

indicated that, if that were the case, that that part of his remarks he wished he had not so conveyed. In light of that, and given the outstanding record of probity of the Solicitor General for so many years, I am satisfied that he will continue to conduct himself with great honour.

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### ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

#### STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO SOLICITOR GENERAL

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I will seek to raise a question of privilege in connection with the letter, which is not an apology and which is not satisfactory as far as I am concerned. However, I want to ask the Prime Minister a supplementary question. With *The Gazette* of Montreal now added to the list of dailies demanding the resignation of the Solicitor General, will the Prime Minister look at the latest gaffe the Solicitor General made in the Justice Committee yesterday, where the Solicitor General refused to do anything to assist the Commissioner of the RCMP to defend the reputation of the force in the Province of New Brunswick, where the Government of that Province, even after Commissioner Simmonds' investigation and report, still indicates that it harbours suspicions against the force? Will the Prime Minister at least read that transcript and what the Solicitor General had to say about his responsibilities?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** I am sorry to learn, Mr. Speaker, that my hon. friend is disinclined to accept an apology offered on the floor of the House of Commons. Having said that, may I tell him that, while I will read the transcript to which he referred, I had an occasion in Regina at the First Ministers' Conference when this matter arose to set out the view of the Government of Canada, which is that we view the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as an outstanding national police force that we hold in the highest respect, and will defend at all times, in all circumstances.

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### PENSIONS

#### PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY'S 1980 ADVERTISEMENT

**Mr. Neil Young (Beaches):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. There is absolutely no question that, under the Government's proposal to deindex pensions, pensioners will be getting a double whammy—lower pensions and higher taxes—from the Budget.

When the Conservatives were in opposition they ran an ad across the country opposing what the Liberals intended to do on deindexation. Does the Prime Minister agree with the following statements which they made then—"the less your income, the harder you get hit", "deindexing would mean a massive tax increase for all Canadians", and "the one group which would get hit hardest are pensioners"? Does the Gov-

### Oral Questions

ernment still agree with those statements which were made across the country in 1980?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I remind the Hon. Member that at that time—and he was in the House, as I was—there was considerable speculation that indexation would be fully removed. Instead of having a minor impact on indexation, as is the case with our proposal, there was to be a drop in the indexation rate from around 11 per cent or 12 per cent to zero. We opposed that, and we still oppose that. This is why we have put in a modified form of indexation which provides for full indexation of the impact of inflation over the level of 3 per cent.

#### GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Neil Young (Beaches):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Since Conservatives raised Canadians' expectations by promising to index pensions fully, as well as all those other promises which they made, why does the Government now feel quite justified and quite clean in saying to Canadians that it cannot keep the promises to seniors but it can keep the promises to the oil companies, and make seniors pay for them?

● (1450)

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to repeat myself. I have talked to many of my colleagues here, and I have talked to many senior citizens. The one thing that seniors tell me very, very clearly, is that they are very worried when they see the debt of the country growing three times faster than the rate of the increase in the economy of the country. They are also concerned, about the huge debt, which at today's level is \$6,000, and will go to \$12,000 per person that will be left for their children and grandchildren to pay. That is something we are trying to turn around, and I would expect that there would be some degree of support for—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. That is becoming a speech.

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### ENERGY

#### CLOSURE OF CAPE BRETON HEAVY WATER PLANTS—CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. The Prime Minister will know that a member of his caucus is on record as saying that the closure of two heavy water plants in Nova Scotia will be devastating to the local economies. That Member has also gone on to say that it is now the complete responsibility of the Government of Canada to resolve the high unemployment rate in that area. I would ask the Prime Minister respectfully if he agrees with those statements. If so, when can we expect some real, concrete, positive