

ployment insurance benefits because they have received unemployment insurance benefits for the last year to a year and a half, is that they go on welfare.

When people have contributed to their own well-being all of their lives, have worked every single day since they were in their teens, and now find themselves in their middle fifties out of work, unable to draw unemployment insurance benefits, with children still in school, and their spouse not earning enough to maintain the family, is it reasonable to expect that these people must lose everything for which they have worked simply because this Government is so blind that it cannot see that they need some assistance now?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is again distorting what I said. I indicated that there are a number of programs and expenditures by the federal Government in terms of direct job creation, and in terms of additional expenditures by the federal Government to the tune of over \$525 million more than last year. We are doing everything we can in that regard. However, the Hon. Member also must recognize that the federal Government—any Government—cannot guarantee to every Canadian who is unemployed that he can have a job tomorrow morning, or even next month. No one can guarantee that.

What we are trying to do is to speed up as much as possible the activities taking place in the private sector. The measures I announced in the Budget, in terms of helping small business and medium size business, in particular, and the measures I announced in the last Budget, which are also effective—and many of them are going to have their main effect in 1984 rather than in 1983—all of these measures should lead to a high rate of job creation in the private sector.

In the meantime we have not only direct job-creation programs, but we have programs for the retraining of workers, and programs to help the mobility of people, helping them look for jobs in other areas. We have all those programs which are in operation and for which there are billions of dollars being made available during the course of 1984-85. We are doing everything we can because we share the concern for these people with the Hon. Member. However, the fact is that, unless one is a charlatan, one cannot guarantee that this problem will be resolved tomorrow morning. It will take time, unfortunately, and I regret it every day, but we are doing everything we can.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, the Minister may well be right. Many of those people cannot find employment because there are no jobs. That is the premise upon which I have based the questions I have asked since last December.

BUDGET'S TAX PROPOSALS

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Now, what I ask the Minister is this: is it fair to turn around and give to doctors, lawyers, consultants, accountants and oil companies, tax breaks totalling into the billions of dollars, and then to tax average Canadians this year an additional \$1 billion, and say

to those who are unemployed through no fault of their own and who cannot find work because, as the Minister says, there is no work for them, that they must lose everything they have ever worked for, simply because this Government would rather help its friends than help those who need it most?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is once again indulging in rhetoric and demagoguery. I may remind him that the federal Government's additional expenditures for this year, which are in the Budget I brought down last week, are directed basically to the people who are in greatest need. We have about \$450 million in additional expenditures for 1984, if I remember correctly in any case, we can check the exact figures. However, what I want to point out is that the vast majority of these funds are aimed at people in need. Two hundred and fifty million dollars for Canadians over 65 who are alone and who live in poverty. One hundred and fifty million dollars for unemployed youth. Therefore, if we look at the expenditure increase for 1984-85, the Hon. Member will have to admit that practically all additional expenditures for 1984-85 will be used to help the people who are in greatest need in our country. All my hon. friend has to do is to look at the expenditure plan for 1984-85.

As far as the expenditure and fiscal plans for subsequent years are concerned, there again, my hon. friend will have to admit that this Government is trying to put on an equal footing those people who are employed by businesses and whose pensions are covered by their employer, and people who are self-employed, whether they are professionals or farmers, fishermen, small businessmen or workers who are not covered by pension funds at this time. We are trying to achieve the objective of equal sharing of opportunities within our society.

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[English]

FINANCE

INTEREST RATE PROJECTIONS USED IN PREPARING BUDGET

Hon. Ron Huntington (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. I must say that if the Minister expects the private sector to deliver a sustained recovery, lower, stable interest rates are absolutely essential.

Mr. Crosbie: Right on.

Mr. Huntington: On Friday last, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State for Finance refused to tell us the interest rate used in the projection of debt service charges in his fiscal plan. He inferred that such information would spook the capital markets. Given the fact that United States Budget projections each year project the 91-day Treasury Bill interest rate ahead three years, and in this past Budget, ahead to 1989, at which time interest rates will be down to 5 per cent, can the Minister tell us why the secrecy here in Canada? Why can we not be trusted with this type of information, particularly when the