

debt and with very serious economic problems in all countries. It is something they are discussing.

It is unfortunate the employment end of things lags recovery. As recovery comes employment follows unfortunately later than recovery. Employment will improve over the next period of time, albeit not as fast as we all would like. It is not just a Canadian problem; it is a world-wide problem.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Madam Speaker, my question was for the Minister of Finance, but since he is not available, I will direct it to the Acting Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister.

One of the Conservative government's worst mistakes was its obsession with monetary policy, which worsened the economic situation, witness the 13.4 per cent unemployment rate in Quebec. The outlying regions are the most affected by business shutdowns, which lead to job losses.

When will the minister correct, improve or change his regional development policy in order to stem the flood of job losses? He could certainly do something.

[*English*]

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Madam Speaker, I might remind the hon. member—and I believe he was part of it—on Bill C-91 that was brought forward in the House to help with the job situation especially in the province of Quebec he voted against it. I want the record to show that. Any time we have tried to help the employment situation that hon. member has voted against it, and I want the record to show that. It is very important the people of Quebec understand that.

Second, the construction industry is one industry where we feel that jobs can be created. Housing affordability today is as good as it has been in 25 years. We have also brought in programs to assure low down payments so young couples can buy their homes. We have lower interest rates which have to do with the fight the government has put on to assure that we get lower interest rates and lower inflation so savings are not eaten away and for the creation of jobs. We have assured that RRSPs are used for housing.

Oral Questions

We have done a number of things to improve the situation. If the hon. member took time to study the reports that are coming out, he would know that Canada is poised to have the best record in 1993 and 1994 in recovering from the recession.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Madam Speaker, I pity the audience which just heard his answer, because it is far from the answer needed for the question I asked. While the minister gives all sorts of explanations that have nothing to do with the question, unemployment goes up and the hope of finding a job goes down. As students arrive on the labour market this summer, the problem will get even worse.

Madam Speaker, I repeat: When will the minister present a real economic recovery plan for the outlying regions which suffer more than all other parts of the country?

[*English*]

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Madam Speaker, the employment situation is one that we are concerned about.

I am sure the hon. member would be pleased at seeing the reports that came out today. The one from Burns Fry Limited said its leading indicator of Canadian economic activity rose 3.1 per cent, its highest level since March 1990, and that the help wanted index which tends to be an early indicator of new hiring increased by 9.2 per cent in May, the largest increase we have seen in four years.

All the signals are very positive and we feel very confident that as this year progresses we will see improved employment opportunities in Canada.

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• (1440)

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. I see he is back from his campaigning and in his seat among his caucus.

As the minister is aware, we in the NDP believe that society should take tough measures against violent crime, but as a society we must balance this approach by