

Oral Questions

70,000 new jobs were created in Canada, that interest rates dropped by 29 base points, that automobile sales rose 29.9 per cent during the month of April, and that today, for the first time, real investment in Canada will have increased by approximately 13 per cent.

For the first time since we inherited this extraordinary Liberal legacy, we are seeing signs of progress in our economy which I think should be encouraging to everyone, and which, if the pace is maintained—and we will be monitoring it regularly and closely—will enable us to ensure that a renewed economy can be used to improve and maintain Canada's socio-economic programs which were placed in serious jeopardy by the approach taken by the Liberal Government, as pensioners know so well.

Mr. Malépart: Mr. Speaker, why deprive the elderly of their Old Age Security pension? Why turn on the neediest in Canada? My supplementary will therefore consider two aspects of the question.

I want to ask the Prime Minister first of all, why, if he failed to meet his previous commitment, he would be any more likely to meet the commitment made in the Budget, namely that he will be monitoring the situation of the elderly? Why would he be telling the truth this time, when he did not keep his word before?

Finally, Mr. Speaker, could the Prime Minister inform the House why he preferred to spend \$56 million to change the colour of military uniforms and \$400 million over the next four years to send more members of the Canadian Forces to Europe, instead of protecting the elderly here in Canada? Why did he do that?

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, all Canadians and all Quebecers are aware that for fifteen years, the Liberal Government did everything it could to undermine the credibility of our Armed Forces across Canada. It is common knowledge, and that is one of the reason why they were repudiated at the polls.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I suggest we ask for the unanimous consent of the House to award a special prize, an Oscar to the Hon. Member for his brazen nerve, because two years ago, they were saying the exact opposite. They were the game people who cut the elderly off at 6 per cent. That is what the Liberal Party did, the bunch of hypocrites!

* * *

[English]

FINANCE**PROPOSAL TO CREATE INDEXED BONDS**

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Does the Minister think it is fair to propose a scheme for the indexing of investments, a scheme which guarantees not only protection from inflation for those investors but also

guarantees them a return on that investment, while at the same time moving to partially deindex the pensions of old age pensioners? Does the Minister of Health, responsible for pensions, think it is fair for the Government to offer to protect the investors' incomes against inflation, while requiring the pensioners to accept all of the burdens of the loss of their income?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has heard the explanation of the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Broadbent: That's why he asked you.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): The Hon. Member has clearly, I hope, understood—or at least listened to—the proposal put forward by the Minister of Finance—

Mr. Deans: I understand.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): —that if moneys can be saved for the taxpayers of Canada, that is a responsibility he has. That is a responsibility not only of every member of Cabinet but it should be a responsibility and objective of every Hon. Member of this House of Commons.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, there is a responsibility on all Hon. Members here to be fair to the senior citizens. But I am asking the Minister of National Health and Welfare if he thinks it is fair today to propose that, through some measure brought forward by the Minister of Finance, we will make sure that those who invest in Canada are protected against inflation to the fullest extent, plus receive an income, while at the same time we are moving to deindex the pensions of senior citizens—partially, but nevertheless to reduce their incomes? Is that fair?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I believe what should be fair—

Mr. Rodriguez: Is it fair?

Mr. Blaikie: Answer the question.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): —is that we want to get the economy working, that we want the economy turned around—

Mr. Waddell: Why do it on the backs of seniors?

Mr. Epp (Provencher): —that we want to protect seniors' pensions, that we want to protect their future pensions, and that we want to protect the jobs which Canadians must have.

Mr. Rodriguez: Is it fair?

Mr. Blaikie: Answer the question.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): All that is part of the equation of living in society, and I think that when we talk about fairness we should look at the entire package rather than the specifics