

● (1130)

We have introduced a minimum tax. I do not understand why those people opposite do not seem to be able to read.

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YOUTH

INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for Youth. For several weeks now the Minister, with her chauffeured limousine, has been boasting about her advocacy role in promoting her Government's success in creating jobs for the youth of the country. The unemployment figures released by Statistics Canada this morning show an increase in youth unemployment from 15 per cent to 16.4 per cent. What is the Minister's next move to ensure her credibility with our youth and improve the lot of unemployed youth?

Mr. Boudria: Hire a young chauffeur.

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I want the Hon. Member to know that youth unemployment has come down 2 percentage points since this Government took office. Some 50,000 more young people are at work today and have meaningful jobs than when we came into office in September of 1984.

Mr. Gauthier: Because they are getting older, Flora.

Miss MacDonald: We are continuing that progress with Job Entry programs for those young people who have not been able to finish high school, for summer students who are coming out of university and college with Challenge '86, and with any other number of programs which are underway in the Department of Unemployment and Immigration.

I would urge the Hon. Member to make sure that those people in her part of the country get their applications in by the end of the week—

Mrs. Pépin: Order.

Miss MacDonald: —for Challenge '86 projects for young people.

[*Translation*]

BUDGETARY ESTIMATES—YOUTH—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister has lost her voice and her staff, I am giving her another opportunity to speak up and answer for herself.

Where in the estimates can one find funds earmarked to create more employment for the 700,000 youth who are hopeless and jobless?

Oral Questions

Hon. Andrée Champagne (Minister of State (Youth)): Mr. Speaker, \$700 million have been set aside this year for youth training and job creation. More than 200,000 youth are now or will be involved in employment programs this year.

That is what the Government has done. The unemployment rate has gone down to the lowest level ever and this trend will continue.

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MINISTER OF STATE (YOUTH)

INQUIRY IF LETTER MADE PUBLIC ORIGINATED FROM DEPARTMENT

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor-Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State (Youth). Can she confirm that the letter made public yesterday did come from her department and bear her signature?

Hon. Andrée Champagne (Minister of State (Youth)): Mr. Speaker, we have checked this last night and indeed the letter came from my department and bears my signature.

Quite obviously an error was made when the letter was drafted. Neither I nor my department ever intended to use public funds for partisan purposes.

I would suggest the wrong word was mistakenly used, and it should read "Party", not "Government". I do not think that anyone in a political "party" would not want to recruit people, so there was an error in the text.

If this incident has embarrassed the Government, my colleagues or the House, I apologize.

[*English*]

REQUEST THAT MINISTER RESIGN

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor-Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister not recognize that in the circumstance in which she has clearly lost control of her office, she really has no choice but to resign?

Hon. Andrée Champagne (Minister of State (Youth)): Mr. Speaker, I have not lost control of my office. I have no intentions of resigning.

Mr. Robinson: It has lost control of you.

Mrs. Champagne: I have made a mistake, and I think there is no one in this House who can boast of the fact that they have never in their lives made a mistake of one word somewhere.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Right on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Broadbent: It was a mistake the letter became public.