

billions of dollars in indirect taxes on Canadians which in turn are fueling inflation.

• (1500)

**Some Hon. Members:** Question!

**Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** Witness the 10 per cent tax on long distance telephone calls and increased tax on cablevision which has been in force since January 1. Witness the increased tax on gasoline which is coming onstream this week.

**Some Hon. Members:** Question!

**Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** My God, there is a bunch of stupid guys on the other side.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps the Hon. Member will put his question.

**Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** Mr. Speaker, I would not like to be in your shoes and have the duty to maintain order in this place.

**Mr. Speaker:** I suppose all I can say is that what the Hon. Member has just said on one side is probably being repeated *sotto voce* at the same time on the other side. Will the Hon. Member put his question?

**Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is that the Minister cannot say that he wants to keep inflation in check and impose taxes over taxes which fuel inflation. Why is the Minister saying to Canadians: "Listen to what I am saying, but don't watch what I am doing"?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I think you observed that the Hon. Member started his question on a far better footing than he finished.

The Hon. Member, I think, has to realize that we are trying to follow economic policy in the broadest sense. Part of it results in increases in taxes. Part of it results in decreases in prices. As a result of the increase in the value of the Canadian dollar, we see that the cost of imports to Canadian consumers comes down. That, hopefully, will be reflected in the Consumer Price Index and the broader cost of living.

If we are able to achieve that objective, then, as I have said before, hopefully we will be able to do this soon and get interest rates down. In the meantime we are following a balanced economic policy, to one part of which the Hon. Member has referred, but there are many, many other parts as well.

[Translation]

IMPOSITION OF INDIRECT TAXES—MINISTER'S POSITION

**Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister why is he trying to squeeze the taxpayers in a vice. First he forces them to pay high interest

rates because he claims he has to keep inflation under control, but then he continues to levy hundreds of millions of dollars in indirect taxes—we will be getting more of these this week, on April 1—and there again they have to pay.

What is the Minister trying to achieve by squeezing taxpayers from both sides at the same time?

[English]

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, again I think the Hon. Member is being far too focused in his questions. He should look at the broader impacts of government policy and the broader objectives of government policy. Clearly, the broader objective, as I have stated on many occasions, as has the Governor of the Bank of Canada, is to improve the health of the Canadian economy and improve the ability of the Canadian economy to create economic growth and jobs.

That is happening. We have been right up at the top of the list in job creation. We have been right up at the top of the list in economic growth. We are trying to ensure that we continue that excellent performance, a performance that is widely recognized—

**Mr. Speaker:** I regret to interrupt the Hon. Minister. There will be one final question.

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#### TRADE

#### CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT— INTRODUCTION OF RATIFICATION LEGISLATION

**Mr. Alan Redway (York East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Many Canadians, myself included, believe that we should not be implementing the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement until after we have had a national election. However, all of that is going to be academic unless the United States Congress ratifies the agreement. Will the Deputy Prime Minister assure the House that legislation intended to implement the agreement will not be introduced until after the United States Congress ratifies the agreement itself?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, the preparation of the legislation is proceeding. When it will be introduced is somewhat uncertain at this time. However, I have indicated it will be sometime after April 11, so that gives me a little latitude. It will depend on a number of things that will have to be taken into consideration. I will certainly take the Hon. Member's suggestion as a representation.