

*Oral Questions*

is the opinion of the industry in this country and of the Government that we are not providing any undue assistance to our forest products industries.

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[Translation]

**THE BUDGET****EFFECT OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS ON SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES HEADED BY WOMEN**

**Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State (Finance). Forty-five per cent of Canadian single-parent families headed by women live below the threshold of poverty. I wish the Minister would explain to us why they put a ceiling of \$15,000 with respect to measures aimed at the most destitute families, yet that ceiling happens to be below the threshold of poverty for many families, and women are particularly affected by this?

[English]

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a difficult decision, as I am sure the Hon. Member knows, to discover what is precisely the right point at which to create or cut off a payment. The Government has been targeting our policies to those most in need. We would always like to be able to do more, but given the state of our economy at the moment we are very pleased that we have been able to help people at the bottom end of the scale, which we feel is where it is most deserved.

[Translation]

**FUTURE OUTLOOK**

**Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont):** A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The families that most need it now are necessarily single-parent families, so I would like the Minister to tell us what other bad news the Government has in store for single-parent families concerning the reform of social expenditures which the Minister of Finance mentioned in his Budget.

[English]

**An Hon. Member:** That is a good question.

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, I think that is a bit of a hypothetical question. This Government has a good record for fairness and a good record for compassion for people with real needs. The people of Canada will see that continue.

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**CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION****RURAL AND NATIVE HOUSING PROGRAM**

**Mr. Bill Vankoughnet (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the

Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The Rural and Native Housing Program has created several problems in the constituency that I represent. In light of the recent agreement that has been signed with the Province of Ontario, can the Minister assure this House and my constituents that there will be consultation and participation by Members of Parliament, as well as municipal and local representatives, before implementing any further rural and native housing programs?

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, through the consultation process consultations were held with several groups. I recognize the contribution made by the Hon. Member in pointing out some of the difficulties with the Rural and Native Housing Program. I have had discussions with the Native Council of Canada, with OMNSIA, and I can inform the Hon. Member that there will be consultation between the federal agency, CMHC, the municipalities, and the groups to which rural and native housing provides a much needed program.

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**YOUTH****SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. How can youth and the public have any trust in this Minister in face and the sad scenario that was highlighted in the Senate report on youth, which underscored the serious mental state of this growing lost generation, with suicide as the second highest cause of death? In light of this, how could the Minister cut down on the budget to the youth Department and literally cut out the voice of youth at the cabinet table in this way?

**Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, it has always been the practice in Main Estimates to include the expenses for activities within the Ministry that fall under the Ministry of State under the Department in which that has been placed. So there has been no cut there.

**Mrs. Finestone:** Mr. Speaker, I find that a totally unacceptable answer.

● (1500)

**MINISTER'S POSITION**

**Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of State for Youth. In the face of that travesty how can the Minister, who says she cares about youth, perpetuate this tragedy by staying in the Cabinet with no responsibility and no budget? How can you stay there?

**Hon. Andrée Champagne (Minister of State (Youth)):** Mr. Speaker, for a Liberal, perhaps having something to say in Cabinet means having money, but in this Government it does not.