

they are in western Canada, whether they are in Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton or Vancouver, the depression-like lines lengthen as the economy shrinks.

In last week's mini-budget there was no offer of any additional support for Canadian children. When will the government face the reality that under this barbaric economic strategy hundreds of thousands of children can no longer be fed or housed by their impoverished parents?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, some \$15 billion is spent by the Government of Canada to alleviate this serious problem. My hon. friend will no doubt want to put on the record that the total incidence of low income Canadians has fallen from 18.1 per cent in 1984 to 14.6 per cent at the end of 1990. Moreover, inasmuch as he mentioned—

An hon. member: That is pretty selective quoting.

Mr. Mulroney: I think it is important for the House to understand—

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): One in four children in Winnipeg is living in poverty.

• (1440)

Mr. Mulroney: Inasmuch as he mentions Winnipeg, there is a report which refers to the fact that a family of four living in Winnipeg would have fallen below the low income line if its income was less than \$29,661. That is a tight budget by any standard but most Canadians would not consider it poverty.

An hon. member: For what year?

Mr. Mulroney: That is for this year, almost \$30,000 according to Campaign 2000. In this particular case in Winnipeg the poverty line was drawn there; the low income line was set extremely high by the standards of any industrialized country. I point out to my friend that obviously if we put the limbo pole that high it makes it extremely difficult.

However there has been progress made in this important area. Canada is alleviating child distress and child poverty. I would hope my hon. friend would recognize the very significant steps forward that have been made by the government and the Parliament of Canada.

Oral Questions

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Windsor is Canada's fifth largest industrial centre. Right now, because of the policies of this government, it has an unemployment rate of 14 per cent and for youth it is around 27 per cent. Because of retooling, 1,200 permanent jobs are going to be lost at General Motors.

What is the government going to do? Will the minister consider a special training adjustment program for Windsor? Would he consider the possibility of putting some jobs in Windsor, perhaps an immigration centre in this border town rather than Vegreville? What action is this government going to take?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, this is the same member who a while ago was attacking the cutbacks by the province of Ontario.

The solution for the working people affected by this massive restructuring has to be found by all the stakeholders working together trying to alleviate the impact of this and to find solutions.

That is why in Windsor, as in other communities across Canada, when a massive lay-off or a restructuring takes place affecting workers we have with the provincial ministry of labour in the province of Ontario and the programming under the industrial adjustment services agreement we signed with the union and owners of plants measures to help those people.

I know that party believes in the magic of the easy statement to solve problems, but it just does not work that way in the real world. We would rather work with those people on the ground in order to find solutions.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, we checked with the minister's officials in Windsor today. No initiatives have yet been taken by the ministry there. It suggests in fact that nothing is likely to be possible on the training front because very few jobs are available at this stage.