

jobs. We gained many, many hundred thousand more than that.

I think the proposals that have been set out in the defence White Paper stand for themselves. They are the result of a very extensive review by the Government, working with the Department of National Defence and the military advisers, on the approach that we should be taking as a Government. I think the Hon. Member will understand that those questions are more appropriately put to the Minister of National Defence who will be back in the House shortly.

#### INDIAN RESERVES—SOCIAL CONDITIONS

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure the Minister of National Defence will have the information we want on alternative spending in the social field, for example. Again, the Minister has been cited as one of those who is trying to bring some common sense to cabinet decisions.

At a time when we have in virtually every Indian reserve in Canada what can only be described as disgusting and unacceptable poverty, at a time when there are one million Canadian children in poverty, at a time when we have a need for child care spaces, at a time when there are all kinds of real social needs that have to be met, why does the Government not embark on a sensible surveillance military policy and use the saved billions of dollars for needed social spending in Canada?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member understands the importance of balance in public policy. The Hon. Member has mentioned our spending on Indian affairs, and I should point out to him that that has increased by 42 per cent since we came into office.

What we have done, on a range of social policy initiatives that I have outlined many times in the House, speaks for itself. Just to remind the Hon. Member, I will tell him that we have increased the child tax credit, we have provided for the prepayment of the child tax credit, we have introduced a refundable sales tax credit, and we have introduced a number of changes that have improved the lives of veterans.

The changes we have made in a range of social policy areas have, I think, been a good balance between what is needed on the economic development side, on the regional development side, on the international affairs side, and on the side of defence policy, all of which combined represent what is needed in good government.

It is very easy for the Hon. Member to pull out of the air some ideas that he would like to put into operation, something which he probably will never get a chance to do, so I understand his frustration in that way. I think it is important to look at the balance and recognize that we are coming off a period when the defence affairs of this country were seriously neglected.

We are trying to generate a greater degree of balance so that the men and women who represent us in the Armed

Forces know that they will be properly equipped and that there is a Government that stands behind them.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows that what is being objected to is wasteful spending. He knows that Canadian military experts as well as British, French, and American have said that this nuclear submarine policy is an absurd one, and Canadians understand that.

[Translation]

#### GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** My last question is simply this: Would the Minister confirm that the Government is now considering its options on this policy? Is it possible that the Canadian Government intends to reverse its policy and to adopt an approach that does not include purchasing nuclear submarines?

● (1430)

[English]

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know who the Hon. Member is trying to fool. His colleague sitting right beside him said a matter of weeks ago that the NDP would not introduce nuclear submarines but would put that same amount of money into surface vessels.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Not the same amount.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** The NDP Leader is saying they were not going to cut back on the defence budget.

**Mr. Broadbent:** He did not say that.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** You cannot have it both ways. You say you don't want to have nuclear submarines but you want to keep defence spending at the same levels. You cannot fool the Canadian people, they are too smart for that.

\* \* \*

#### IMMIGRATION

##### REPORTED GRANTING OF REFUGEE STATUS TO NICARAGUAN CONTRA REBELS

**Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Immigration. It concerns today's reports that Nicaraguan Contra rebels requested and received refugee status in Canada as early as last year.

Following statements made last November by the Secretary of State for External Affairs who said that Canada might have to admit Contra rebels as refugees, the Minister for External Relations assured this House on November 24, in response to questions from the Opposition, that:

We have never admitted terrorists or persons guilty of war crimes, and that policy will not change.