

Oral Questions

It is very important that we get some kind of response both to ILAP and to making funds available so that workers and economists can look at how the northwest may be revitalized. We need to know exactly where we are going so that we are not just throwing federal funds at different parts of the problem.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I want to tell the Hon. Member that that kind of examination of the future of the forestry industry has been examined by my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, through the forestry services of Canada. My colleague, the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, has his officials working on it. It is one of the key sectors of our economy. There is a constant assessment of it and planning for its future. What we have to concentrate on is the immediate problem. I would remind the Hon. Member that in his area there are now 45 or 50 Section 38 work creation programs in the Kamloops area. We have established additional allotments under the Canada Community Development Program.

When the Hon. Member says that he does not expect to receive any NEED money, that means that he is not going to work to find it. We are inviting all Members of Parliament to go into their municipalities and communities and develop work projects so that we can put people back to work. Much of the responsibility for how well the NEED Program will operate in his area, is up to him.

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SHIPBUILDING**TARIFF PREFERENCES EXTENDED TO COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES**

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In the last two years the country has lost something in the order of 5,000 shipbuilding jobs and about \$1 billion in shipbuilding orders. Canadian shipbuilders are asking the Government to implement a policy that would at least put them on an equal footing with foreign competitors.

Would the Minister explain why the Government refuses to remove tariff preferences for shipbuilding from Commonwealth and developing nations, and why he refuses to plug tariff loopholes on offshore marine requirements?

If the Minister would implement such a minimal shipbuilding policy, he would put 10,000 unemployed shipyard workers back to work in Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia, without having to blackmail workers and shipbuilders with the phoney six and five policy.

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, during the course of the summer and the fall we spent a great deal of time dealing with a shipbuilding policy. I hope to be able to make an announcement in that regard in the very near future.

LABOUR CONDITIONS**UNEMPLOYMENT IN MANITOBA**

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The unemployment level in the Province of Manitoba is around 10.5 per cent, a rise of almost a full percentage point over the October, 1982 figures. In many parts of the Province welfare agencies are being swamped and unemployment insurance offices cannot keep up with the deluge of applications. Is the Minister or his Department preparing any special program for the Province of Manitoba or, more specifically, for the prairie Provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, in this crucial period?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, in yesterday's throne speech in the Province of Manitoba, the provincial Government indicated that it was prepared to participate with us in the implementation of a NEED Program. I expect that either on Saturday or Monday, whichever day is convenient, we will sign the letter of understanding between the federal Government and the provincial Government, to take the initial \$17 million job creation money that we have made available to that Province and add to it what the provincial Government will provide. This will enable a large number of work projects to be initiated in that Province.

I can give the Hon. Member that assurance and that confidence that he can take back to his constituency. That program is about ready to be signed and to be brought into effect before Christmas.

ASSISTANCE FOR SECONDARY AGRICULTURE BASED INDUSTRY

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister. One of the areas that has been as hard hit as any is the secondary agriculture base industry in Manitoba, Versatile Manufacturing being a perfect example of this. The economy of a Province like Manitoba is based on the secondary agricultural manufacturing sector aspect.

Is any specific money being targeted to this particular area in the general agreement that the federal Government and the provincial Government have signed together? Is anything at all being done to look after this most important area which is the underpinning of the economy in Manitoba?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I am not sure that I can provide the Hon. Member with a list of different forms of grants and supports that have been given. The Hon. Member mentioned Versatile Manufacturing, which happens to be located in my constituency. I know that through the DREE Program the federal Government provided substantial capital to Versatile during the past year for expansion and modernization.

I would also remind the Hon. Member that we co-operated with the provincial Government to provide a major infusion of