

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, according to the United Nations, the reality is that Canada treats women very badly. I am glad to learn that Montreal's population is now over three million, but unfortunately the number of children living in poverty in Montreal is growing faster than the population. The number of single mothers living in despair is also rising.

What will the Prime Minister do for women who do not find work? What will he do for women who do not have access to child care? What will he do for women who do not enjoy employment equity with men? Indeed, what will he do to reduce this wide gap between women and men that was unfortunately pointed out by the United Nations?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the answer is the same in French as in English. It is essentially the same question that the hon. member just asked. She says in French that the United Nations report mentions Canada treating women very badly. That is not true. The United States report says no such thing. That is not true.

I agree with my friend that we must reduce and eventually eliminate this employment gap between women and men in Canada. That is just what we are trying to do. How? The hon. member could refer to the report of another well-respected international agency, the International Monetary Fund, which said this week that our economic growth would be the highest of all industrialized countries in 1992 and 1993, that employment growth would be No. 1 in the world and that inflation would be the lowest in the world. These factors will help create an economic base and new wealth that we can share more, of course, as a country, with the female population of Canada.

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[English]

**YOUTH EMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (York North):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Women and children are not the only groups that have suffered under his government. He has also failed to create opportunities for youth. Nothing exemplifies this more than Canada's shameful youth unemployment

rate. It is now 16.9 per cent which means that over 400,000 young Canadians are now on the unemployment roles of this nation.

The government's response has been to cut 40,000 jobs from the students' summer employment program since 1985.

How can the Prime Minister justify this action against Canada's youth?

**Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Youth) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, obviously youth, like other Canadians in the country, have suffered over the past year with respect to the general economic situation. This is a world-wide situation.

I would think that my hon. colleague, when he makes comparisons, will make the appropriate comparisons. What he has to think about is that the budget with respect to the jobs he is referring to was increased last year and was increased this year again.

**Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (York North):** Mr. Speaker, the minister's response cannot be taken seriously, given the desperate economic conditions Canada's youth face.

Every member of this House is aware of the thousands of SEED applications that do not get approved. Thousands of job opportunities are lost. Every member knows how difficult it is to say no to young people who desperately need a summer job to complete their education.

How can this government be so indifferent to Canada's youth, Canada's future?

**Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Youth) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Again, Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague forgets to acknowledge the fact that the budgets have been increased.

He also forgets to acknowledge the fact that some of my predecessors made the adjustments in the programs that he is trying to compare with 1985 in order to deal with those students at risk, including the ones dropping out. That is where we have concentrated some of the money in order to make sure that students get the appropriate education and stay in school rather than drop out of school.