

*Oral Questions*

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

● (1450)

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Mr. Speaker, in light of a recent report issued by the Minister's Department which accuses 55 to 65-year olds of ripping off the UIC system, is the Minister prepared to table in this House the impact studies which show where the so-called 55 to 65 year-old rip-off artists are located? Is she prepared to table the employment profile showing the jobs that are available to older Canadians?

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that that report was given to the former Government last June, and it is not a report I have seen. However, I do want to tell the Hon. Member that my concern for older unemployed Canadians still exists. I do want him to know that it is because of that that we have already allocated \$1 billion for new job opportunities and human resource development which will apply to older workers as well as to others in our system.

**Mr. Deans:** Come on, Flora, that is nonsense.

**Miss MacDonald:** We have as well, I may say, made the announcement concerning spouses—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I do regret to interrupt the Minister but I think she has answered the question.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** It is a sad day that this Minister has changed colour, Mr. Speaker. She is now blue.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Rodriguez:** I want to put another question directly to the Minister, Mr. Speaker. I think Sinc has cut off her oxygen.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

## INTRODUCTION OF AMENDMENTS

**Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** To the Minister through you, Mr. Speaker, is it not a fact that indeed this is a well orchestrated campaign based on alleged abuse of the plan, to prepare and condition Canadians for amendments aimed at punishing older Canadians who are unemployed, when in fact the main purpose of these future amendments will be to shift the financial burden for the program from the Government to the employer-employee section of the plan?

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** No, Mr. Speaker. That is not a fact.

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## IMMIGRATION

## STIPULATED ENTRY LEVELS

**Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. It

was announced this week that between 85,000 and 90,000 immigrants would be admitted to Canada in 1985. This represents a decrease since 1980 of about 40 per cent. In excess of 50,000 people leave Canada each year and, therefore, the net increase in population in 1985 is going to be very modest. Part of the Government's success in achieving an economic renewal in this country will be to increase significantly the number of immigrants at the right point of time in the economic recovery cycle. I would like to emphasize the right point of time.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the Hon. Member have a question?

**Mr. Attewell:** Would the Minister advise this House when she would predict that a reversal of the current downward trend in immigration would occur, so that we would be strategically poised to capitalize on the recovery?

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the number of immigrants to Canada in 1983, and again this year 1984, is below the 90,000 level. Indeed, consultations that led up to setting the levels for 1985 were begun last April, long before this Government came to office. In other words, Sir, we will have had three years in a row where the immigration levels are below 90,000. That is a great concern to me, and it is for that reason that I plan to have a review of immigration policy, including the setting of the immigration levels. At that time we will be able to review, as well, the restrictions imposed by the former Government.

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[Translation]

## VETERANS AFFAIRS

## INQUIRY WHY PENSION REVIEW COMMITTEE DISSOLVED

**Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Hull-Aylmer):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

First of all, I want to congratulate him on his recent appointment, and I hope that he will assume his responsibilities as dutifully as his predecessors.

Last June, a special committee chaired by Judge Marin was established to study the provisions of the Pension Act. This Committee was supposed to report within six months and suggest ways to improve the services guaranteed by the Veterans Act. Everyone will recall that one of the better reports, the Wood Report—

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the Hon. Member have a question?

**Mr. Isabelle:** My question is as follows, Mr. Speaker.

Did the Minister consult the Royal Canadian Legion and the National Veterans Council before cancelling the Special Committee and can he also tell us his reasons for doing so?

[English]

**Hon. George Hees (Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Mr. Speaker—