

Oral Questions

The minister of fisheries has received a request for a meeting with Saskatchewan fisheries groups. To ensure a complete understanding of this important issue from the perspective of those involved in the fishery and the communities dependent upon the freshwater fishery, I urge the minister to accept that invitation and meet with them as soon as possible.

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK

Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, March 6 to March 10 is International Women's Week, a time set aside to honour the contributions of women in our society.

• (1115)

My riding of Cumberland—Colchester is replete with women who have made outstanding contributions, not only in their communities but in Canada and the world beyond.

The Colchester Historical Society in its recent edition of *Colchester Women* has recognized the contributions made by outstanding leaders like Abbie Gray, Dr. Janet Baker, Rev. Wilena Brown, and Dr. Annie Dickson. The legacy of such women is an inspiration to those who follow in their footsteps.

Studies indicate that the higher the education of the mother of the family, the more likely the success of the children. As we head into International Women's Week, I encourage women everywhere to build the future of this country by striving to attain their educational goals. The hand that rocks the cradle is truly the hand that rules the world.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD*[Translation]***THE BUDGET**

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, over the past decade, individuals have been called upon to assume a heavier tax load than corporations. This week's budget perpetuates this state of affairs by imposing a higher increase in taxes on the middle class than on corporations, in particular through increased excise taxes on gasoline. In 1995, individuals will pay four times more income tax than corporations.

My question is for the acting prime minister. Will the acting prime minister acknowledge that the budget calls upon individuals to assume a heavier tax burden than businesses, since 65 per cent of all of the income tax increases it contains will hit individuals?

[English]

Mr. David Walker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very surprised that the hon.

member has so misinterpreted the budget. We are very proud of the fact that this budget has absolutely no increase in personal income tax rates.

We have taken several steps to increase the contribution from the corporate side to the basic revenue structure of this country. We have made changes in the large corporate income tax rate. We have made changes in taxation with the banks. For the first time, given also the increase in profits in the private sector, I think we will find there is a tremendous shift to the corporate side away from the average family.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that was exactly what I was talking about. How can the parliamentary secretary talk about a fair budget when we know that the only additional effort being required of banks and financial institutions is a temporary tax of some \$100 million staggered over two years, although the combined profits of the six biggest banks were \$4.3 billion last year alone? When is the government going to impose a real minimum tax on the earnings of profitable large corporations?

[English]

Mr. David Walker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is making every effort to make sure the banking industry and the financial institutions pay their fair share.

A number of measures that were first introduced last year have been reinforced this year. The tax structure is not temporary but permanent. These institutions will be paying their fair share. We will insist upon it.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance himself talked about implementing a minimum tax on the profits of corporations during the last election campaign.

Considering the finance department's commitment to closing tax loopholes and creating a fair budget, how can the parliamentary secretary justify that the 1995 budget does not touch tax havens, nor does it touch flags of convenience, which allow rich taxpayers and large corporations to avoid paying their fair share of tax, or that the budget does not tighten up family trust rules until 1999?

[English]

Mr. David Walker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in rapid succession the member has been able to misinterpret about three different measures in the last budget.

First, starting with the capital base of corporations, we have a tax structure now which eliminates many of the loopholes whereby corporations managed to escape taxes on the income side. Second, we did not sign any tax treaty with any country which provides for a tax haven. It is just the opposite. We ensure