

Oral Questions

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister for Science and Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, the pages we sent to the inquiry were at the express request of the inquiry itself and the commissioner.

Does the hon. member want to complicate another process, which is the criminal process, by releasing documents that this commission has? We have to wait until the commission is done with them and until the judicial inquiry has reached the proper stage. He knows that.

We have been very open right from the beginning. There are thousands of pages. We have sent documents to the commission that even the commission did not know it had, claimed it did not have and then found it had them. We have been very open. We will continue to be open with the commission because we, hopefully like the hon. member, want to get to the bottom of this safety issue. It has been regulated by the province. It is a provincial commission of inquiry and we want to help it get to the right answer.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

As a result of the government's economic mismanagement, poverty has become a permanent feature of urban life across Canada. In fact over 10 per cent of Toronto's population have had to rely on food banks at one time or another. Over 66 per cent of those individuals have lost their jobs recently, thanks to the Tory recession.

Given that the rising dependence of food banks in our country has become a chronic epidemic, when will this government finally drastically alter its economic course so that people can regain their jobs as well as their dignity?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Mr. Speaker, I read with great interest the report that came from Statistics Canada showing the excellent track record of this government including family incomes, particularly women's incomes.

Real average incomes grew by 9 per cent over the 1985-90 period and almost all family types and all

regions experienced this increase. Women's incomes which should be of particular interest to my hon. friend are catching up with men's. Their average wages grew 11 per cent between 1985-90 while those of men grew by 3 per cent. We are making progress and we expect this to continue as the economy improves over this year and next.

As the hon. member knows, the OECD, the World Bank and the IMF all predict that Canada will lead the G-7 in growth both this year and next year. That is extremely important for job creation and the wealth of Canadians.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, the government just does not get it. Last year over 75 million pounds of food were delivered to needy Canadians by Canadian food banks. Those are Third World statistics.

How can these Canadians have any hope with this government's sense of priorities when the federal government is spending \$1 million on a final farewell tour by this Prime Minister?

I challenge the Prime Minister and I ask: Will the government instead donate \$1 million to the Toronto Daily Bread food bank? This would allow it to provide 700,000 meals to needy Canadians and would really be putting Canadians first rather than the gratification of this Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the boys are getting jumpy over there. I can see they are really getting worried and they have good reason to be worried.

An hon. member: They do not like those polls.

Mr. Mulroney: This is the kind of scurrilous question which slanders Canada in regard to calling us a Third World country. We have problems in this country but Canada treats all of its citizens better than any other country in the whole world. Do not say that you have the right to sneer.

• (1500)

The minister has put together an unprecedented package to assist people in need and children in need. There are billions of dollars that have been increased some 20 per cent over the last term in regard to helping people in Canada who need the help most of all.