

in the month of October. Things are moving in the right direction.

• (1125)

In spite of what the Hon. Member is trying to get at with the question, let me state one overriding consideration that his Leader will support. We cannot, as a country, run away from the deficit problem. We cannot run away from the problem of accumulating debt. We are on a treadmill here. It is a very dangerous thing that we are facing. If we do run away from it, the job loss, the economic and the financial mess that we will be in in five years' time will be far more serious than it is today. That is why we took the actions that I announced in my statement last Thursday.

DEPARTMENT'S STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance. Now that Informetrica has confirmed what my Leader said over a week ago, that there would be a net loss of 50,000 jobs to the economy as a result of the Government's economic statement, is the Minister now willing to provide for the House of Commons and for the public of Canada the statistical information that was made available to him by his ministry officials, and show conclusively exactly how many jobs his Government is prepared to risk in an effort to achieve the kind of economic Utopia that it claims might occur some time in the future?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we are not trying to achieve an economic Utopia. We are trying to withdraw ourselves out of a very serious problem that we are facing as a country and as a Government. We are taking the steps that we feel are necessary. The Hon. Member has seen the results of the Informetrica modal. I am sure there will be others that will be somewhat less. There may be others that are somewhat more. I say to the Hon. Member that he must look at the broader reasons for the action that we took last Thursday.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is a very simple question. It surely can be answered. The Minister has in his possession statistical information given to him by his ministry officials which shows that there will be a loss of jobs as a result of the economic direction the Government has decided to take. Will the Minister provide for the House the information that was given to him, in order that the public of Canada can draw some reasonable conclusions as to whether or not those are the risks that they are prepared to take in order to achieve the aims that the Government wants to achieve?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have said in the past, and I will say it again to the Hon. Member, that this information was provided to me as part of an over-all policy recommendation. I do not believe that it is

appropriate for Ministers of the Crown to be making information available publicly to Members in the House and the general public which is part of a set of policy options. That is the reason for my not making that information available.

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METRIC CONVERSION

STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate him on his election and on his portfolio. I wish him well in the House, but not too well. In that regard, I want to know if he has seen the front page of this morning's *Globe and Mail* and, in particular, if he saw the comments of his Parliamentary Secretary who was quoted as saying:

The Conservative Government is abandoning Canada's move toward mandatory metric measurement—

He then goes on to say:

Definitely, that is what's going to happen, as sure as I'm talking to you now.

He was talking to Miss Barbara Yaffe. The article continues:

We will be selling to the consumers for one more generation in Imperial.

I want to know, if the Minister has seen that, if his Parliamentary Secretary was speaking for the Government and for the Minister. Also, can he confirm that that is going to be the policy of the Government, that it is not going to go ahead with the metric policy?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Hon. Member that the responsibility of the department is to listen to all comments and consult the public at large with respect to metrication. That is what we are doing now and as soon as we are through consulting we will have an opportunity to set forth the government's final policy on that issue.

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• (1130)

[English]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA—STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador): Mr. Speaker, I asked whether or not the Parliamentary Secretary was speaking for the Government. The answer to the question is no. Obviously the Parliamentary Secretary was speaking for the Parliamentary Secretary.

It is just as serious, if not more serious, that in the same article, the Parliamentary Secretary said: