

Oral Questions

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member has indicated, the federal government has initiated a very important program called the federal buildings initiative, or otherwise known as the FBI program, that operates throughout the federal government in all departments. It is fully operational now. It speaks to increased energy efficiency through the retrofitting of all federal government buildings and installations.

Let me update the House on the success of the program to date.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Ms. McLellan: As the hon. member for Restigouche—Chaleur has indicated, while the hon. members of the third party may not be interested in energy efficiency and climate change we on the government side are.

Let me say very briefly that we have initiated 80 projects involving over 2,400 federal government buildings.

The Speaker: I am always reluctant to intervene either in a question or an answer, but probably two kicks at the can is as far as we go.

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CANADA PENSION PLAN

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, you are doing a good job. The Superintendent of Financial Institutions reported that the Canada pension plan fund would be broke in 20 years and the projected premiums paid by workers and employers would have to more than double to keep the fund afloat. The contingent liability in the plan is estimated at \$500 billion, about as big as our whole government debt.

I did not give you a compliment, Mr. Speaker, just so that I could ask a long one. Could the Minister of Human Resources Development—

The Speaker: I am always flattered by these comments and I know the hon. member will want to do as good a job as I do by putting his question.

Mr. Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, I was asking my question.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville): My apologies. Could the Minister of Human Resources Development tell us why his review of social security programs did not deal with this looming crisis?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very glad the hon. member got to put his question, but it is a question that does not make an awful lot of sense or have relevance.

He should know that the Canada pension plan is subject to the five-year annual review of federal-provincial finance ministers as part of the statutes or the legislation itself. That review will take place this fall.

One thing we have to look at, because it is a matter of some concern, is that over the past year or two there has been a substantial rise not in the income security portion but in the disability portion of the Canada pension plan, which is one of the fundamental causes for the increased outflow during the past year and a half.

• (1445)

We have to look at this matter. It is a consequence of other jurisdictions taking decisions on things like workers' compensation that as a result people become part of the CPP regime. We will be looking at this. It will be part of the review. I can assure the minister that once again, the government is in good hands.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am not a minister yet.

The Liberal Party looks after its own pensions. I wish it would do this with as much enthusiasm for the rest of Canadians. Not only will this rate increase force an increase in payroll taxes that will kill jobs, but younger Canadians will also question whether CPP is even a good investment.

MPs will be given a choice to opt out of the MPs pension plan. Will younger Canadians be given the same opportunity to opt out of this bankrupt pension plan?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a very strange and curious question. It comes from a member of a party which just a week ago tabled its own so-called budget proposal.

That proposal recommended the total abolition of all parental or maternity benefits. This would have totally denied any kind of fiscal support for close to 200,000 mothers in this country. It would have denied and abolished disability benefits for close to 200,000 Canadians. It would have taken over \$3 million out of the OAS.

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[Translation]

SOCIAL HOUSING

Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec—Est, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Friday the Quebec minister of municipal affairs and housing rejected the federal government's proposal to increase the amount individuals must pay for social housing from 25 to 30 per cent of their income.

My question is for the minister of public works. Since the Quebec government has decided not to increase the amount to be paid for social housing, can the minister tell us whether he