

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister may be able to control what some of the leadership candidates say but in this case I would like to read to him directly from an article in *The Toronto Star* today. His colleague says he finds it "objectionable that people blame schools for the high drop-out rate". He said many students are dropping out not because of poor schooling but because they feel the faltering economy no longer assures youth they can land jobs after graduating.

• (1420 )

I want to ask the Prime Minister, since he has entered the debate, does he agree with the assessment of his colleague that the faltering economy is causing young people to lose hope in this country?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, this is a far cry from a faltering economy, a far cry from what my hon. friend said in French in her opening question where she imputed something absolutely false to the Minister of the Environment, which he never said.

Some hon. members: Withdraw.

**Mr. Mulroney:** If there is going to be a withdrawal I hope it would be the member for Hamilton East withdrawing something she imputed to the Minister of the Environment which he never said.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

**Mr. Mulroney:** Obviously what Canada and the industrialized countries have gone through in the last two years has not been helpful to our young people seeking employment. We regret that very much. The situation that prevails in France, Germany, England and the United States has taken a toll on all citizens, including the youth. Unfortunately Canada has not been an exception to that.

My hon. friend, the Minister of the Environment, was quite properly pointing out that a faltering economy in Canada, or the United Kingdom, or France or the United States takes a toll on the young. We have to make sure this is not repeated. That is why we are trying to control government expenditures. That is why we are trying to limit the rise in deficits and debt which have

brought about the lowest inflation rates in 30 years, the lowest mortgage rates in 35 years and the highest growth and employment growth rates of the IMF and OECD countries in 1993-94.

**Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre):** Nobody has a job.

**Mr. Mulroney:** I will conclude with this. My hon. friend from Winnipeg says: "No one has a job". He is right that too many people are out of work but it is less in percentage terms than were out of work when my hon. friend and the Liberals were in office.

**Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre):** We had programs for them. You do not and that is the difference. We put them back to work.

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister has already fired one leadership candidate whose opinion he did not agree with on the helicopters. I would like to ask him very specifically: Does he agree with the position taken by his colleague in Toronto that it is the sick economy that is causing young people to drop out of school and not the education system? Does he support that statement?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, how could I support the statement when my hon. friend the Minister of the Environment never made it? This is the unique and delicious interpretation of the member for Hamilton East of what the Minister of the Environment said and it is extremely dangerous for anybody.

We all learn things around here. What we all learn in all parties is never to accept the interpretation of the member for Hamilton East for anything we are alleged to have said.

**An hon. member:** That is right. Lesson number one.

**Mr. Mulroney:** My hon. friend says remember what your leader said. Brian, remember what your leader said: "Do not be a nervous nelly".

**Mr. Tobin:** Bye, bye, Brian.

**Mr. Mulroney:** My hon. friend from Newfoundland says: "Bye, bye, Brian". You are right and I say to you, bye, bye, Brian.