

of the current Parliament, as both the Prime Minister and the Speech from the Throne have announced.

As I have already stated, there are two ways to increase the amount of money available for low-income Canadians. The first clearly is the redistribution of wealth. The second involves increasing the total amount of wealth within a country.

The hon. member for Oshawa made reference to the commitment of President Kennedy to the eradication of poverty. It was President Kennedy who said that all ships float higher on the flood tide. As we can increase national prosperity in Canada, all Canadians should benefit from the increases, both in our ability to finance increased transfers to individuals who are in need in Canadian families and in terms of new opportunities for Canadians.

In 1984 this country had just come through one of the worst recessions seen since 1929. Runaway inflation robbed pensioners of their life savings and of their dignity. The level of unemployment was so high that when young people looked for jobs they were told that their skills simply were not needed.

We embarked on a program to revitalize our economy, enlarging our foreign markets for Canadian goods and services, turning Crown corporations that had outlived their public policy purposes back to the private sector, and deregulating industries which were stifling under government intervention. We needed income tax reform because the system that we had inherited choked initiative. We removed 850,000 lower-income Canadians from the tax rolls. We wanted to free up disposable income and improve incentives for people to work, thereby generating economic activity and jobs for others.

In just five years these and other initiatives have helped to create 1.5 million jobs for Canadians, the majority of them full-time jobs. Retail sales are up by 48 per cent. Manufacturing shipments are up by 28 per cent. It goes a long way to explaining how we are able to remove some 549,000 Canadians from below the poverty line. We are continuing to look for ways to further develop the strategy. Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue to make progress in this area to ensure that economic growth can continue.

An important part of this package showing the government's continuing concern for those with lower incomes

is that those with incomes lower than \$30,000 will be better off after sales tax reform than they are now. This would be possible because we will have a progressive GST credit. We are doing this because we want Canadian families to have opportunities. This is a prosperous country and each Canadian should have the right to better his or her own situation.

I am a married man and I have two small children. I know how parents agonize over how to raise their children well. The fundamental responsibility for raising their children will always remain with the parents themselves. Within the Department of National Health and Welfare we have taken some important steps to help families with problems.

Perhaps we could call it eleven o'clock at this point, Mr. Speaker, and I could resume discussion of some of these initiatives following Question Period.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We will now proceed to statements by members with the hon. member for Miramichi.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[English]

MIRAMICHI

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, for the past six months the people of Miramichi have gone through hell. Four people, Mrs. Annie Flamm, Linda and Donna Daughney, and the Rev. James Smith were brutally and senselessly murdered. Nina Flamm was brutally beaten but fortunately survived. Father Smith was the brother of my predecessor, G.A. Percy Smith, who many members will remember. All the victims were gentle and good people who had never hurt anyone.

During the night and early morning the prime suspect was apprehended as a result of the work of brave, careful and dedicated police men and women of the RCMP and the towns of Chatham and Newcastle. I am told that the officer who was instrumental in the apprehension is a female member of the RCMP.

I want to take this opportunity to applaud and thank most sincerely all the brave and courageous men and women who put their lives on the line to bring this awful