

Oral Questions

In the Budget of April 19, 1983, he said:

—my dominant concern in preparing this Budget has been to help the more than one and a half million Canadians who want to work but cannot find jobs.

Ten months later the number of unemployed is 1,473,000 and the Minister forecasts it will be over 1,400,000 this year and next, and it will be over 1,100,000 in 1988. What has happened to his dominant concern to help Canadians find jobs? When is he going to act to carry out that magnificent statement of April, 1983?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the problem with the Hon. Member and with the Conservative Party is that they have never gone past 1983. We are in 1984, in case the Hon. Member did not realize it. We had a Budget yesterday which came out with a number of measures aimed at helping the economy and Canadians in a lot of areas, whether they are senior citizens, young people, workers, farmers, small businesses, or home owners. I invite my friend to look at it.

As far as the figures he has quoted are concerned, I have to remind him that last year we created 400,000 jobs. The job creation forecasts for 1984 compare very favourably with any other industrial country. As I indicated, we are going to create close to 1.6 million new jobs over the next five years. Obviously we are not going to be able to eliminate unemployment during that period for the very simple reason that we have the fastest growing labour force of any industrial country. My friend knows that, too.

We are going to create jobs as fast as can be done without creating impossible situations in terms of the general performance of the economy. We are very concerned about the situation; we are allocating public funds to a degree and at a level well over what has ever been allocated in this country by any Government to fight unemployment. But we are also counting on the activities of the private sector to come in and be the main engine of growth. This what we expect in the coming year.

Mr. Crosbie: A short supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: With all due respect to the Hon. Member, it is past the hour and there is a Budget debate ensuing. This appears to involve matters anticipated in the Budget debate. The Chair would like to call on the Hon. Member for—

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary? Is there anything more important than unemployment, Mr. Speaker? This is of some urgency.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair recognized the Hon. Member when it was already past three o'clock, and the Chair—

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, a short supplementary.

Some Hon. Members: Sit down!

Mr. Crosbie: Well, Mr. Speaker, we know it is 1984 when we have Big Brother over there answering. Heil Schickelgruber!

Mr. Trudeau: The Reichstag was burned down by guys like you.

Mr. Crosbie: What about unemployment? You are a disgrace to your office.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) on a matter of privilege.

Mr. Crosbie: We are not permitted to ask you questions. You are afraid of your unemployment record.

Mr. Trudeau: Stand up.

Mr. Ouellet: What a joker.

Mr. Crosbie: From Russia with love.

Mr. Trudeau: If you are concerned about unemployment, why did they spend half an hour asking questions about clippings?

Mr. Crosbie: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I—

Mr. Speaker: The Chair has indicated grave concern about anticipating a Budget debate according to the rules of the House. The Chair at this point has recognized the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain on a matter of privilege.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. NIELSEN—REPORTED INVESTIGATION OF LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I do regret the fact that so much time was taken early in Question Period which has denied other Members a chance to raise legitimate questions.

As you know, I was making some comments yesterday with regard to the question of privilege raised by the House Leader for the Official Opposition and responded to by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard). I can see there is very little interest in the matter given that most of the Members are paying attention to other than what is taking place. I listened with interest to the exchanges between the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) today and I must say the whole thing sickens me. It sickens me to the point that I cannot be bothered talking about it; make your own decision.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair may have misinterepreted—

Mr. McKinnon: He is sick.