

S.O. 21

SOCIAL SECURITY

UNIVERSALITY—POSITIONS OF LIBERAL AND PROGRESSIVE
CONSERVATIVE PARTIES

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, it should come as no surprise that Liberal Leader John Turner is flip-flopping on universality. In an interview on CTV's *Question Period* he stated: "The Liberal Party could rethink its commitment to universal social programs". Meanwhile, the Liberal health and welfare critic, Douglas Frith, was overheard on *The Nation's Business* pledging the Liberal Party to safeguard the universality of social programs at all costs.

Can the Liberals really believe it possible to take both sides on this crucial issue at the same time? Perhaps Turner's true blue colours are showing and he is envious of the accolades that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) is reaping from mutual friends on Bay Street. Is it the Tweedledee and Tweedledum syndrome?

On the other hand, our new Conservative Prime Minister has been taking lessons in Liberal obfuscation. He is unwilling to deal honestly with the issues of universality, which are twofold. First, Canadians, including middle income Canadians, regard universal social programs as a right, not a charity. Second, sharing the cost of universality requires not just tinkering but a major reform of the income tax system so that the rich pay their fair share.

● (1410)

Obviously the Bay Street boys have both been studying Frank Scott's poem about MacKenzie King:

The height of his ambition
Was to pile a Parliamentary
Committee on a Royal Commission;
to have "conscription if necessary
But not necessarily conscription"—

Mr. Speaker: Before I recognize the Hon. Member for Scarborough Centre (Mrs. Browes) may I remind Members of the practice in this House to refer to other Members by constituency and not by name. We are developing an unhappy new tradition of using names.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

PLIGHT OF THE OLDER UNEMPLOYED

Mrs. Pauline Browes (Scarborough Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of grave concern to the people of Canada. Last Friday I was in my constituency office in Scarborough Centre and I met a gentleman aged 51, who recently lost his job. He told me of the anguish and frustration that he and his family are going through. He told me of his mortgage payments and his son's university tuition that he can no longer pay. He told me of his long, lost days searching for work, only to be turned away because of his age.

This gentleman is one of 138,000 unemployed Canadians between the ages of 45 and 55. I urge the Government to take action on this segment of the unemployed. While I applaud the current efforts to assist unemployed youth, we can never forget the vast number of older unemployed people who find it much harder to find work because of their age.

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[Translation]

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

REQUEST THAT MARIJUANA POSSESSION BE STUDIED AT
NOVEMBER CONFERENCE

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, today, a well-known Canadian citizen is appearing in criminal court for simple possession of marijuana. Let this case be a reminder to us of the thousands of Canadian citizens who have been forced to suffer the same treatment because of outdated legislation that makes this House look like the proverbial ostrich. I would therefore ask the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) to put possession of marijuana on the agenda of the Federal-Provincial Conference on the Criminal Code, to be held on November 22nd and 23rd this year, and give Canada legislation that will bring it in step with the eighties.

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[English]

THE CENSUS

CONSEQUENCES OF CANCELLING 1986 CENSUS

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): Mr. Speaker, many Members are concerned with the Government's announcement abolishing the 1986 census. Apart from the many other issues that have been raised in the past is the question of lost jobs. Some 40,000 part-time jobs will be lost through cancelling the 1986 census, or approximately 5,800 person year equivalents.

The 1986 census was to cost \$149 million and it had been in the planning stages for two years. Consultations have been held with several groups since 1982, including provincial Governments, ten federal Departments, academics, and business people. This census would have resulted in several new questions being asked, specifically on ethnic minorities and disabled people. The Government will not be able to institute any new affirmative action programs without the results of the census. This census should be re-instated immediately. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) should change his plan to cancel the census, which cancellation some people have qualified in the last week as criminal.