

consultation process. There are no ready-made solutions, but we are doing our best.

I do not endorse negative and destructive criticism. The creation of a national consensus calls for goodwill on the part of all Canadians.

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[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF WESTMINSTER SELECT COMMITTEE
ON DEFENCE MEMBERS

Mr. Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of Hon. Members to the presence in our gallery of Members of the United Kingdom House of Commons Select Committee on Defence, led by their Chairman, the Right Hon. Sir Humphrey Atkins, M.P.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

NATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

JOB CREATION FORECAST

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Government has something on its mind. Certainly it is not Parliament, as there are very few of its Members here this afternoon. I do not know whether I should direct my question to the House Leader. Preferably I will direct it to the Acting Prime Minister, if I may.

During the weekend at the National Economic Conference, the Minister of Finance projected that 50,000 fewer jobs would be created in Canada in 1985 than were created in 1984. With the great business confidence the Government claims to have inspired, why will fewer jobs be created this year than last year?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, as a result of what happened in the National Economic Conference this weekend and of the confidence in our economy as a result of that Conference, we will see the creation of permanent jobs this year and in following years, which is more than the former Government can claim.

Oral Questions

FINANCE

REQUEST FOR INTRODUCTION OF BUDGET

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, at least the Hon. Minister should have a smile on her face when she comes up with that answer.

[Translation]

Without allowing for seasonal adjustment, 274,000 Canadians who were working the day before the Minister of Finance presented his economic message in November are now unemployed. I therefore would like to know whether the Acting Prime Minister or the Minister of State (Finance) will undertake today to persuade her colleague, the Minister of Finance, to bring down a Budget that will promote job creation.

[English]

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, since this Government assumed office, 85,000 more new jobs have been created and 70,000 fewer people are unemployed than there were in September. The Leader of the Opposition should recognize these figures.

Also, I commend to him an article in the paper the other day under the headline "Employment Outlook Best in Years". It was a survey of 1,500 businesses which all said that they expected to hire additional people this year.

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THE ECONOMY

CONFERENCE BOARD FORECAST

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member enjoys playing with facts. She will find a little more difficulty playing with numbers. Those numbers are just not borne out in what she said.

Perhaps the Acting Prime Minister will prefer to pass this question to on to her. Since she likes to quote headlines, I want to quote today's report issued by the Conference Board of Canada, that Canada's major banks and investment firms have reached a consensus that the Canadian economy is "gearing down" to a slower rate of growth in 1985, and that 1986 will be even worse. That is not just a headline the Minister was able to find; that is a report of the Conference Board of Canada.

When the Minister of Employment and Immigration next sees the Minister of Finance, will she do her best to impress upon him when he brings down his long-awaited Budget—the longest period between an election and a Budget in modern history—that it should improve the picture and add a few jobs?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I assure the Leader of the Opposition that the Minister of Finance and I have very productive discussions on an ongoing basis. This is more than I can say for some of the Ministers in the previous Government. However, I