

Oral Questions

[Translation]

MEMBER FOR BURIN—ST. GEORGE'S

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, the Public Accounts for 1989–1990 list member's expenses, so it is easy to identify the member with the highest bill for travel expenses. Average travel expenses for private members were \$35,000.

I found that travel expenses for former Tory MP Joe Price, who represented the federal riding of Burin—St. George's in Newfoundland, varied between \$32,000 and \$42,000 annually from 1984 to 1988, while his successor, the Liberal member for Burin—St. George's managed to spend \$118,865 of taxpayers money over a period of 12 months.

This is unheard of for a private member in Ottawa, and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that he prepared his claims in his office, not in his game room or bar!

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[English]

CANADA CAREER WEEK

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, this week I and my colleagues have risen to proclaim Canada Career Week, a time to applaud our communities and inspire young people to finish their education.

Across Canada, teachers and parents, governments and business are urging students to work toward a career instead of dropping out of school.

Cobalt-Haileybury High School, in my riding of Timiskaming, has its share of drop-outs, but dozens of them are realizing their potential and we are bringing them back to the high school to finish grade 12 and learn a trade. They attend school two days a week and work three days for local tradespeople who employ them as apprentices. You have to be trained today and whatever the economic conditions are, funding is a major problem. This major project is funded under the government's Jobs Strategy "Innovations" program, until 1992, which embodies, I believe, the true spirit of Canada and Career week.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

The Minister of Finance will have noticed today that his induced retrenchment or his technical recession, as he has been calling our current economic situation, has just cost another 1,000 Canadians their livelihood with the announcement of lay-offs at Sears Canada. This is on top of 2,900 lost jobs at Air Canada; 900 at Worldways; 1,500 at CN; over 700 at MIL Shipbuilding; 650 at Harding Carpets, and on and on.

Canadians need more than yarns about the Minister's hard times on Bay Street. What plan does he have to help Canadians whose livelihoods have been taken away from them as a result of this economic recession? What is the government going to do?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, besides getting rid of the manufacturers' sales tax, which will of course put all our manufacturing sector in a much more competitive position—

An hon. member: Exactly. The opposition says no, but the manufacturers say yes.

Mr. Hockin: He asks specifically about Sears Canada and Harding Carpets. Sears Canada has no intention of closing any of its stores, contrary to the rumours in the media. The company, in fact, is making offers of early retirement to a number of employees, but plans no lay-offs.

In terms of Harding Carpets, I am pleased to tell the hon. member that negotiations are continuing with the bank, and it appears to be more hopeful today than it did yesterday.

• (1420)

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Mr. Speaker, I think what is profoundly disturbing to Canadians is that the Prime Minister has admitted that this recession was a planned recession. We know that the Canadian Manufacturers' Association has said that this is not just a cyclical downturn. Then, this morning after meeting with the Minister of Finance, the social policy reform group said: "The minister was unwilling to make commitments to assist those people who will be most hurt by the recession".