

*Oral Questions*

I ask today: Why is the government budgeting now to pay its debt to Wall Street but wiping out its debt to women?

**Hon. Gilles Loiselle (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, after the most extensive study ever conducted in Canada on pay equity, we came to a proposal which was put to us to pay \$370 million. We paid it and we consider that we have settled this account for the past.

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**PUBLIC SERVICE**

**Mr. Brian O'Kurley (Elk Island):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for the Public Service. Canadians are concerned about reports that government workers are being mistreated by union leaders.

It has been reported that some abusive and self-serving union leaders continue to condone harassment of Public Service employees because of their political beliefs.

Will the minister assure this House and all Canadians that this government will not tolerate harassment of Public Service workers by union bullies?

**Hon. Gilles Loiselle (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, I am aware that many Canadians have found profoundly disturbing activities alluded to by the hon. member that have been reported in the media.

However, our capacity to act is very limited because section 8(1) of the Public Service Staff Relations Act prohibits us from interfering.

• (1450)

However, I am glad to tell the hon. member that there is at least one union local that has claimed that the alliance has committed an unfair labour practice and is challenging the right of the Public Service Alliance of Canada to impose these kinds of actions. We will be following that very carefully.

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**THE BUDGET**

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

My community of Windsor has 21.5 per cent unemployed as we stand here in this House of Commons today. The same tragic, senseless human waste is there right across this country.

I want to ask the Minister of Finance why it is that his budget has paid so little attention to the plight of these 1.5 million jobless across this country and at the same time has left unfair and unacceptable tax loopholes still in place?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, it is tragic that the unemployment levels in the hon. member's area are as high as they are. I regret that very much.

Obviously, his area is a manufacturing and processing sector and we have undertaken a number of initiatives which will indeed strengthen the manufacturing and processing sector, not only strengthen the viability, but indeed encourage the investment opportunities in that particular area.

The hon. member knows very well that capital these days is very mobile in a globalized economy. What Canada has to do is ensure that it has an appropriate environment and a competitive environment to allow that expansion and that new investment to take place.

I ask the hon. member again to reread that section dealing with the manufacturing and processing sector. I am sure he will find that there are a lot of positive elements in there. It has generated a great deal of positive response from that particular community and for that I am very grateful.

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** In fact, Mr. Speaker, I read those sections very carefully because they represent yet another new tax loophole to the manufacturing sector in this country, an increase in the capital cost allowance, which nobody has ever indicated increases investment any place in the world.

I want to ask this minister point blank: Why has this minister left in place in our tax system a situation that permits corporations to pay for the cost of escort services for their clients and write it off against the taxpayers all across this country?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I have heard it all. I do not know where the hon. member has been. In the pre-budget consultations I travelled right across this country. At every meeting that I attended there was a