

Oral Questions

Madam Speaker, this government also cut \$1.1 billion from medicare. These cuts will leave many Canadian women without choices for their own health care. This government did have a choice; it chose to retain tax loopholes that allow the business community to entertain their friends to the tune of the same \$1.1 billion a year.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sure the hon. member has a question.

Ms. Black: I ask the Deputy Prime Minister to rise from his seat, look me in the eye, and explain why happy hour for the corporate elite means more to this government than the health of Canadian women and their children.

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Madam Speaker, I will look the hon. member in the eye and I will tell her that that is not a tax loophole at all. As a matter of fact, if she had joined with some of her colleagues the other night to visit the Canadian Hotel Association and the Canadian Restaurant Association meetings, they would have told her that this is a very important part of our tourism industry, attracting tourists to this country, and which employs, I might say, hundreds and thousands of people in this country.

Ms. Black: Women?

Mr. McDermid: And women. Exactly, women in the tourist industry.

If she is advocating that we wipe out all those things that help employment in this country, so be it; have her stand up and say that. But at the same time also suffer the consequences, if we do that, where we will have less employment in that particular sector.

If you check with the tourism industry, which the NDP says they support, then you would not be advocating such a foolish move.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Madam Speaker, it appears that the hypocrisy of this government knows no bounds.

• (1130)

Two weeks ago, this government announced a family violence initiative that would put a meagre \$1.5 million

towards stopping violence against women in our society and a week later slashed the Canada Assistance Plan which was the process for funding women's shelters, and for funding child care and services for children.

This government gave women a drop in the bucket on a Thursday and emptied the bucket on the following Tuesday. When will this government announce a royal commission on violence against women? This is something that women in Canada from coast to coast to coast are demanding from this government. We want a royal commission. Will it be announced on International Women's Day?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, I listened with some disbelief to the hon. member suggesting that the government had announced \$1.5 million for family violence in Canada, which is nonsense. We announced a \$136 million family violence program. This represents a more than doubling of the commitments that have been made in the past of fighting family violence and child sexual abuse.

The hon. member says that we should be studying the issues related to family violence. I do not think we should be studying them. I think we should be acting on them.

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EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

None of the government's words will disguise the fact that 185,000 unemployed men and women are now living on the prairies; 162,000 unemployed Canadians in British Columbia; 142,000 unemployed men and women in Atlantic Canada and over 900,000 in Quebec and Ontario.

Just 10 days ago, the government forecast an unemployment rate in the months ahead of 10 per cent. Within 10 days, that forecast has been shattered. It now stands at well over 10 per cent. I ask the Deputy Prime Minister: What is the government's new unemployment forecast for Canada?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Madam Speaker, again Liberal logic is to take one month's unemployment as a year's average which goes to the spring, March 31, 1992.