

Oral Questions

Given that this represents a city within a city and a disturbing indictment on the *status quo*, can the minister assure us that whenever he presents his new budget he will abandon the old and failed Tory economic agenda? Will he seek new solutions that will create new jobs, new opportunities and above all, new hope which Canadians are desperately in search of?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the sincerity with which the hon. member poses the question and I sympathize with the difficulties.

The fact still remains that we are making progress. As I indicated earlier, employment in Ontario has increased for the sixth consecutive month resulting in a cumulative increase of 91,000. Ontario has gained 76,000 new jobs with more than half of those coming from the manufacturing sector. I think he would agree with me that there is progress.

He suggests that we shift gears and change the thrust of fiscal and economic policy in this country. The hon. member and I disagree on that. I think what he is suggesting is that we should borrow more money to spend more, or that we should tax more to spend more. I am sorry. I just do not agree with that kind of approach. I do not agree with his leader when he suggests that we can borrow money at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. You cannot borrow your way to prosperity and I think the hon. member should recognize that.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the same minister.

In response to the food bank crisis in Toronto the federal department of health and welfare last month spent \$75,000 organizing a conference which recommended such solutions as establishing a community-wide soup kitchen and actually another idea suggesting we should begin to grow food in the Toronto public park areas.

Instead of wasting taxpayers' dollars chasing hare-brained ideas, why can the government not finally and very simply recognize that the most effective solution for such hard-pressed Canadians is a good job with decent pay? This means that the government simply must

change course and produce a new economic strategy because the old one is not working.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. member. The best social safety net is a job. This is what Phil Cross of Statistics Canada had to say in an article published in *The Toronto Star* on March 16 which stated:

"The real growth is in automotive products, and the big winner is machinery and equipment. There have been just some spectacular gains," Phil Cross, the federal agency's director of current analysis, said yesterday.

Cross said the gains were registered over the 12 months since February 1992.

I think that certainly does offer hope. It certainly means jobs are being created. The export demand is there. The economy is being driven by exports and by enhancement in productivity. This is thanks in part to the free trade agreement, thanks in part to the GST and thanks a whole lot to the policies of this government.

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[Translation]

MINING EXPLORATION

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. If the mining industry is to contribute to Canada's economic recovery, it will first have to ensure there is a recovery in exploration activities.

• (1450)

Could the minister give us his position today on spreading exploration activities over an entire year, tax deductions for underground and surface exploration, the exclusion of flow-through shares from cumulative net losses on investment and the creation of a Canadian exploration expense account, to help the mining exploration sector in this country after the first federal budget?

[English]

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, ordinarily I would say that is a question for the Order Paper. However, knowing my colleague's interest in the mining activity in the part of the country he represents, I would like to reply that in the exploration for using flow-through shares, it can be spread throughout a whole 12-month period even going 60 days into the next year.