

*Oral Questions*

question asked by the hon. member relates to matters concerning the budget. I do think that the Minister of Finance, when he presents a budget, will be dealing with this problem. The indexing does exist today, and when we have a budget we will know what will happen.

I do not know the intention of the Minister of Finance with regard to these things, but I will take the comments of the hon. member to the minister and when we have a discussion on this I will raise the matter.

**Mr. Crombie:** Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance has made quite clear what he intends to do: he wants to consider the question of de-indexing income taxes. My question to this minister relates to his understanding. I know he understands the effect this will have on Canadians: indeed, for those who earn \$10,000 a year the effect will be a loss of \$156 each year, amounting to \$896 over five years, at current rates. This will be money right out of their pockets and it will result in their inability to provide food and clothing.

**An hon. Member:** What is the question?

**Mr. Crombie:** That is my concern. The reason I ask the question of the minister is the fact that this would mean—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The first question was rather long and I accepted it, but the hon. member's second question must be shorter.

**Mr. Crombie:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is simply this: what initiatives will the minister be taking this session to deal with the economic circumstances in which Canadians will find themselves over the next six months—a situation which Statistics Canada has indicated we are beginning to experience already?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Madam Speaker, first I must say that the first part of the question is purely hypothetical. A possible budgetary change is under discussion and I am unable to comment on it before the Minister of Finance makes a decision in that area.

About the economic policy in general, the second part of the question, the Minister of Finance dealt with that subject yesterday and I have nothing to add to what he has already told the House.

● (1420)

[*English*]

**Mr. Crombie:** Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance will be requesting, I am sure, the view of the Minister of Social Development. Will the minister give this House the assurance that he will maintain the protection which Canadians of moderate means now have, and not support any move to de-index income tax rates which will have that kind of effect on low-income Canadians?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Madam Speaker, we on this side of the House have always been anxious to maintain for Canadians a tax system which is as fair as possible. This concern has been with the government for a great many years past and will remain so for a great many years to come. After the budget has been made public, the hon. member will be able to pass judgment.

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[*English*]

**EMPLOYMENT****POLICY TO ALLEVIATE HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH**

**Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I am concerned, as are my colleagues, about the latest statistics which show that 431,000 young people under the age of 25 are out of work. This amounts to 44 per cent of all those people unemployed in Canada.

What is the minister doing specifically to alleviate this national disgrace? What policy course, if any, is he following in that obviously uncaring government which thinks it is safely ensconced over there for four years?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member raises a concern which we all share. I do not think any party in this House has shown more concern over the years than we have for the problems of young people.

As the hon. member will know, we have had an opportunity to discuss this matter at some length in Parliament over the past three weeks. The government has announced a number of special measures which are designed to bring young people into the marketplace and to give them the skills and training they need in order to provide them with proper employment.

At the same time, the government has also introduced a major summer employment program. The figures referred to by the hon. member do not take into account this program, because it is just now coming into effect. We cannot solve all the problems of young people through direct government intervention; we must rely upon the workings of the private sector. However, this matter is a major priority of the government and it will continue to be a major priority.

**Mr. McDermid:** Madam Speaker, all the plans and all the programs which the government has brought into effect are strictly of a band-aid nature. Is the minister actively urging the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to get on with the program of self-sufficiency in energy in this country so that we can create permanent jobs for our young people in all provinces of Canada with our money, instead of creating jobs in Mexico, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia and Iraq?

**Mr. Axworthy:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to report to the hon. member that I spent a full day yesterday meeting with representatives of the oil industry in the province of