

*Oral Questions*

We were treated to a rare and historic opportunity to watch the peaceful transition to majority rule in South Africa as the black majority got the right to vote for the first time.

The warmth of the welcome for us, the enthusiasm of the voters and the great goodwill exhibited by all of South Africa's citizens toward one another were an inspiration for each one of us.

We were all satisfied that the election was free and fair, notwithstanding numerous delays and poor organization in some areas.

We were all optimistic that with continued goodwill South Africans can work together to forge a new, prosperous, multiracial and multilingual South Africa that will be an example for all peoples of the earth.

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**UNEMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops):** Mr. Speaker, just days ago the government was celebrating six months in office and toasting its achievements in reducing unemployment. Well, the party is over. Cork up the champagne bottles; today's unemployment figures represent a growing hangover for this government.

• (1115)

Unemployment is up and the hardest hit are Canadian young people. This is before the job market is flooded with college and university students.

In spite of the election promise of jobs, the reality is that the job future looks bleak as Canadians wait for the Liberal government to deliver on its job creation promises. The Prime Minister said that job prospects were improving. Everyone wanted to believe him and hoped he was right but unfortunately he was not.

It is interesting to note that the bright light in the job creating area of Canada is in the province of Ontario, where the government has created an economic atmosphere which saw 49,000 jobs created in the past three months.

I urge the Prime Minister to get beyond Peter Pan economics, get real and take action on jobs now.

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**JOCELYNE FLEURANT**

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, as we approach Mother's Day it is appropriate that I stand in recognition of a member of my constituency, Jocelyne Fleurant, a proud mother of a Canadian peacekeeper in the former Yugoslavia.

Mrs. Fleurant began a nation-wide campaign of support for our men and women serving overseas after her son left CFB Chilliwack for his first tour of duty in Croatia during the spring of last year.

Symbolizing this support for our Canadian peacekeepers abroad, Mrs. Fleurant has made and distributed thousands of hand-made UN beret blue ribbons secured by a small Canadian flag pin.

I commend the tireless efforts of this mother to remind Canadians of the need to keep up the morale of our Canadian peacekeepers. Her commitment should be and is an inspiration to us all.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[Translation]

**UNEMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

This month, unemployment statistics were not deliberately leaked by the government because, unlike the March ones, they show that the unemployment rate went up by 0.5 per cent to reach 11 per cent. In Quebec alone, the situation is a lot worse with an unemployment rate which went from 11.7 per cent in March to 12.6 per cent in April.

Is it not time for the Liberal government to implement concrete and structuring initiatives to deal with unemployment, instead of sitting tight on the record of its first six months in office?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we are not pleased with these numbers, not so much because of the numbers per se, but because they are a blow to the unemployed.

However, it is interesting to note that if there are 65,000 more people looking for a job this month, it is because they believe that the economic indicators are favourable. For instance, house sales have gone up by 30 per cent, consumer confidence is up by 13 per cent. People are regaining hope in increasing numbers and we are hoping that, as our economic recovery program is taking hold, the unemployed will keep on finding jobs.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot):** Mr. Speaker, taking into account the population growth, does the Deputy Prime Minister realize that to get back to pre-recession employment levels, I do not mean full employment, just pre-recession employment levels, more than 900,000 jobs would have to be created in Canada?

[English]

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, since the month of February we have created 115,000 jobs. In the province of Quebec since last August there have been 74,000 jobs created.