However there will be no change in the fundamental principle that I have enunciated from the very beginning in respect of the nature of this bill. It is what the minister has just stated, namely that someone who leaves his or her job without reason, without justification and without provocation ought not to expect that ordinary workers and men and women in Canada would continue to pay unemployment insurance benefits for them.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the minister. Canadians will not be satisfied with minor changes. This bill is unacceptable and it is flawed. The problems this bill will create are quite obvious.

That is why I would like to put this question to the minister. As the minister is aware, people who quit their jobs without just cause are now penalized by a waiting period of up to three months.

Can the minister give the House the assurance that the bill he will table today will not include the same Draconian measures under another name?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I repeat. If we accept the NDP's proposal the only alternative is to increase unemployment insurance premiums and slow down economic recovery in this country by increasing the deficit.

Canadians, whether they are employed or unfortunately unemployed, know that we must take steps to control the deficit. The underlying principle of the government's proposal is that although a person who quits his job without just cause has the right to do so, and I respect that decision, that person should not expect other workers, other Canadian taxpayers to pay him unemployment insurance benefits.

Perhaps, as has already been suggested, there should be another social program for these people, but definitely not the Unemployment Insurance Program.

[*English*]

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. The minister is simply saying he is going to bring in basically the same measures and force people on to social assistance at provincial and territorial expense. That is hardly dealing with the basic problem.

If the government wants to save money under the unemployment insurance system I would suggest that the Prime Minister bring forward a plan to get Canadians back to work. When does the Prime Minister propose to bring in such a plan to put Canadians back to work and address unemployment instead of attacking the unemployed?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the employment rates have improved quite appreciably. The news has been good on the employment front in the last number of months.

There have been some 161,000 full-time new jobs created in the last five or six months, particularly some 57,000 in December. Manufacturing sales are up. Our exports are up. More important, our unit costs compared with the United States in the first six months of this year are down by 5.2 per cent ensuring the competitive nature of what is taking place. Our industries are on a better footing. We have much better opportunities for selling abroad, thereby creating jobs at home.

● (1430)

If my hon. friend looks at the numbers available I think she will see there is reason for even the NDP to take some encouragement in what is taking place. The last thing I think she would want us to do would be to follow the example of the Ontario government which put forward a billion dollar job creation program and created 675 jobs.

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HEALTH CARE

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of health. In 11 days the minister in a secret deal will hand over to a private corporation the administration of non-insured health services for our First Nations people, ignoring their advice, their treaty rights to quality health care and their right to self-government.

Will the minister explain to Canadians why he has refused to take the advice of our First Nations' people and why was the whole tendering process conducted behind a curtain of secrecy?