

*Oral Questions*

concerns that somebody else is not doing what this government wants it to do?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member almost seems ecstatic about the Royal Bank's projections.

I suppose I can ask him the same question. Since the Royal Bank said that one of the dangers concerning economic growth is the fast rising provincial budget deficits, especially in Ontario, I am going to ask the hon. member to do something. I am going to ask him to go and see his friend Bobby Rae and appeal to him not to raise taxes, personal or corporate, and not to drive up the deficit. He will be doing Canada a great favour if he does that.

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**POVERTY**

**Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

This week in Ottawa West, the regional municipality is buying a hotel to provide emergency shelter to some of the homeless families who are the victims of the heartless social and economic policies of this government right here in the nation's capital.

Over 35,000 children, 100,000 people, 50 per cent more than last year, live in poverty, surviving on social assistance or unemployment insurance.

What specific programs does his government have to relieve the poverty and misery it is causing just beyond the steps of Parliament?

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, there is a program called the Canada Assistance Plan where the federal government pays 50 per cent of the eligible costs at the provincial level. There is \$3.4 billion of Canadian taxpayers money in job training programs. There are a host of programs.

If the hon. member is targeting a specific project there, I would be pleased to look with her at the dozens of programs that are available to help people. If the hon. member wants to go through that process, I am ready to help her out.

**Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

Over 2,000 children lived in emergency shelters in this community last year, 60 per cent in refugee families living in poverty because his government and his department are taking eight months to hear their claims. That is eight months with no work permit, eight months in which they are not eligible for the programs that he just described or for the social assistance that the government is responsible for paying to refugees and immigrants in this country when they need it.

How does the minister justify creating a whole new group of poor people because his department is not processing refugee claims and is dumping the responsibility on to the municipalities and the provinces?

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member cares to look at the numbers and the statistics provided by the IRB, she will acknowledge in the House to all her colleagues that in fact the process of refugee determination has been greatly enhanced in terms of the time it takes to process claims.

She is not telling Canadians that right now the process deals with more claims every month than we have new claimants. This is quite an improvement. The hon. member talks about the refugee determination process. If they want to co-operate, I am sure all members of the House could work together to improve that system greatly.

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**CANADA ASSISTANCE PLAN**

**Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

There are now 46,000 unemployed Edmontonians. The number of city residents on assistance and living below the poverty line has increased by 28 per cent over the past year, many of them children.

The government's capping of the cash transfers to three provinces including Alberta is worsening a difficult situation for a great many Canadians. It is costing Albertans about \$200 million this year, according to the provincial treasurer.

Will the minister commit to stop the capping of these programs for the residents of British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario which amount to more than 15 million Canadians?