

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I only wish our socialist friends would at least keep up with the times. The fact is that British Telecom was one of the most successful privatizations in world history.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex-Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at the Minister for thinking that I would not be aware of that.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Langdon: I looked at whose footsteps he is following. The point is, Mr. Speaker, that 49 per cent of that company is still state-controlled—

Mr. Broadbent: Exactly. Controlling interest.

Mr. Langdon: —and given that the British Government is by far the largest shareholder, that makes it in effect in charge of that company.

Mr. Broadbent: Laugh at that.

Mr. Langdon: In addition, Mr. Speaker, legislation exists which dominates the company and sets its policy. Does the Minister not realize that it is partly his own commitment to selling off TeleGlobe, the commitment which is taking up—

Mr. Speaker: Does the Hon. Member have a question? Quickly, please.

Mr. Langdon: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister prepared to turn off this slide out of private enterprise control putting Mitel under the control of, in fact, one of the most powerful state corporations in the world?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: It's true.

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I am certainly pleased that our socialist friend was not as far behind the times as I thought he was.

Mr. Broadbent: He is right on.

Mr. Stevens: But he is still pretty far behind. I can only say to the Hon. Member that when we have an opportunity to review this transaction under the provisions of FIRA, we will have a much better opportunity and information base on which to answer the type of question the Hon. Member is raising.

Ms. Jewett: You mean you don't know now?

Oral Questions

CANADA PENSION PLAN

HOMEMAKERS PENSION PROPOSAL

Hon. Douglas C. Frith (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. He knows that he has accepted to be the keynote speaker at the Canadian Pensions Conference on June 5 in Toronto. Can Canadians assume, from the fact that he has agreed to be the keynote speaker, that his Government is, therefore, prepared to act on the election campaign promises which he and his Party made last summer on the inclusion of homemakers in the Canadian Pension Plan and on improvements to the private and public pension plan system? Or is this going to be another speech of platitudes whereby we are going to set up another round of negotiations?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Hon. Member that many of the points he raised in his question were covered by the task force on pension review in the former Parliament. The Hon. Member also knows that, along with many changes in the Canada Pension Plan, those matters obviously must have the agreement of the provinces. I point out to him that there have been meetings between the Finance Ministers on the premiums, and tied in with that, at the next stage, will be any changes in terms of benefits. So the matter to which the Hon. Member refers is well in hand.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Douglas C. Frith (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Health and Welfare well knows that after seven months of negotiations there has been a consensus package arrived at. In those negotiations are he and his Government demanding the inclusion of homemakers in the Canada Pension Plan as part of that agreement?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is well aware that in these negotiations, the various points we want to have discussed will be discussed with the Ministers and not bargained on the floor of the House of Commons. But I say to the Hon. Member that the matter of the homemakers pension, which we committed ourselves to in the last election campaign, and which is now a commitment of this Government—we want to see it included. I would hope we would get the same kind of support from his Party. While the Hon. Member has given his support individually, I have not received the same support from members of his own Party.

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EMPLOYMENT

CHALLENGE '85—PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. She announced earlier this year a program called