

## LABOUR CONDITIONS

### LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT REPORT

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure who is the new Acting Minister of Employment and Immigration so I will put my question to the Deputy Prime Minister. Yesterday Statistics Canada issued a special report indicating that long-term unemployment has increased 91.6 per cent over the last three years. Since none of the Government's present programs are adequate to deal with this problem, will the Minister, or someone on behalf of the Government, indicate today in specific terms what the Government intends to do about this very serious report?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, may I point out to the Hon. Member that the Acting Minister this day is the Minister of State for Immigration, a newly appointed Minister whom I am sure all Hon. Members would want to welcome.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Immigration)):** Mr. Speaker, I will indeed take note of the Hon. Member's question. I thank him for his representation and will assure him that the Minister on his return will address himself to the question.

### REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT MEASURES

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East):** Mr. Speaker, the answer is not adequate. This issue has been around for quite a while now. I want to ask the Acting Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister a supplementary question. With unemployment hovering around 9.6 per cent for the last four months and when only 28 per cent of Canadians say they are happy with the Government's job-creation programs, what is the Government going to do which is new to help this group of unemployed Canadians today, not next week?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate across the country has fallen from 11.7 per cent to 9.5 per cent. Youth unemployment has fallen from 18.4 per cent to 14.8 per cent. That is a pretty good record.

### STATISTICS CANADA REPORT—REGIONAL IMBALANCE

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister as well. Statistics Canada this morning indicated long-term unemployment is up by some 91 per cent and that we indeed have two economies in Canada, a buoyant southern Ontario and a stagnant rest of the country. What specific steps is the Government planning to correct this very serious regional economic imbalance and to create long-term jobs?

## Oral Questions

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member would agree that the economic performance of the Government has been excellent. Unemployment has dropped. It is below 10 per cent. For the first time in eight years we have interest rates below 10 per cent. In fact interest rates are at the lowest level in eight and a half years. Inflation is down to 3.7 per cent. I think the record is very good.

That is not to suggest that we do not have some difficulties. We know there are problems in the agriculture sector and in the energy sector in western Canada. Those particular areas are being addressed and there will be new policies forthcoming in the future.

### SITUATION IN WESTERN AND ATLANTIC REGIONS

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville):** Statistics Canada said almost a year ago that long-term regional unemployment was up in western Canada by over 800 per cent, and very much up in Atlantic Canada as well. Specifically, what will the Minister do to correct this very serious regional problem? Will he now, for example, keep the CN shops in Moncton open so we can at least keep those 250 jobs?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is very much aware of the number of initiatives we have undertaken with respect to the agricultural industry in western Canada. We scrapped the NEP. There are still some remnants left which are still irritating some people out there, but that has certainly been a positive development. There is the Atlantic Enterprise Program in the Atlantic region. All of these things clearly recognize the commitment of the Government to regional development and economic growth opportunities right across the country.

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## ENERGY

### PETROLEUM AND GAS REVENUE TAX—REQUEST FOR COMPLETE REMOVAL

**Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. The Western Accord provided for the total elimination of the discriminatory Liberal Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax by 1988. Since the signing of the Western Accord, however, world oil prices have dropped 60 per cent. The resulting downturn in the economy in western Canada from low oil prices has translated into a loss in excess of 18,000 jobs in Alberta alone in the past four months. It is obvious—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Would the Hon. Member please put a question to the Minister?