

form of means test before we hand out the supplement. That at best is a compromise, but one that is necessary in order to retain the OAS. It has worked remarkably well.

The former Minister of Finance did not talk about the GIS, he talked about OAS. There is a fundamental difference between the two, as the Hon. Member knows. I do not mind having him ask me that question, but yes, I do support the principle of a means test in determining the guaranteed income supplement.

If I am not mistaken, it is significant that the Minister increased the GIS substantially in this Budget. One could question how substantial \$50 a month is. To some people it is not very substantial but others have expressed satisfaction, pleasure and relief that some help has come. I just hope that the provincial Tory governments which have a great deal of control over senior citizens' homes and those kinds of things make certain that that money is not siphoned off from the senior citizens and swallowed up in the form of rent or charges against these individuals who live in senior citizens' complexes.

I apologize for not having mentioned the veterans. I share the hon. gentleman's concern. The Minister is in the House and I suggest that we need an approach on the part of the bureaucrats who deal with the veterans that is a little more enlightened. There seems to be a pattern developing in that Department of which the Minister is aware. I have talked to him about the practice of automatically refusing and delaying veterans' pensions. As a Member of Parliament, I too have come across cases that have dragged on for years before they are settled, and they are inevitably settled properly on behalf of the individual.

**Mr. Parker:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to question the Hon. Member for Lincoln (Mr. Mackasey) with regard to his comments about the New Democratic Party. Yes, Canada is a wonderful place to live and we all want to enjoy Canada's benefits. I wish to reaffirm to the Hon. Member that there are over two million people unemployed and on social assistance at this time and they too are looking for some of the benefits of the country.

I would like to take up the challenge presented by the Hon. Member and tell him about the proposal we have put forward with regard to the sale of western Canada coal, a clean coal that would clean up our environment, would create jobs right across Canada and help alleviate the cause of acid rain right from the source rather than after the fact. We are importing coal with a sulphur content 800 per cent higher than the coal of western Canada.

● (1230)

We proposed that a study be done that would create thousands of jobs, alleviate a lot of the causes of acid rain and keep \$1 billion from leaving this country for the United States. That proposal could do something for all parts of Canada but the Government has refused to consider a study. I should like to hear what the Hon. Member thinks of that proposal. I invite him to take up the challenge.

### *The Budget—Mr. Mackasey*

**Mr. Mackasey:** Mr. Speaker, one thing the New Democratic Party is noted for is extravagance of expression. The Hon. Member spoke of two million people out of work; a little while ago someone mentioned 1.5 million people out of work and another person mentioned one million people out of work. As one who had charge of that Department at one time, I will not talk about what can be done with statistics. It is unfortunate that so many people are out of work, but the sheer reality is that we have come out of this recession second only to the United States. Our dollar is the second strongest currency in the world. Our recovery has been the fastest in the industrialized world, faster even than that of the United States.

As far back as I can recall, the level of unemployment in this country has reflected three things and they have not changed in the 10 years since I made a study of the matter. First of all, it reflects the advent of women in the work force. This is an overdue phenomenon, if you like, compared to Europe where that movement was accelerated, if you like, by the last war more so than it was here. Women came into the work force, discrimination against them was eliminated to a great degree, barriers to certain disciplines such as engineering, dentistry, law, were lowered. They add to the numbers, Mr. Speaker. They add to the quality of the work force, they add to the GNP, they add to our ability to look after the unemployed. But they also add to the numbers.

The second thing that still adds to our numbers is the rather civilized and open approach we have to new Canadians from other parts of the world. As a former Minister of Immigration I can remember the anger of some Members, particularly some from Toronto, when I brought in 7,000 Ugandans. I am sure that today each and every one of them is working and contributing, but they add to the numbers. Hardly a day goes by when someone does not ask the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) to open the door even further. But that also adds to the numbers, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, we still have the fastest growing work force because of the remarkably high number of young people just coming into it. This reflects the generation that came back from overseas, married late and whose children are now coming into the work force.

Those are three reasons why unemployment figures are high, Mr. Speaker. What the hon. gentleman did not point out is that we have created jobs at a faster rate than any other country in recent years. It is no great secret how to go about creating jobs. We can overheat the economy and have inflation back, then another deep recession six or nine months from now. That is the trouble with socialist policies, Mr. Speaker; they are not balanced. It is hard to argue with members of that Party. They are well intentioned and they are concerned about people; they have that human touch, secure in the knowledge that they will never have to be realistic about the cost of implementing a program.

Coming back to the question of coal, Mr. Speaker, I agree that pollution of the environment is a problem. We have been buying coal offshore but it is not so long ago since Japan was buying coal from British Columbia. Apart from the devastat-