

Oral Questions

the private businessmen or investors in this country you will get a different scenario.

I would like to know if the Prime Minister still believes that further cuts are not necessary or should we wait until the Minister of Finance is back in this House to get a second opinion?

Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)): Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the hon. member has looked at our budget carefully enough.

If he had read the budget carefully and looked at the very prudent forecast numbers we used, he would see that our target of 3 per cent of GDP is well within grasp and well within those budget numbers.

If he would like to know to whom we were listening, I was listening to the Royal Bank of Canada's forecast last week and the Conference Board of Canada's forecast last week. I know most of those forecasters personally.

The Speaker: Perhaps it slipped our minds while we were away, but we would prefer that there not be any documents or books waved in the House. It takes a little bit away from the decorum and I would ask all hon. members to please adhere to this request.

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[Translation]

MANPOWER TRAINING

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

In an interview with the daily *Le Devoir*, the Quebec Premier reiterated his desire to patriate federal responsibilities for manpower training, saying: "Quebec has always done a better job than the federal government with vocational training activities, and I will not settle for less".

Will the Prime Minister agree to this renewed request made by the Quebec government and will he transfer to that province full federal responsibilities for manpower training, as well as the funds to go with it?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, we have had and we continue to have discussions with the province of Quebec regarding manpower training. So far, we have agreed on some points, including the single-window concept, which a number of provinces also approved at the recent meeting held in Toronto with the Minister of Human Resources Development, I believe.

• (1445)

Indeed, the Quebec Premier has indicated that he wants to keep negotiating on manpower training. We have taken his arguments into consideration and we will continue discussions with the province.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister, who seems to be participating in a lot of discussions, if he will keep discussing until the election campaign gets under way in Quebec and then propose to Quebecers an agreement such as the Bourassa-Campbell one, that is another smoke screen?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, it is not for me to say whether the Bourassa-Campbell agreement was a smoke screen. I imagine that the people have already rendered their verdict on that.

Generally speaking, we will first undertake the income security reform and future agreements with any province, including Quebec, will be based on arrangements reached on future reforms.

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[English]

JOB CREATION

Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

The government has said again and again that it attaches the highest priority to job creation. To that end the minister has lowered UI premium rates and will soon announce the government's strategy on youth.

What other results can the minister point to that really show Canadians particularly those in Nova Scotia that the government's job creation policies are working?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most important demonstration of a new sense of confidence in the country are the figures we released last week that show there was a very substantial drop in the unemployment rate.

In particular, I would like to say there is .7 per cent, almost 10,000 new jobs created in the province of Nova Scotia alone. It demonstrates that three-quarters of the new jobs created were full-time permanent jobs and not the part time jobs of the past.

I agree with the hon. member it is very important that we take a special look at those who still have very strong needs in the labour market. Young people must be the priority of all members of Parliament because they are the ones who still need the greatest assistance from all of us to get back to work.