

Supply

Mr. Orlikow: I will take that bet.

Mr. Nunziata: One hundred dollars. Bet your salary.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Could we forget about the bets please?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McCrossan: The record of this Government as it comes to pass will indicate clearly that each of our economic measures has produced results. I fully expect and have every confidence that the number of Canadians below the poverty line will decline just as dramatically in the next four years as it increased so dramatically over the last four years under the last Government.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. I want to say to the Member that my Leader asked me to apologize for his absence. He had an emergency call, otherwise he would have been here.

I want to put two questions to the Minister. The Hon. Member talked about the jobs created by this Government. Has the Hon. Member seen the most recent report of the OECD? I could send him a copy of an article which appeared in the May 31 edition of *The New York Times* and summarized the report. It was reported that in 1984, only one country among the OECD countries had a higher rate of unemployment than Canada, and that was Great Britain, with its 11.7 per cent unemployment rate compared with an 11.3 per cent unemployment rate in Canada. The OECD estimates are based upon information from experts in Canada in the Department of Finance and in the Department of Employment and Immigration. For the year 1985, it was estimated that the unemployment rate for the United States would be 7.25 per cent; for West Germany, 8.25 per cent; for France, 10.5 per cent; for Britain, 10.75 per cent; for Italy, 10.75 per cent; for Japan, 2.5 per cent; and for Canada, our country with this Conservative Government, 11 per cent, the highest percentage of unemployment of any OECD country.

● (1240)

Also the Hon. Member expressed some criticism of the policies of the New Democratic Party Government of Manitoba. I will not say that everything that Government does is perfect, but surely the Hon. Member realizes that the Province of Manitoba has a very high deficit. The reason for that is that it has done more to protect the standards of the old, the sick and the needy than any other Government. That Government may make decisions which he and I do not like, but does he not realize that the reason for the high deficit and for making decisions which none of us like is that it has done so much to protect the people who need protection the most?

Mr. McCrossan: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his questions. I could not have planted better questions myself. With respect to the 1984 unemployment figures in Canada, I was trying to emphasize in my speech that exact point, that we inherited a mess.

Mr. Orlikow: Talk about 1985.

Mr. McCrossan: The Hon. Member indicated that those particular figures were published in May, 1985. Obviously they are obsolete because we have a 10.5 per cent unemployment rate now, not an 11 per cent one. Obviously they were prepared without any knowledge of what was in the Budget. If they were published at the same time as the Budget, they certainly could not have incorporated the effects of the Budget on the economy. It is obvious that someone in Brussels or Paris would not be able to keep up to date on what is happening in Canada.

I was dumbfounded when I heard the Hon. Member say that it was NDP policy, at times of high budget deficits, to cut back on the benefits to the elderly in Manitoba, the most needy in society, those collecting the GIS.

Mr. Orlikow: I did not say that at all.

Mr. McCrossan: I wonder whether he talks with his Leader, who just apologized for leaving. Everything members of that Party have been saying in the House indicates that cutting back of that nature is unacceptable. The Hon. Member's own critic, the Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Ms. Mitchell), made a point in the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs concerning our unanimous recommendations—

Ms. Mitchell: They were not unanimous. We did not support them.

Mr. McCrossan: There were many unanimous parts of the recommendation. I believe the Hon. Member will agree that the part to which I am about to refer was unanimous, that we should approach all provincial Governments to ensure—

Ms. Mitchell: And the federal Government, with which you did not agree.

Mr. McCrossan: As I was saying, it was agreed that we should approach all provincial Governments and the federal Government to ensure that increases which we were giving to the most needy were not simply used as a vehicle for revenue reduction by the provinces.

Ms. Mitchell: What about the federal savings?

Mr. McCrossan: Her Party in that province is doing exactly what she recommended to stop.

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Speaker, quite simply and quite honestly, I found the Hon. Member's speech to be disgusting. He skirted, he danced, he went back to 1970-72, but he refused to discuss the motion at hand. He talked about hypocrisy. Talk about hypocrisy; it was his Leader, the current Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), and members of his Party during the last federal election campaign who went across the country and told senior citizens that full indexation was here to stay forever, that full indexation was a sacred trust and that they cared about the people who built this country. Then the Budget was brought