

*Oral Questions*

parity with the private sector but only for 90 per cent of that level?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, we have stated that we are in favour of a policy of comparability with the private sector. However, we must be careful to compare apples with apples and not with oranges. For instance, we compare government employed plumbers with industry employed plumbers, and not with plumbers working on a temporary basis on construction sites who lack job security and are not eligible for the pension plans offered by the government.

[English]

**Mr. Broadbent:** Is the minister telling the House that the wage proposals put forward on behalf of the government in all the categories of tradesmen in construction meet the traditional test of comparability? Is he saying that what the government is offering meets traditional comparative standards?

[Translation]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, there have been arbitrations and settlements over the years. This is nothing new. What we are offering government blue collar workers today is about the same comparison basis we have offered them in similar circumstances over the years.

[English]

STRIKE OF GENERAL LABOUR AND TRADES GROUP—  
POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE RECRUITMENT PROBLEMS IF WAGES  
NOT COMPARABLE TO THOSE IN PRIVATE SECTOR

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** Is the minister aware of a report done by the pay research bureau in the Public Service Staff Relations Board which reaches a conclusion contrary to his own and suggests to the government that if it continues widening the gap between what it pays its employees and what is paid by the private sector, quite apart from the question of equity the federal government might well encounter recruitment problems of a serious nature?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of Treasury Board):** I have been talking with a lot of members of parliament who would like some of their people to work for the government. I am not afraid we shall be short of labour in the next few years, because we treat our employees very well.

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[Translation]

## AIRPORTS

PROBLEMS RELATED TO ROUYN AND VAL-D'OR AIRPORTS

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Transport.

Like the Leader of the Opposition, I wish the right hon. Prime Minister a good trip to Europe. May it be profitable to Canada on the international scene and especially to our Canadian economy. I am sure I speak for all hon. members

[Mr. Broadbent.]

when I say that we are not ashamed of our Prime Minister when he goes abroad.

I wish to put a question to the Minister of Transport. We have all heard that he has resigned as leader of the Quebec wing of the Liberal party. He has fairly often done good work with his students and I trust the new incumbent will be able to instill somewhat more seriousness into them.

Will the resignation of the minister allow him to devote a little more time to the solution of the serious problems of the Rouyn and Val-d'Or airports?

**Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, since I heard that the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi will seek the leadership of his party, and since I know he stands a good chance of being elected, I did not feel it necessary to have as strong an organization as we had in the past in the province of Quebec.

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● (1440)

[English]

## THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

POSSIBILITY OF RECESSION—ADVICE OF PRIME MINISTER'S  
ECONOMISTS TO COUNTERACT

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**An hon. Member:** Speak right up George.

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

**Mr. Hees:** Mr. Speaker, obviously the natives are again restless. They feel that the lion is moving in for the kill. As figures released yesterday by Statistics Canada show that real domestic product has been falling steadily for the past three quarters, thereby establishing this country firmly in a recession, I should like to ask whether that group of outside economists, with which the Prime Minister has surrounded himself, and who have been working for him for the past few months, have come forward with any concrete suggestions to restore the pace of the economy to a satisfactory level and, if so, could the Prime Minister very briefly mention those suggestions?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** No, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Hees:** Then I take it, Mr. Speaker, that these very high priced economists who have been on the public payroll for several months now are taking no interest in the country's number one problem. I would ask the Prime Minister whether it is a fact that the only task which has been allotted them by the Prime Minister is to pass judgment on the policies put forward by the Minister of Finance and his department?

**Mr. Trudeau:** No, Mr. Speaker, although the opposition would need some help on that.

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