameliorate a very serious situation, not only in Sudbury, but in Thompson as well.

Mr. Smith (Churchill): The other day the Prime Minister said that Canadians are soft and will have to toughen up. I say to him that Canadians living in Manitoba want jobs. They do not want stop-gap programs such as the minister has been announcing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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RESOURCES**INQUIRY AS TO MEETINGS WITH BASE METAL INDUSTRY**

Mr. Cecil Smith (Churchill): I wish to ask the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to indicate what Canada's industrial strategy is, if in fact we have one. When was the last meeting held with the base metal industry of Canada? What are the future plans to meet with the base metal industry in Canada in order to keep it alive?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, there are meetings all the time with the base metal industry in Canada.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gillespie: You people—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Order.

Mr. Gillespie: —do not seem to be very interested in the answers because you are just making noise. It seems to me if you had a little more concern for the workers involved, you would be prepared to listen.

[Mr. Smith (Churchill).]

FINANCE**REASON FOR FAILURE TO LINK JOB CREATION TO TAX CONCESSIONS TO CORPORATIONS**

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, this belated concern for the workers coming from the minister is very touching indeed. I have a question for the Minister of Finance. In the budget of last March, the government provided more than \$1 billion in tax concessions to large corporations without requiring specific job creation to entitle them to receive the benefits. Since among those receiving benefits were Northern Telecom which became eligible for millions of dollars as a result of the budget of last March and has recently laid off up to 1,000 people, and since INCO corporation, which yesterday laid off some 4,000 workers, has received more than \$10 million as a result of the same budget, I should like to ask the minister why in heaven's name he reintroduced last night the same provisions as contained in the budget of last March instead of taking an equivalent amount of money and spending it on direct job creation?

● (1127)

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not believe the government should take upon itself to settle all problems. I believe it is important to give the corporate sector the possibility to develop by creating a favourable situation in the area of taxation so as to enable them to invest in Canada. Investments are important to Canada. It is impossible for the government to solve all problems. We need a sound private sector.

[English]

Mr. Broadbent: The minister's answer, I must say, is just stupid. They are not investing to create jobs. INCO got \$10 million out of the budget of last March. But instead of creating jobs they are laying off thousands of workers. INCO corporation recently received from the government of Canada some \$378 million in tax deferral benefits. It has received this year from the federal government via the Export Development Corporation \$40 million in special assistance which it has used to create jobs in Guatemala, Indonesia and New Caledonia. If the minister is really serious about using the private sector to create jobs, why is he using the taxpayers' money to give to the corporations so that they can create jobs in other countries in competition with Canadian workers?

Mr. Chrétien: I am not sure whether the figures used by the hon. member are correct, but we in Canada are involved in export and we export Canadian technology, something we are doing very effectively. It is extremely important that we continue to export the technology available to us when it is needed elsewhere. We cannot run a closed shop operation. We have to live in the world. It is important to secure market accessibility elsewhere. The incentive given to industry was not to create jobs elsewhere; it was for development in Canada. I think that, as usual, the hon. member is confused.