

*Oral Questions*

two-month period since Statistics Canada began collecting employment data in 1953.

In practically every sector of the Canadian economy there are now thousands more people working than there were last September. There are 32,000 more jobs in agriculture, 22,000 more jobs in manufacturing, 74,000 more jobs in trade, and 135,000 more jobs in the service sector. Over three-quarters of these new jobs are full-time.

The new Government has created a total of a quarter of a million jobs since its election last September. That is 66,000 jobs more than the former Government created in its entire final 12 months in office.

● (1115)

The Opposition laughed when the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said that the election of a Progressive Conservative Government would create thousands of jobs. Let's see if they are still laughing today.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### PENSIONS

#### IMPACT OF BUDGET

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri-Westmount):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of National Health and Welfare I will direct my question to the Prime Minister. The chorus is growing. Manitoba Tories, Premier Frank Miller and, in fact, most members of the Tory caucus, now recognize that the deindexation of old age pensions was an incredible blunder.

I am glad that the Minister of National Health and Welfare has arrived in the House. The Minister has stood in the House in defence of that move. He has spouted *Hansard*, and has read quotes from other sources. However, his job is to defend his constituents. I am hearing a lot of constituents asking why he is not doing that job. They are asking why he is sounding like the Minister of Finance. Why does the Minister not go to the Prime Minister and tell him what he really believes, so that he can stop spouting nonsense in the House of Commons?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I think there would be general agreement in the House, following the creation of 89,000 jobs in April and 79,000 new jobs in May, that this is a great day for Canada.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** It represents a combined increase for April and May of 159,000 new jobs. That represents the largest

back-to-back increase in job creation since Statistics Canada began compiling the data in 1953.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** I know that good news for Canada seems to be met with a glum disposition on the other side. It is good news. It is putting people back to work. It is the way to strengthen the social system. It is the way to bring strength back to the financial management of Canada. The way in which new and more valuable protection can be given to the elderly in Canada is by a sound economy which will be achieved through job creation.

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## PUBLIC SERVICE

### RESIGNATION OF FINANCE DEPUTY MINISTER

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri-Westmount):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is obviously very nervous when he resorts to a discussion of job creation when he is faced with the situation of the elderly. I am sure that the elderly people who will lose up to \$60 a month because of the Budget, by the year 1990, will be happy to hear that. I would invite the Prime Minister to inform himself. In the first eight months of the last Liberal administration, 272,000 jobs were created.

As we know, the Deputy Minister of Finance, Marshall "Mickey" Cohen, resigned yesterday. We know Mr. Cohen, and we know that he is too good and too knowledgeable to be associated with this incoherent, unfair, and piecemeal Budget. I would like the Prime Minister to give us the commitment, as he sinks further and further into the fiscal swamp, that he will not try to put the blame for the Budget on the back of Mickey Cohen, because it was designed and drafted in the Prime Minister's office. Will he give us that commitment?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend should read *The Toronto Star* of today. He is quoted as saying that the Progressive Conservative Government has been extremely supportive of and loyal to Mr. Cohen. That is completely counter to the implication of his question. If it is in *The Toronto Star*, it has to be true!

Mr. Cohen is an outstanding public servant. I accepted his resignation with genuine regret. He has brought honour to the Public Service, and he has served the Department of Finance with great distinction and accomplishment. Any suggestion to the contrary is, as my hon. friend knows, malicious and absolutely false.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

● (1120)

**Mr. Johnston:** Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to hear that because, as I said, Mr. Cohen is much too good and much too knowledgeable to be associated with this travesty.