

## REFORM PARTY OF CANADA

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley):** Mr. Speaker, the head of the Reform Party in B.C. says that he would like to run candidates in the next provincial election. The leader of the Reform Party of Canada says he cannot do that. The head of the Reform Party in B.C. asks why should a man across the mountains in Alberta tell the B.C. people how they should run things?

As a matter of fact, why should an executive tell the people in B.C., or 500 delegates in a convention tell the people of B.C. what to do?

There is a solution. All they have to do is hold a referendum within the rank and file of the party. After all, this is the solution that they want to have for all the people of Canada. If it is good enough for the people of Canada, why not good enough for the party? There is a problem. It might cause Preston Manning to lose his iron grip on the party or it might force the party to practise what it preaches, and that would be a little tough on it.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Yesterday in a speech in Ottawa, the minister finally came very close to using the dreaded R-word. He said: "We may well have had a second negative quarter". Everybody else calls that a recession.

Just a few minutes ago, the Bank of Canada announced that it was raising its bank rate. Today in committee, the Governor of the Bank of Canada said that he—and this means the government—would persist with its interest rate policies, but gave no recognition to the damage these policies are doing by way of loss of jobs and plant closings.

Why will the Minister of Finance not admit that it is these policies, his policies, that caused our present recession, the first made-in-Canada recession? Why will

### Oral Questions

he not admit what everybody else is saying, that we are in a recession and reverse these policies before they cause even more damage to Canadian workers and Canadian communities?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians might take the Leader of the Opposition more seriously if he would acknowledge that the delay by the Senate of major pieces of financial legislation is damaging for this country.

**Mr. Milliken:** That's false.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** The hon. member says it is false. He should read what the Economic Council has said, what other organizations have said, that if we cannot get our fiscal deficit down or, let me be more precise, it says that it is important to get our fiscal deficit down so that we can have lower interest rates.

The hon. member wants to see lower interest rates. Why is it that he and his caucus colleagues, the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard and others are saying to the senators "keep up the good work. Stop this finance legislation. Don't allow the government to have the bills passed that will help it get its deficit down". These are the precise bills the organizations said last week must be passed so the government can get on with lowering its deficit and that will take the pressure off interest rates. If the Leader of the Opposition would be true to his conscience, he would agree with me.

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance is desperately but not successfully trying to blame everyone but himself and his government for the mess we are in right now.

In his speech yesterday he was trying to blame the current economic mess first on the Persian Gulf crisis, and even on Canadian workers who are the victims of his policies.

I say to the minister that months before the Persian Gulf crisis in August, starting in January of this year, we began losing industrial manufacturing jobs. We lost over 160,000 according to Statistics Canada since the beginning of this year. Instead of blaming everyone but himself, the minister should look at himself in the mirror and recognize the culprit. He ought to be ashamed of himself.