

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think that the minister forgot to answer part of my question. I also asked him for an investigation into the events on the base itself.

My second question is this: Does the defence minister confirm that, in a recent investigation, the military police seized a third videotape whose content may be more violent and even more shocking than the two previous ones? Can the minister promise that this new tape will not be destroyed like some of the evidence relating to the events in Somalia, which has vanished?

[English]

Hon. David Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of the existence of the tapes or other evidence to which the hon. member is alluding.

If he has such evidence then hopefully he would make it available to me, and I could pass it on to the military police authorities. Of course that could be a subject of interest for the inquiry at a later date.

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SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, many months ago the Minister of Human Resources Development launched his much touted review of social programs. He promised to radically transform our social safety net to make it more efficient and restore hope to those entrapped within it. Now, months later and millions of dollars later, nothing. The minister has failed to deliver on any of his promises and his failure will cost Canadians dearly in the budget.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Given the government's failure in this regard, what plans does it now have to reform social programs and when can Canadians expect the results?

● (1425)

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the hon. member is attempting to cast a very important initiative which has been very broadly and strongly endorsed by the Canadian people to help reform social policy in a light that only reflects his own particular pessimistic view of things.

The government is very much committed to continuing with social reform. We now have the committee report which has a number of recommendations in it. We are looking at that report very carefully. We will be responding to it within the time

required by the House in terms of a specific policy and we are going forward with our plans to bring in legislation this fall.

Social policy is well on track, unlike the policies and positions of the hon. member.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the failure of the social program review has a direct impact on the spending in the budget.

As the government knows, over 60 per cent of its spending is in the social area. The budget cannot be balanced unless both social programs and social spending are substantially reformed.

Will the government not acknowledge that the primary reason the finance minister is now considering tax increases, which he was not doing two months ago, is because the human resources development minister failed to deliver on social programs and social spending?

In other words, will the government acknowledge that it is the taxpayers who are going to pay for the human resources development minister's failure?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the answer once again for the hon. member. I recall very well that during his election campaign he was a strong advocate of listening to the judgment of the people. Since he has been elected to the House it seems he no longer has much faith or trust in their judgment.

We still do and that is why we undertook for a period of four months a very serious, very extensive, very broad based discussion with Canadians. Over 100,000 participated in one way or the other.

Our reforms will be based on the judgment of the people, not on the curious and strange ideology of the hon. member opposite.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the government has not yet provided any satisfactory explanation for the failure of the social program review. Surely one of the reasons is that the minister handed out millions and millions of dollars to liberal thinking special interest groups to lobby for the status quo and against spending reductions.

This is becoming the Achilles' heel of the government. The parole board has been weakened by patronage and special interest politics, as has the IRB and the social program review.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Instead of excusing and justifying patronage and special interest politics, when is the government going to acknowledge that it is this addiction which weakens the government's integrity and do something to correct it?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the member calls an addiction