

*Oral Questions*

requests from communities all across Canada, first of all, to be designated for ILAP. I think Kitchener has had a jump on everyone else and some substantial benefits have accrued as a result of designation by the Government of Canada. His specific concern will be considered.

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**FINANCE****GOVERNMENT TAX POLICY**

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Yesterday the Member for Vancouver East was asking the Prime Minister questions concerning the fact that we now have more than 3.5 million Canadians who are living in a state of poverty. Neither he nor the Minister of National Health and Welfare expressed any undue concern about this reality. Indeed, it was suggested that the Government would have no new programs in the foreseeable future to help the poor. My question to the Prime Minister is this: is he aware that we have a Bill before the House now at second reading stage that will in fact put a disproportionate tax increase on the poor, in comparison to the rich?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, the assertion of the Hon. Member when he says that we are doing nothing to help the poor is obviously wrong. There are a whole series of measures particularly affecting the poor who are unemployed, which are in train now, and which are going to cost the Government and the people of Canada about \$2 billion. So it is a slight exaggeration to say we are doing nothing.

As to the poverty line, the Hon. Member knows that that is a figure which is arbitrary in many ways. It is in dispute by the Council of Welfare which itself uses these statistics. The definition of poverty is not one on which there is any agreement, and I think it is a bit simple to just draw a line and say that everyone below that line is below the poverty line. That line is very much higher than it was several years ago. It is a moving line. It means that the people of Canada generally are getting richer. It means, since the average Canadian is getting richer, therefore the average poor person becomes poor at a higher level than he did ten years ago. So it is a conceptual notion which is debatable and which I would be happy to debate with the Members back there who are shaking their heads in ignorance.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister continues to reveal his deep and abiding concern with the problems of the poor. One thing is certain. A Government that cared about the poor would not increase taxes on the poor at a higher rate than on the rich. That is clear.

**EFFECT OF TAX LEGISLATION ON LOW INCOME FAMILIES**

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, I want to ask the Prime Minister in this context, since the Canadian Council on Social Development has said that a family of three living on \$18,000 a year is living in poverty, does he think it is reasonable that we should be debating a Bill in this House which will increase taxes on this family living in poverty, by 23 per cent, but increase taxes on a similar family of three earning \$100,000 a year by only 10.5 per cent, less than one half. If he does not think that is fair, will he at least have the decency to make a commitment to the House to amend the Bill so that this unfairness is removed?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, obviously the Hon. Member is debating the Bill itself. There will be ample time to do that during the meetings of the House. If the NDP wants to move amendments, it can find out from the Member sitting next to the Leader how to move an amendment in this House, and what process is used to debate it.

**GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, it is obvious the Prime Minister just does not care. He looks after his rich friends, puts Pitfield in the Senate and puts Macdonald in a \$900 a day job in a Commission, but does not do a thing about the poor of the country. That is the Prime Minister.

He has just talked nobly about an NDP amendment. I would like to ask him, and put him on the spot, if the New Democratic Party moves an amendment to remove this injustice which taxes the rich in terms of increases at half the rate it is going to impose on those at the poor level, will the Prime Minister for once act, instead of just talking about noble principles, and will he commit his Government to supporting that amendment?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member is saying, instead of talking will we act. If the Hon. Member would act and move his amendment, then we would know what he is talking about, maybe.

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**INDIAN AFFAIRS****UNEMPLOYMENT ON RESERVES**

**Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin):** Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Indian Affairs I will direct my question to the Minister of Employment. Since there are over 200,000 status Indians unemployed, and because we have not been able to find where the Indian Economic Development fund is, that fund that was announced with the Western Development Fund of some \$345 million, of which \$45 million should have spent before this month is out, I wonder if the Minister could help the Minister of Indian Affairs find that