Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Deputy Prime Minister.

This government's economic policies have not only failed; they have sold Canadians down the river. If this government had listened to what Canadians said, we would not be in the position that we are in now.

[*Translation*]

The best thing the government could do today to bring Canadian men and women together and unite them in pride and hope would be to listen to our poor families who are overburdened with taxes. My question is directed therefore to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Is he finally going to listen and withdraw its GST? Is he going at last to impose a minimum tax on profit making corporations which are currently paying no tax at all?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says that our policies have failed. How is it, then, if with failed policies we are number two right after Japan in economic growth from 1984 right through to the end of 1989? How is it that if our policies have failed we are number one of the major industrialized countries in job creation? The policies of this government have been working.

The Leader of the NDP says that we should scrap the GST. She is concerned about the economy. We should listen to what experts have been saying who understand the tax system in this country, what they have been saying since 1940 and again in 1956, 1963, 1966, 1976, and 1983. People time and time again have said: "Scrap the existing federal sales tax, put in a new type of consumption tax, and the result will be a healthier economy".

If the hon. member wants to go back in the last little while, let me ask the Liberal members of Parliament, what is Jean Chrétien saying now? Last week—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Yukon.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

We will be debating, as I said earlier in this House today, Canadian unity and listening to Canadians. Three days ago when I was in Newfoundland, I met with workers from Grand Bank, Newfoundland who want to be listened to also. For these people and thousands like them, their way of life is being devastated because this government's economic policy has been to turn the fisheries over to the corporations and not to operate in Canadians' interest.

Right now there is a conference going on in Ottawa on sustainable development in fisheries. Why did the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans refuse to invite anyone from the unions representing fishermen and plant workers? Why won't he listen to these experts? Why won't he listen to the people who know the industry, who do it every day?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, if the only purpose of that hon. member is to try to picture this minister of fisheries as a person who is not listening to fishermen in the regions of Atlantic Canada, I think she is not at all in tune with the facts.

I constantly deal with fishermen and with the unions of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, P.E.I., and even on the west coast.

This hon. member grandstands in the House and wants to pretend that the downturn in the Atlantic fishery is because of economic mismanagement.

I would just like to remind her that at no time have we ever reduced the inshore allowance of the people with whom she met. We have reduced the quotas of the big corporations, but never the inshore allowance of inshore fishermen. How can she stand in this House and blabber these comments that do not make sense at all?

* * *

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre–Dame–de–Grâce): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Yesterday, the MIL Corporation announced that it was planning to lay off 700 workers in Tracy, Quebec, including 400 this coming December, bringing to over 12,000 the number of workers laid off in the Montreal area this past year. Meanwhile, the government has decided to make major cuts in the unemployment insurance scheme.