

S.O. 21

Mr. Speaker, I then asked myself once again why we have so much unemployment in this great country, with all its natural resources, and men and women who are anxious to use their knowledge and skills for our country's progress. I then realized that the previous Government had introduced regulations that inhibited hopes for success and restricted personal initiative. Today, our Government is giving Canadians new hope and urging people from all over the world to come and work in this land of opportunity.

The Budget of the Hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) is telling Canadians to work and succeed. Mr. Speaker, this Budget will reward only those who work and succeed, instead of those we think might succeed—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the Hon. Member. The Hon. Member for Westmorland-Kent (Mr. Robichaud).

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OLD AGE SECURITY**DEINDEXATION OF PENSIONS—REACTIONS OF SENIOR CITIZENS' ORGANIZATIONS**

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, ever since the Conservative Government announced in the Budget that it would limit indexation of Old Age Security pensions, more and more senior citizens' groups have been expressing their dissatisfaction with this proposal.

In New Brunswick, the Senior Citizens' Federation, with a membership of 30,000, said outright that the Government proposal to deindex pensions is unacceptable.

More than 73 per cent of the elderly in my province are already living below the poverty line. According to the president of the Federation, Mrs. Edna Bourque, "the changes announced by the Minister of Finance have greatly increased anxiety among the elderly and seriously affected their quality of life."

"Fully aware of this intolerable situation", Mrs. Bourque went on, "today our Federation is launching a campaign that will have repercussions from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in order to reverse this immoral federal decision."

It is clear that deindexing Old Age Security pensions is discriminatory and unfair in the extreme.

Mr. Speaker, the Government is now being attacked by its own citizens, and it has no choice but to revert to a more equitable position.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**INDIA—MARTIAL LAW IN THE PUNJAB**

Mr. Lorne Greenaway (Cariboo-Chilcotin): Mr. Speaker, last week marked the first anniversary of the storming of the

Golden Temple in Amritsar, India. The Golden Temple holds the same significance for the Sikhs of the world as does the Vatican for the Catholics of the world. The destruction of this holy centre has contributed to deep division in India, and has led to several tragic events.

For a year the Punjab State has been under martial law, and communication has been difficult. Many are concerned that serious transgressions of human rights have occurred and continue to take place in the Punjab. Such organizations as the International Red Cross and Amnesty International have been denied entrance to this State.

The citizens of my riding are concerned. I would like to quote from a letter addressed to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) dated May 30, and written by the Mayor of Williams Lake, British Columbia. The letter reads:

I believe that both yourself and Canada are well respected as being truly concerned with world peace. A good percentage of our well respected new Canadians are from India and are truly concerned with the problems in their homeland. We have a large Sikh community in Williams Lake who have proven their responsibility to Williams Lake, British Columbia and Canada by not holding any public demonstrations concerning the reported atrocities in India. The East Indian population are good sound residents of Williams Lake and are truly concerned with the safety and lack of communication from their family and friends in India.

I would truly appreciate you and your government taking the lead in doing anything within your jurisdiction to assist with the peaceful solution to the problems in India.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member but his time has expired.

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POLITICAL PARTIES**PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE CAUCUS MEETING**

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, the election of September 4 has resulted in 211 seats being held by Conservative Members. What Canadians, and especially seniors, are now realizing is that these Tories are a silent majority when it comes to protecting the pensions of our senior citizens.

This coming Saturday, Conservative MPs will be holding a special caucus meeting in Ottawa. I would encourage all those who are represented by Conservative Members to call the constituency offices or the Ottawa offices of their Members before Saturday, to demand that they speak up for Canada's senior citizens at that meeting. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) should be given a clear message to withdraw the deindexation of old age pensions.

I would especially urge those who live in ridings where strong NDP voices were lost to call their silent Tory Members. Those who live in the riding of Saskatoon East should call 343-6060 in Saskatoon. Those who live in the riding of The Battlefords-Meadow Lake should call 446-2144. In Dauphin, Manitoba, they should call 638-9633, and in Selkirk-Interlake they should call 785-2918. The voice of the people can, and must, prevail.