

*Oral Questions*

fair. He knows that the National Action Committee on the Status of Women representing three million Canadians has declared its unequivocal opposition to proposals for a business transfer tax or some other form of sales tax that would impose a tax on essentials such as food because of the impact it would have on working families and on poor families, most of which are headed by women.

Could the Prime Minister clarify the confusion left by the Minister of Finance last week and tell us specifically if the Minister of Finance was reflecting government policy when he said that only low-income families would receive some kind of a sales tax credit to offset this proposed new sales tax on food?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister of Finance indicated that the Government of Canada would be setting out its views in regard to tax reform in a White Paper on June 18. He indicated the components of that and the philosophy behind it. That philosophy is one of greater fairness, the elimination of tax avoidance, and a greater degree of fairness and assistance for those who are at the lowest level of the income pole. This will be accomplished in a number of ways, all of which will be set out in the White Paper to be presented on June 18. My hon. friend would no doubt want to wait until he sees the integrated package before he asks me to comment on any hypothesis.

## SALES TAX CREDIT

**Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre):** Mr. Speaker, is the Prime Minister aware of the fact that the existing sales tax credit, modest as it is, is given only to families earning less than \$17,000 per year and therefore not only excludes large numbers of working families just above the poverty line but also excludes many thousands of families that are actually below the poverty line? Is this the model for the proposed sales tax credit on food? Does this not mean that the Government intends to make working families pay this sales tax on food of \$300 per year while many families in poverty will pay the sales tax as well? Is that his policy?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** No.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

## POSSIBLE AMENDMENT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. There have been reports that the Minister has now decided not to proceed with any reform of the Unemployment Insurance Act despite unanimous recommendations to the contrary made by the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration. Is that

correct? Is it true that the Minister has now dropped any reform of the Unemployment Insurance Act?

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the other day my colleague, the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt, said that we do have a reform of \$1 billion. I told him that he did not have good information. Today I told my friend that there will be an announcement next Friday on unemployment insurance reform.

## MATERNITY AND PARENTAL BENEFITS

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East):** Mr. Speaker, while there were some differences between the Standing Committee report and the Forget report, there were also some major grounds of agreement including what should be done with maternity benefits and parental benefits. Would the Minister not at least legislate in those areas where there is agreement between the two reports?

[Translation]

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the Government has received and will continue to receive a number of reports on a problem as special as unemployment insurance. There is no question of the Government considering only one aspect of a report. We have to define whether the current unemployment insurance system is now meeting the needs of Canadians. And in accordance with the reviews which will be made and reports which we have received, we will table next Friday what the Government intends to do about unemployment insurance.

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[English]

## INDUSTRY

## PROPOSED SALE OF CADILLAC FAIRVIEW TO UNITED STATES FIRM

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Just weeks after the Dome sale was announced, another large Canadian firm, Cadillac Fairview, is now being sold to a U.S. firm, putting malls and office buildings right across the country in U.S. hands. What does the Government intend to do to promote the Canadianization of the economy and to reverse this growing shift to U.S. control of key firms across the economy?

[Translation]

**Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion):** Mr. Speaker, the first thing I want to tell my colleague is that the company concerned did not submit an application to Investment Canada. Besides, when reviewing such applications, we always make sure, before anything else, that Canadian interests are protected, and they have been in those instances, when we take into account the Canadian participation in the management of that corporation; second,