

S.O. 21

another culture, are puppets in the hands of politicians when that is politically profitable. Otherwise, they are ignored.

[English]

The federal Government should take a long, hard look at Mr. Yalden's report, with a commitment to acting upon the recommendations contained therein, and also look at the area of multiculturalism and pursue a more vigorous policy in that regard.

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[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT FUND CREATION OF
EMPLOYMENT IN QUEBEC

Mr. Claude Tessier (Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead): Madam Speaker, the \$220 million Canada-Quebec agreement with respect to the immediate creation of jobs has been scuttled because once again the Quebec Government has failed to honour its signature of December 23. The purpose was worthwhile indeed, but there is a question we must ask ourselves as Federal Members of Parliament and representatives of Quebec ridings: why should the Federal Government always disregard its own requirements and let the Parti Québécois force Quebecers to behave as if they were separated from the rest of Canada?

Indeed, Madam Speaker, even though certain features may be considered as peculiar to Quebec, and even particular status to a certain extent, the fact remains that Québec's Péquiste Government too often acts as if the province had already separated, and because it is behaving as such, and all the more so because it does not have that mandate, we federalist Members and all our supporters have to admit that the Canadian Government cannot be so cooperative as to shirk its own responsibilities towards Quebecers and other Canadians alike.

The Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) is to be commended for his courageous decision not to wait any longer for the Quebec Government, and we urge him to give Quebecers the funds earmarked for immediate job creation.

I deeply regret however that municipalities are now excluded because of the Quebec Government, and yet they could use assistance under the NEED Program and they would be ideal partners to provide services in our respective ridings.

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[English]

SMALL BUSINESS

APPEAL FOR STIMULATORY MEASURES

Mr. Otto Jelinek (Halton): Madam Speaker, with unemployment in Canada at an all time high and growing, it is painfully obvious that the Government has failed to come to grips with this very serious problem.

We have seen the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) pump millions after millions of tax dollars into costly, temporary, and non-productive make-work programs, only to have these temporary jobs cease to exist upon the termination of such programs.

In the meantime a survey by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business yesterday concluded that 700,000 to 800,000 permanent jobs have been lost in the small and medium-sized business sector as a result of the Liberal Government's lack of positive programs and policies for that sector.

This only confirms what we in the Conservative Party have been saying for years, namely, that small and medium-sized businesses form the backbone of our economy and, with realistic and effective policies, are Canada's No. 1 potential employers.

I therefore appeal to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) to adopt in his forthcoming budget specific policies which would encourage employment, expansion and start-ups of small businesses by way of employment incentives and other forms of tax incentives, in order to stimulate this most important sector of our economy.

Then, and only then, will it be possible to move forward on the road to economic recovery and permanent job creation in Canada.

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● (1410)

SOCIAL SECURITY

FULL INDEXATION OF OLD AGE PENSIONS

Mr. Ray Chénier (Timmins-Chapleau): Madam Speaker, the announcement made recently by the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) regarding the full indexation of Old Age Security pensions for the second quarter of 1983 is certainly good news for Canadian senior citizens. The six and five legislation will not apply in the second quarter of 1983, thanks to the continuing decline in the rate of inflation which stood at 7.4 per cent in February.

When the federal Government introduced the six and five legislation last summer, many people were quick to judge, charging that senior citizens would suffer greatly by the new legislation. At that time we assured Canadians that people who needed help the most would not be affected by the six and five legislation. And now the Government has shown that it too can be fair. Because the inflation rate has dropped so dramatically in recent months, the Government can now provide full indexation on Old Age Security pension cheques.

It is my hope that we will continue to see the rate of inflation fall over the next few months, in order that we may continue the full indexation of Old Age Security pensions in the third and fourth quarters of 1983.