

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. MacEachen:** —I can tell him that it has been announced or it is the intention of the Minister of National Revenue to announce that these remissions will be extended for another year.

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**PENSIONS**

## ALLEGED REINTRODUCTION OF MEANS TEST

**Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance. It is becoming increasingly clear that the government, with the assistance of the New Democratic Party, is determined to bring back into Canada's social policy increased use of the means test. We may remember that the means test is a system whereby people like senior citizens who would like to receive government benefits, pensions and bus passes—

**Mr. Chrétien:** Order.

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Hawkes:** —have to prove economic need. Could the minister provide the House—I suspect it might be a fiscal measure—with an estimate of how much money he intends to save in the next decade out of the pockets of senior citizens by bringing back increased use of the means test?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, I am surprised by the hon. member's allegation that it is our intention to bring in the means test to deprive senior citizens of current benefits. Our policy is the exact reverse, that we have applied an income test program through the guaranteed income supplement. We have increased that supplement just recently, so there is absolutely no foundation for the suggestion that we are proposing to reintroduce any form of means test which we were successful in abolishing in our social programs.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hawkes:** Madam Speaker, I guess we all have surprises from time to time. I felt the cabinet had reviewed the Constitution Act, 1980, before presenting it before the House. I think the minister might recall the details of sections 15(1) and (2) which indicate that we cannot discriminate on the basis of age, and there is an exception in the case of disadvantaged people. If the minister checks with any university professor in the business of teaching social policy—

**Some hon. Members:** Order, order!

**Mr. Hawkes:** Madam Speaker, I must give some background.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Hawkes:** —I think he will find that the most logical legal ruling will be that they have to provide benefits to senior

citizens on the basis of a means test. Will the minister undertake to look over the situation and at some time in the next week or two provide us with an estimate of how many dollars he intends to save out of the pockets of senior citizens because of putting the Constitution Act, 1980, through closure and through the House?

**Mr. MacEachen:** Madam Speaker, I refuse to provide such an estimate because no such estimate will exist or is intended to exist.

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**TELEVISION**PROPOSED SPEECH OF PRIME MINISTER IN SASKATCHEWAN—  
INQUIRY AS TO COST

**Mr. Len Gustafson (Assiniboia):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State for Multiculturalism, and also for information and publicity. Given the fact that television time is being bought in Saskatchewan for the Prime Minister's speech apparently on Wednesday, which is the day following the budget, I wonder if the minister will tell the House who is paying for this advertising that apparently is designed to deal with the very, very delicate climate of politics in Saskatchewan now? Who is paying for this? Is it the public, the Liberal party or the government?

**Hon. Jim Fleming (Minister of State, Multiculturalism):** Madam Speaker, if I may, I think in all fairness I must say, because there are rules of the House, and not with any incipient pomposity on my part, that I will only answer future questions which are directed to me in my responsibility as Minister of State for Multiculturalism, which is my title.

The answer to the question is that I have no knowledge of any public funds being used to purchase such a program.

**Mr. Gustafson:** Madam Speaker, apparently this speech is being advertised over radio and television. Has the minister hired promoters? Apparently somebody is promoting it. Who is paying for it?

**Mr. Fleming:** Well, I am glad the hon. member is watching television and listening to radio, but I have told him that I have no knowledge of public funds being used and I have no involvement in the purchase of such a program.

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**INDUSTRY**DE HAVILLAND CORPORATION—INQUIRY WHETHER  
HAMILTON-WENTWORTH AREA CONSIDERED FOR PROPOSED  
EXPANSION

**Mr. Stanley Hudecki (Hamilton West):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Can the minister tell the House if he and the board of directors of the de Havilland Corporation have