

*Oral Questions*

and they will be freezing in the dark. Will the minister, for the love of God, change his policy?

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

**Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the right hon. Prime Minister who promised, during the federal election, to provide generous adjustment programs for workers who lose their jobs because of his government's policies.

Since Tuesday, 2,900 jobs at Air Canada, 1,500 jobs at Canadian National, and up to 3,000 jobs at Imperial Oil have been axed because of the government's policy of transport deregulation and lax rules on corporate mergers and take-overs. When will the Prime Minister produce those generous programs so that workers and their families will not be left high and dry and broke by the government?

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP ask the same question day after day after day, at the same time as they are defending the Liberal senators who are holding up \$800 million worth of benefits for Canadian workers.

**Some hon. members:** VER, VER.

**Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan):** Mr. Speaker, if the government thinks that the cut-backs and meagre half measures of Bill C-21 are generous programs, then I worry about the future for Canadian workers.

• (1450)

Transport deregulation has cost the industry 4,400 jobs within the past 44 hours. That is 100 jobs an hour and now the government wants to open things up completely with continent-wide free trade in the skies.

I ask again, Mr. Speaker, will the government produce the programs it promised to help workers? Better yet, will the government dump policies such as deregulation, high interest rates, and the GST, that are killing those jobs in the first place?

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, out of the litany of problems that my hon. friend referred to, he referred to deregulation. I would like to point out that in the National Transportation Agency's annual report it stated that Canada's airline industry has always been concentrated, but when examined closely it is less dominated by one airline now than it was before the relaxing of regulatory controls in 1984. The increased level of competition in the domestic airline industry has produced a much broader selection of services and prices for the Canadian transportation industry.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

We now know it's official: Canada is in a recession and it is going to hurt. This was according to the Conference Board, and yesterday, one of the government's ministers was honest enough to admit it was true. We also know that Quebec is going to hurt more than the others. With 40 per cent of Canadian business bankruptcies, an unemployment rate of 10.5 per cent, compared with 6.5 per cent in Ontario, and this week's announcement that 4,000 jobs will be lost in Montreal alone, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the minister what he intends to do about turning the situation around. And when is the government going to give us a new economic statement?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I have repeated several times the reasons behind the policies of the Canadian government. There was a problem in the past with inflation, and our inflation rate is still higher than that of our trading partners in other countries. That is why it is very important for our country to reduce inflationary pressures. By doing so, we can then reduce interest rates. That is our government's policy. It is a policy that created a large number of jobs in Quebec and across Canada during the first year of our term, and that same policy will produce the same results in the years to come.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean has the floor, for a very short supplementary.

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean):** Mr. Speaker, only the Minister of Finance fails to see that unreasonably high interest rates are a drastic remedy that is killing, not curing the patient. This policy is draining Quebec. It is pulling the plug on a whole generation of hard work and success in business in