

not keep interest rates down so it would benefit most regions of Canada?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party does not have to pretend to speak for the Premier of the Province of Alberta. He can do so himself. I can tell the Member that what the Premier of Alberta does not want is a recurrence of inflation at 13 per cent, 14 per cent and 15 per cent. He does not want a recurrence of interest rates of 21 per cent to 25 per cent which almost broke the Alberta economy.

What we and the Bank of Canada are doing is striking a reasonable balance so that we can contain inflation and maintain a low level of interest rates.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

UNEMPLOYED OLDER WORKERS

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Yesterday the Standing Committee on Human Rights tabled a unanimous report urging resolute action to help unemployed older workers, that is, workers from 45 to 65, pointing out that while unemployment had declined for the general population since the recession of 1982, it has increased in a serious way for older workers. Further, the average duration of unemployment for older male workers is 36 per cent greater than for all unemployed male workers.

● (1430)

First the Government cut unemployment insurance benefits for older workers, then in its budget of February, 1986, it cancelled the existing Labour Adjustment Benefits Program and promised a program for older worker adjustment. After two and one-half years that has not see the light of day. Another broken promise by this Tory Government.

Some Hon. Members: Question!

Mr. Allmand: When is the Government going to start listening to these many unanimous reports and take action to help laid-off older workers in Canada?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, may I take this opportunity to remind the House and the Hon. Member that some 1.3 million new jobs have been created as a result of the economic policy of this Government since we came to office.

What is most important is the percentage of those people who have been unemployed for more than one year fell by 38 per cent, and that there were 194,000 new jobs in the economy in the first half of 1988. That is a tremendous achievement,

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something that has never been achieved in the last 25 years. The Hon. Member should be applauding the Government rather than criticizing it.

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT ACT ON REPORT'S FINDINGS

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister is totally ignoring several unanimous reports which talk about the older workers in this country, not the general population. Not only do we have the report tabled yesterday but we have two reports by the Employment and Immigration Advisory Council, one in 1985 called "Older Workers, An Imminent Crisis in the Labour Market" and a follow up by the same committee in June, 1988. The report yesterday said it is clear that older workers have been hardest hit by long-term unemployment and the consequences for them are exceedingly harsh. Many of them are aware that at this stage—

Some Hon. Members: Question!

Some Hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member knows that the report is available to all Hon. Members and does not need to be quoted in extensive detail. The Hon. Member will put his question.

Mr. Allmand: Two and one-half years ago the Government promised a program for older worker adjustment—

Some Hon. Members: Question!

Mr. Allmand: When is the Government going to take action on this report? Here we have another broken promise by this Government and nothing being done.

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I think what this Government has done is bring in a strategy which deals very well with older workers. I said in this House before that the Canadian Jobs Strategy was a new concept. It took a little while to have an impact. It is now having a major impact. The Canadian Jobs Strategy does respond to the needs of the long-term unemployed, and in some sense is dealing particularly with problems of older workers. We have a program specifically for that in terms of the skills training program.

We have seen 129,000 new jobs being filled by older workers in the last 12 months. That is a major improvement. We have seen the decline that was published yesterday by Statistics Canada. What this is saying is that these job programs are starting to bite where they really count, that is, among long-term unemployed workers, many of whom are older. It is the first time we have had a job training program that deals specifically for them.

UNEMPLOYED OLDER WORKERS IN HAMILTON

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. This week marks Hamilton's second Older