

*S.O. 21*

been granted, by successive Liberal and Conservative Governments, the legal right to pay no corporate income tax on profits that in the two years 1980 and 1981 totalled \$52.7 million.

Had the tax system been fair and equitable, and had Union Gas been required to pay even a 25 per cent tax rate on its profits in 1980-81, revenue accruing to the federal Government would have amounted to \$13.2 million. Had Union Gas been required to pay taxes on its profits, average Canadian taxpayers may have had less personal income and sales tax to pay in 1986. Today's great untaxed corporation award winner is a reminder from New Democrat Members of Parliament to the Conservative Government of the pressing need for serious and comprehensive tax reform.

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**UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

## CALCULATION OF SEVERANCE PAY AS INCOME

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, I want to rise on behalf of almost 1,000 employees at Miracle Mart, some of whom are located in the city of Hamilton, who have been laid off. As a result of the Government's regressive decision last year, they are unable to collect any unemployment insurance because they are receiving severance pay.

You will recall that we have raised this issue a number of times in the House and we were told: "Wait for the Forget Commission". After hearing press reports on the weekend, I am afraid that we do not want to wait for the Forget Commission because there will be many other Canadians who will be left out in the cold, as have these hundreds of Canadians.

In the case of Hamilton, the average number of years of service of these women and men at Miracle Mart was 19 years. They will leave their jobs without being able to collect a penny of unemployment insurance. We believe that is absolutely wrong and we will continue to fight it in the House and in the constituencies.

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**PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS**

## SASKATCHEWAN ECONOMY'S RESILIENCE

**Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek):** Mr. Speaker, despite historically low grain and oil prices, resulting from unfair foreign competition, the Saskatchewan economy is showing remarkable resilience.

Retail sales are up 6 per cent, housing starts are up 13 per cent, and building permits are up by 43 per cent. The prime interest rate, at 9.75 per cent, is the lowest in eight and one-half years. Five-year mortgage rates are down by three and one-quarter points since September, 1984.

In fact the Government of Saskatchewan has guaranteed home mortgages at 9.5 per cent for the next ten years. Inflation is under 4 per cent, the most stable price environment since 1971. Fourteen thousand new jobs have been created over the past two years. The unemployment rate, at 7.5 per cent, is down a full point over the past two years.

Now the new Saskatchewan Home Improvement Plan is generating jobs at a rate of 154 each day. The Conference Board of Canada forecasts a 6 per cent increase in personal income this year. It is proof positive that the Saskatchewan economy is being well managed.

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[Translation]

**SOCIAL SECURITY**

## UNIVERSALITY OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS

**Mr. Gabriel Desjardins (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, it seems the federal Liberals from Quebec keep changing their minds. In the summer of 1985, Quebec Liberals were telling the world they would never challenge the universality of social programs in Canada. The same Liberals, with the Hon. Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) and his leader foremost in the fray, accused my Government of hypocrisy because it was trying to improve the administration of our social programs.

Mr. Speaker, on the weekend, the Quebec Liberal Party's future, its young Liberals, passed a resolution aimed at putting an end to the principle of universality of social programs. Those same young Liberals who support their leader forget that last summer he said in the House of Commons that the Liberals would never discuss changes to the administration of social programs in Canada. But who are we to believe in the Liberal Party, Mr. Speaker? The youth wing, which has always been the party's pride and joy, or the Liberal Caucus in Ottawa? In any case, Canadians will have to wait a long time before the Liberals make it clear to everyone what exactly their social policy is.

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● (1410)

[English]

**NOBEL PEACE PRIZE**

## TRIBUTE TO ELIE WIESEL

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege this afternoon to join my colleagues in applauding the selection of Elie Wiesel as the recipient of the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize. Born in Romania in 1928, Wiesel witnessed and experienced the full horror of the Nazi holocaust in