

*Oral Questions*

public dialogue that becomes the focus of a general election campaign? Can we have an election soon if we are not going to get a change of policy, so that Canadians can decide whether they need a change of policy? I think they do.

● (1120)

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Now I can really understand the sense of panic of the Hon. Member and his Party, Mr. Speaker. They are not going to have an election soon.

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**THE ECONOMY**

## OECD FIGURES ON CANADIAN ECONOMY

**Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance who, you will recall, last Wednesday stated in this House that the Canadian record with respect to the economy is very comparable to that of the United States. Has the Minister recently reviewed OECD figures which show that Canada in fact fell into the recession prior to the United States, fell further, has had higher inflation, yet less real growth, higher unemployment, yet greater relative federal deficits than the United States? If the Minister is aware of those figures, will he explain to this House why he consistently continues to misrepresent the facts? Can he not distinguish facts from pure fantasy?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, indeed the Canadian economy has known a deeper recession than that of the United States. I have recognized that fact all along. I have also indicated, however, a number of figures have shown that Canada had known a larger improvement last year than most other economies, including that of the United States.

Figures will change as months go by when you make such comparisons, but I remind my hon. friend that for the first three quarters of 1983, for instance, growth in Canada was higher than in the United States. If one looks at the provisional figures for the whole year in terms of employment growth, for instance, one will find that in the first ten months of 1983 employment growth in Canada was higher than in the United States, but then was lower in the last two months. If one takes the full year, one arrives at the equivalent levels of growth of about 3.8 per cent. Therefore, the economies in Canada and the United States are moving very much in the same direction at the present time. We have known a deeper recession, it is true. I have always recognized that. And I am confident, as the OECD has predicted for 1984, that Canada will know a very good year, as a matter of fact a year which compares favourably with any other country. I refer my hon. friend to the most recent report of the OECD in that regard.

## PRIME MINISTER'S 1980 STATEMENT

**Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel):** Mr. Speaker, I will direct my question to the Prime Minister, who has just heard his Minister of Finance admit that our recession was more serious than that of the United States. Yet the Prime Minister said this morning that the last Budget was such a success. Would the Prime Minister now admit that while he has been contemplating what he called his "complex destiny" overseas—

**Mr. Crosbie:** He has a complex all right.

**Mr. Stevens:**—there are 500,000 Canadians who are out of work today over and above the number who were out of work in January, 1980, when he made the famous statement that he would fight to lower unemployment in this country—which is a tragedy for this nation—and that, indeed, he has lost that fight which he promised the Canadian public he would make during the last election?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member is suggesting that I did not win the fight to keep the economy growing in the first part of the 1980s as well as we did in the 1970s, that is true. That is what the Minister has just repeated. We have had a recession. I would just like to point out to the Hon. member that the OECD countries have more than 30 million unemployed. That is a very considerable increase over what they had in 1980.

The recession has been world-wide. It still is, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Stevens:** Why are the Americans doing better?

**Mr. Trudeau:** If the Hon. Member would go overseas he would see that there is a lot of unemployed over there, and that this Government is doing better in correcting the unemployment problem than they are.

**Mr. Stevens:** How about the United States?

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**LABOUR CONDITIONS**

## PLIGHT OF THE UNEMPLOYED

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance, who was going on this morning just as he has for the past weeks and months, talking about a recovery. For months now the Government has thrown literally hundreds of millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money at corporations on the promise that jobs would be created. I say to the Minister that the 1.5 million unemployed announced today are the best evidence possible that the Government has blown it. It does not know what it is doing in the economy. Will the Minister tell us today and, through us, the unemployed in British Columbia, Newfoundland, Ontario anywhere in this country—what they are to do for a job prospect next week?