

*S. O. 31*

Unemployment is much higher than in the United States but inflation is only half as high. With the end of the recession the chances for a strong recovery are better in Canada than in the United States.

Mr. Mulroney makes jokes about his low popularity ratings. According to opinion polls only 20 per cent of Canadians like him. A politician's popularity is capital and he has spent his capital well on economic benefits that will come to Canada for many years, regardless of who is Prime Minister.

A foreign magazine, a foreign publication is talking about the strength of the Canadian economy and about how we in this country are going to reap benefits for many years to come. I have no doubt about that in the least.

In conclusion, I would like to point out to the members opposite that there are some problems in Ontario. However, I am convinced that the problems have been addressed and the initiatives we have taken will lead us to future economic prosperity. We are starting to see some of that already.

**Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the member for Ontario. I share the community that he represents.

First, I want to say that he said many things in his speech that I agree with. I do not want Canadians to think that we are all doom and gloomers over here because that is not the case. He spoke of low interest rates and we recognize that fact. He also spoke of low inflation rates and we recognize that fact as well.

We are not elected to this House of Commons just to talk for those who are advantaged or doing well. We are also elected to this Chamber to speak for those in our community who are going through difficult times. In your community, my community—and let us forget the number 11.2 per cent because it is a misleading number—right now we have over a half million people not working in the greater Toronto region and area.

In this House it is our responsibility to try to find work for them. The comment saying: "Let us not give a blank cheque to those who are on welfare" might have been a bit cruel. I do not think anyone was suggesting that we give a blank cheque to anyone.

There are a lot of Canadians who understand and realize that there are abuses in the welfare system and abuses in the unemployment insurance system. None of us would support ignoring those abuses. What people are crying for—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I regret to interrupt the hon. member. It being eleven o'clock I must go to statements. The hon. member will have an opportunity after Question Period.

It being eleven o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 30(5) the House will now proceed to Statements by Members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

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## STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[English]

### GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, in October 1990, roughly 20 months ago, the Prime Minister and then Minister of Finance promised at that particular time a review of the goods and services tax on books and reading materials.

It is now time for that particular review to take place.

Most Canadians would realize and acknowledge that the goods and services tax on books has reduced reading in Canada and has driven Canadians to shop for books and magazines outside Canada. It has also harmed our writers, our publishers, our book stores and our libraries. It has also affected students in a very negative kind of way.

Continuing this tax will reduce our literacy, our competitiveness, our productivity and our prosperity. It has also contributed to a loss of jobs. This has been documented.

The GST is a tax on literacy. It is a tax on knowledge. It is a tax on learning.

The Economic Council of Canada has pointed out that there will be another one million illiterate Canadians, functionally illiterate Canadians, out there in the work force by the year 2000.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I regret the hon. member's time has expired.

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### BUY CANADIAN PROGRAM

**Mr. Ken Atkinson (St. Catharines):** Mr. Speaker, when the announcement was made earlier this year that the General Motors foundry in St. Catharines would close in 1995, the city council reacted by calling on the federal