

Oral Questions

Ms. Copps: Day care is taxed.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Day care is not taxed. The member for Hamilton East has just said that day care is taxed. It is not taxed.

What this all points out is that the Liberal Party of Canada cannot accept the fact that this bill has passed the House of Commons. It is in the Senate and the Liberal members opposite are saying that they want to pass over their responsibility as elected members of Parliament to a body to which the Canadian public has no recourse.

They have no way of voting out Allan MacEachen. They have no way of voting out Sid Buchwald. It is this fundamental principle of parliamentary democracy that the Liberal Party is trying to deflect the attention of Canadians on. They will not deflect the attention of Canadians because of the wide-spread editorial support for what—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): My question is for the Prime Minister, if the Liberals will calm down over there, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Nystrom: My question is for the Prime Minister, as the leader of the government. In a rather unprecedented report this morning the Economic Council of Canada launched a scathing attack on the federal government's economic policies. It said that the government leader should admit that there is something fundamentally wrong with past economic policies.

• (1440)

I want to know from the Prime Minister of Canada whether or not he agrees with his blue chip economic advisory group that there is something fundamentally wrong with the economic policies of this government. Will he now admit that and change those policies on behalf of the people of this country?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I believe there is a fairly loose interpretation here, but that is normally expected from the hon. member.

We accept the fact that we should be getting the deficit of the Government of Canada down. That is precisely what we have been trying to do over the last six years and what we have been having a reasonable amount of success in doing.

More work has to be done, but perhaps the hon. member and his party could get off this horse of supporting the Liberal senators when they are blocking Bill C-21, which is designed to get the deficit down; Bill C-28, which is designed to get the deficit down; Bill C-62, which is designed to get the deficit down, as well as Bill C-69. Those are bills on unemployment insurance, on taxation, on the GST, and on expenditure—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, no wonder the Canadian people are cynical about this government. What this report does is attack the government on its failure to bring down inflation in this country in the proper way and to bring down unemployment in the proper way. They say, and I quote, at page 45: "Canada has never made more than a timid commitment to full employment".

The old ways have not worked. What I want to know from this government is what new policies it will introduce now to respond to this report. What new commitments will it bring in for the unemployed of this country? What new direction can we expect in Canada to put Canadians to work?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think the record of this government stands. We have brought the unemployment rate from 11.7 per cent down to the current level of around 8 per cent. A million and a half jobs have been created.

The Economic Council, if the hon. member will go on a few pages, also points out the fact that we should be spending more money for training to help people who are unemployed get better skills so they can get back into the labour force. That is the bill that my colleague has put to the Senate. It is a bill—

Ms. Copps: You just said it was to reduce the deficit.