

Oral Questions

Mr. Mulroney: And she said, "When you see the Hon. Member for Hamilton East, give her my love".

Ms. Copps: As long as she trades in her old age pension cheque.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: The Right Hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned two federal spending components: social programs and regional economic expansion. The Budget Papers show clearly that all social programs will be up by 5 per cent annually over the next five years, every single one, and that regional economic expansion programs will be up by 35 per cent over the next five years. Now that is a commitment to social programs and regional economic expansion!

[*English*]

IMPACT ON CHILD CARE PROGRAM

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister talks about his mother, and I am sure she is a wonderful woman. I am also sure that he is a son that only a mother could love.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): During the election campaign, the Prime Minister said about the child care program, and these are the Prime Minister's words:

We will be reintroducing that legislation and passing it as soon as Parliament comes back after the election.

How can the Minister of Finance reconcile that election commitment of the Prime Minister—not an election promise but an election commitment, to use the vocabulary of the Minister of Finance—with the Budget announcement that \$4 billion for child care spaces has been wiped out? Is this election deception not yet another reason why the Minister and the Budget ought to be thrown out?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my right hon. friend mentions my mother. My mother will be embarrassed by this, but I feel I should say that she did say to me, "Brian, if I couldn't have a son like you, I'd like him to be just like Mr. Turner".

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The Right Hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, with regard to child care, we began to implement the child care strategy. It is in place in regard to—the Hon. Member for Hamilton East is chuckling, but the Government is now providing \$2.3 billion over the next seven years to increase tax assistance for families with pre-school children and children with special needs. These tax measures, which are a very important component of a child care program, help 1.4 million families here in Canada, low-income families. A second component is a fund of \$100 million to support special initiatives to improve child care services.

I will acknowledge with regret that a third measure that had been proposed to accelerate the creation of additional child care spaces across Canada, because of the fiscal situation, we are not in a position to proceed with those measures at this time. However, the Government will act during this mandate to meet its child care objectives, and I think all Hon. Members will regret the fact that at the end of the last session, the Liberal Senators killed the child care program.

[*Translation*]

CAMPAIGN PROMISES—PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Laurier—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Right Hon. Prime Minister.

During the election campaign, no Conservative Member of the House told seniors that some would have to return their old age security pension cheques. During the election campaign, neither did the Bouchard brothers tell families that they would have to give back their family allowance cheques.

My question for the Right Hon. Prime Minister, since his mother is with him today, is: Could he tell his mother how come he said in front of her and everyone during the election campaign, "Would I hurt my mother?" How come at the same time he lied again to seniors by not admitting that 368,000 elderly people in Canada would have to return their old age security pension cheques, which has never happened before in Canada?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have heard some good ones, but that tops them all!

The Hon. Member for Sainte-Marie is defending people over 65 with an annual income between \$50,000 and \$75,000. I can tell you that my mother does not earn that. We are here to defend the least fortunate in our society, not the rich.