

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I trust that the Press Gallery also realizes that the Minister did not answer the question.

## WOMEN WORKERS

**Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East):** Mr. Speaker, will the 21 per cent of workers who are part-time, many of whom are women, be covered by unemployment insurance? What is the Minister going to do about complete unemployment insurance benefits for part-time workers?

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I thought the Hon. Member would be standing to say what a benefit she thought it was that, for the first time, training allowances under the programs of CEIC have been extended to part-time workers. This is a tremendous benefit, particularly to women who are the heads of single parent families.

**Mr. Deans:** Will they get unemployment insurance?

**Miss MacDonald:** That certainly is a very good step in the right direction.

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## TRADE

## POSSIBLE IMPOSITION OF UNITED STATES CUSTOMS USER FEES

**Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs and is with regard to proposals before the United States Houses for the possible implementation of customs user fees for entrance into the United States. Has the Minister discussed this possibility with American officials? These fees could have a serious adverse impact on trade relations between our nations.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, those matters have been discussed extensively with U.S. officials, most recently by my colleague, the Minister of International Trade. We have made the case that the implementation of the fees proposed would have a disproportionate negative effect upon Canadians. Our ministerial consultations will continue. In addition to that, we have instructed the Embassy in Washington to be in touch with U.S. officials, both to seek a more reasonable fee regime if the law is to be passed, and to seek some guarantees that procedures will be followed which will minimize delays at the border.

## THE ECONOMY

## EFFECT OF BUDGET MEASURES

**Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance and is with regard to last week's Conference Board report which confirmed our prediction that the budget tax increases would hurt the economy by reducing consumer spending. Why is the Minister still satisfied with his strategy of taxing away income which would otherwise contribute to economic growth?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member is well aware that the broad strategy of the recent Budget, as well as that of the previous Budget and the economic statement, is to rely to the extent of 70 per cent on expenditure reductions, while tax increases amount to only 30 per cent of the deficit reduction measures. That is the broad strategy which we have followed, and I think it is the proper strategy to be following.

## PERSONAL TAX INCREASES

**Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity):** Mr. Speaker, sales tax and other tax increases will amount to a 27 per cent personal tax increase over the next two years. Will the Minister assure Canadians that he is not going to pile on further personal taxes to deal with the expected shortfall as a result of lost oil revenues?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I have addressed this question in the House before. The Member is correct that there will be a reduction in direct revenues in the energy industry. However, there is also an offset with the reduction of interest rates which is taking place which will reduce our interest costs. There is a balance between these two items and I, therefore, do not see that there is any reason for us to address this question.

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## CORPORATE AFFAIRS

## OWNERSHIP CONCENTRATION

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Due to the takeover of Hiram Walker by Gulf, Canadians will once again be watching as more and more control of the Canadian economy falls into the hands of seven families. Does the Minister think it is right for a country like Canada to have so much of its economic power concentrated in the hands of seven families?

**Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post):** I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I did not hear the question.

**Mr. Blaikie:** It was for the Minister of Finance. He was listening. Why doesn't he answer?