

## S. O. 31

[Translation]

More than 60 per cent of single-parent families live below the poverty line. We know full well that children who live in such miserable conditions are unable to realize their full potential in school and are more likely to contract infectious diseases.

[English]

While the two-pronged approach to job creation offered by the government's platform as well as other specific programs is not a panacea, it will address this lamentable situation and boost the standard of living of thousands of Canadians currently living below the poverty line.

Only through the creation of jobs will the quality of life improve for these unfortunate Canadians.

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## MULTICULTURALISM

**Mr. Gurbax Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton):** Mr. Speaker, the comments made yesterday in the House that suggested multiculturalism creates ghettos are wrong.

Some members seem to believe new Canadians will flock together in abject poverty if multiculturalism is allowed to continue. This is absurd. To its credit, the Government of Canada wants new Canadians to retain their culture and heritage.

The melting pot philosophy of the United States, which seems to be what some members want here, is not the answer. Are there no ghettos in the United States?

As we head into the 21st century this is not the time for xenophobia. The world is getting smaller and Canadians are demonstrating how we can all live together without losing our identity.

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[Translation]

## EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Gaston Péloquin (Brome—Missisquoi):** Mr. Speaker, the speech from the throne tells us that job creation is the government's top priority. Yet, just before Christmas, the Distribution and Transportation Directorate of the House of Commons dismissed 10 messengers.

What surprises me is that when the Conservative government tried to dismiss these same messengers in August 1993, several members of the present government protested vehemently. Even the hon. member for Hamilton East, now Deputy Prime Minister, said at that time, and I quote:

[English]

"For many this is the only family income. The result will be hardship and misery for the employees, their spouses and children".

[Translation]

Even the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell said in a radio interview that it was shameful to offer 20 hours of work a week to these heads of families with two or three children. He thought it was just like sending them straight to the welfare office.

They were promised full-time jobs some time in the future, but for now, all they have are temporary jobs.

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[English]

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on unfairness in the unemployment insurance system.

Some members of the Canadian forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and public service are paying premiums for unemployment insurance they will never be allowed to collect.

When they reach a certain stage in their careers these people, should they retire or be released, have qualified for and will receive a pension sufficient to make them ineligible to receive unemployment insurance. Yet at present they are still required to pay the premiums. Since they can no longer collect unemployment insurance they should no longer have to pay UI premiums.

● (1110)

I submit the regulations should be changed so that when the pension entitlements of individuals equal or exceed the unemployment insurance they would receive, they stop paying UI premiums. To do otherwise amounts to extra and unfair taxation.

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## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

**Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso):** Mr. Speaker, the Strait Area Mutual Aid Association is a group of 25 volunteer rescue units in eastern Nova Scotia that responds to emergencies such as fires, accidents and search and rescues, all free of charge to governments or citizens. These volunteer services are absolutely vital to safety in rural communities, but they are being gouged by the outrageous radio licence fees they must pay to the federal government.

The previous Conservative government raised the association's fee from a flat rate of \$260 per year to an irrational calculation totalling over \$8,000. This increase ignores the economic value of volunteer services to the federal government and it threatens the very future of these services in rural Canada.