

Oral Questions

Mr. Broadbent: —which was to bring in a minimum tax on corporations—

Miss MacDonald: Stand up and cheer!

● (1140)

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Oshawa has the floor.

Mr. Broadbent: Even Ronald Reagan, a conservative man in the United States, brought in corporate tax which included within its ambit all companies making profits. Why did the Tory Government, which promised corporate tax reform, not at least have the decency to copy that?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I was afraid that I would not be able to get up and answer this question because God might have struck me dead on the spot, twice. The New Democratic Leader said I was talking like a veritable socialist and then started talking about Ronald Reagan's policies. I do not know what is happening to this place.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Work on it.

Mr. Riis: Figure it out.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I am sure that the Leader of the New Democratic Party, whom I compliment on talking far more about policy than have his friends to the right, is going to be very complimentary of the directions we are following on changing exemptions to tax credits which will lead to a greater degree of fairness and a greater degree of progressivity in the tax system. He will also compliment me on the fact that we have taken 850,000 people off the tax rolls.

Mr. Broadbent: Come off it. You put them on.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I appreciate the point he has made. He said that we put these people on the tax rolls. He is quite right. They got a job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Now answer the question.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Miss Aileen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance whose budget last night made it clear that for middle-income Canadians so-called tax reform means no relief from the tax grabs of his previous Budgets.

Since taking office three years ago the Conservative Government has raised personal taxes by \$22 billion. The Minister claims he will reduce personal taxes by half that amount, \$11 billion, over the next five years. However, in his presentation he did not say that that \$11 billion would be eroded to \$5 billion because of new sales tax grabs.

Can the Minister honestly say he is being frank with Canadians?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I can honestly say that I am being frank with Canadians when I say that 840,000 jobs have been created since we came into office.

I will draw the Hon. Member's attention to an article which was in *The Ottawa Citizen* only five days ago which says that the after tax incomes of Canadians were up in 1985. That tells me that there is more economic activity in the country as a result of the policies of the Government which is easily offsetting any of the negative factors about which she speaks. We are making progress.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS—REQUEST FOR MINISTER'S RESIGNATION

Miss Aileen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, last night's performance was a budget in everything but name. There were more tax proposals than in the so-called Budget presented in February of this year. There was a Ways and Means motion and a blatant breach of convention and propriety on the part of the Minister in deliberately revealing its contents ahead of the scheduled release time.

Does the Minister not consider that this abuse of parliamentary process requires his resignation?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, that is six questions out of seven on process while millions of Canadians are concerned about the impact on their taxes of this tax reform paper. When is the Liberal Party going to get up out of the mire and understand what is important to Canadians?

Mr. Axworthy: Parliament is important.

Ms. Copps: Honesty is what is important.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I would challenge that Hon. Member to honesty any time.

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[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF HON. BOUALEM BESSAÏH, MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM OF THE DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

Mr. Speaker: Order! I would like to draw the attention of Hon. Member to the presence in our gallery of Mr. Boualem Bessaïh, Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Democratic People's Republic of Algeria.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!