

*Oral Questions*

these two measures have infused \$1.7 billion into the economy.

While I acknowledge the point that the hon. Leader of the Opposition has made, I think it is quite obvious the government has responded very positively.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, a report of the National Forum on Family Security clearly states that the situation in Canada has deteriorated steadily in recent years and that the gap between rich and poor has not narrowed but actually widened.

• (1420)

When will the Minister of Finance understand that to give Canadians a chance, the only valid social policy at this time is job creation, because there is no better social policy than putting Canadians back to work? When will the Minister of Finance understand that unless we have a job-creation policy in this country there will be more misery instead of less?

[*English*]

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I do not disagree with my hon. friend when he says that the best social security is to have a job. That is precisely what we are trying to do: create the environment and put in place fundamentals that will allow the economy to grow and will allow jobs to be created.

Quite frankly, based upon the December 1992 statement plus the budget, we have taken a number of initiatives to stimulate and reactivate the small business sector, to provide more funding for training and skills upgrading and retraining and to provide moneys in a joint provincial-federal cost shared program on infrastructure. Those are the things that are now being transformed into action and jobs are being created.

I remind my hon. friend that as of last month 48,000 new jobs have been created since August and 202,000 full-time jobs have been created. In the last three months we have had GDP growth of 4 per cent. That is pretty positive. It is the best in the G-7.

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the Minister of Finance

finds some satisfaction when a week ago he predicted that the level of unemployment would remain at 11 per cent not only this year but next year.

Now that he is talking about creation of jobs, why does the Minister of Finance stubbornly refuse to take advantage of what the municipalities and the provinces are asking at this time? They would be willing to put in two-thirds of the money if this government would put one-third of the money into developing infrastructure in all the municipalities of Canada to create jobs right away for people who want to earn a living, and not a year from now.

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. member that Canada is not alone. Four of the G-7 countries have double digit unemployment. He may be interested in knowing that the IMF and the OECD have indicated that Canada's employment growth will be 2.3 per cent this year and 2.6 per cent next year. As a matter of fact, since November our employment growth has been in the order of 2.8 per cent.

**Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova):** That does not make it right.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** The hon. member says: "Why don't we borrow some more money and go deeper into debt?"

**Mr. Fontana:** We never said that.

**Mr. Harb:** He never said that.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** That is exactly what he is saying. Quite frankly there is only one taxpayer. The federal government would have to borrow the money. The provincial governments would have to borrow the money. The municipalities would have to borrow the money. We are trying a pay as you go basis where we are cutting expenditures. We are stimulating and bolstering the economy so that it will create jobs and long-term durable growth.

**Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East):** Mr. Speaker, no wonder Canada could not maintain its triple *a* rating with this triple *f* government.

Statistics Canada reveals that Tory Canada has three classes of citizens: the rich, the not yet poor and the forgotten poor. In the recession middle class families lost three times as much of their income as did high income families, the kinds of people who benefit from this