

Oral Questions

Mr. Deans: It will not surprise Mr. Turner to hear me say—and this, of course, is a secret not to be repeated anywhere else—that there were those in the NDP who, in their own self interest were hoping he would win.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: It is too late, Ian.

Mr. Deans: The Deputy Prime Minister says that they are ready to go, and there are those of us who, for the last three years, have been wishing they would. I hope that when Mr. Turner assumes the post of Prime Minister he will move quickly to have the writs issued in order that the question of who should govern Canada may be cleared up once and for all. I will look forward after that to welcoming him into the House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE ECONOMY

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT CHANGE POLICIES TO ASSIST
YOUNG PEOPLE

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. We want to welcome him from the backrooms of the Liberal Party convention where it was rumoured that he was available if necessary, but not necessarily available. In the Province of Alberta the Minister has a reputation as a job destroyer because of his Budgets and his energy program.

On the weekend a consultant of the Department of Manpower and Immigration attended a Canadian Mental Health Association conference. She made some very strong statements about the pathetic plight of young people in the Province of Alberta. There were other consultants from the United States who indicated that, because of the 12 per cent increase in unemployment rates among young people in Alberta, we could expect increased assaults, vandalism, about a 60 per cent increase in suicides, and a 75 per cent increase in mental health breakdowns requiring hospitalization.

In the last two weeks of this Parliament are we going to have action to change the energy program and the transportation program, or are we simply going to have election campaign talk while these young people experience depression, suicide, and all of those things?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to say that I spent the last several days meeting a large number of people from Alberta, including a large number of young Albertans. Far from being pessimistic, they were very optimistic, very sure of themselves, and very confident about the future of the country. They were eager and ready to contribute fully to our country. They were confident

that their province would indeed again experience excellent days. Obviously these were not young Conservative people who had their noses to the wall and were following the example of their elders as the national complainers and negativists. They were young Liberal people who had confidence in themselves and in the country.

If my friend checks the record he will find that the period in which the city of Calgary had the largest increase in terms of violence and local crime was when the city was at the height of its growth, several years ago. There was a large influx of people into Calgary at that time. That led to very serious local problems. As a matter of fact, while I did not subscribe to this utterance and found it very shocking, I remember a Mayor of Calgary complaining about everyone in Canada being attracted to that city, and complaining about the problems. He must have been a Conservative too.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance indicates to us that we can solve the crime problem in the country through unemployment. I think that is a rather bizarre statement. However, it is in accord with his view that when you throw people out of work they do not use as much oil and gas, and therefore you can have security of supply and a balanced self-sufficiency picture.

VIEWS ADVANCED BY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, has the Minister of Finance read the speeches by the Leader of the Opposition? Does he agree with the Leader of the Opposition that, to help individuals secure more training, we should have a registered training account, an expanded loan program, and better tax deductions to allow people to contribute more money to their own training? Does the Minister of Finance agree that the country needs those kinds of stimuli to help young people in particular to continue their training?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have imposed upon myself the difficult task of reading most of the speeches of the Leader of the Opposition. Up to now I have found nothing but rhetoric and generalities in them.

I am glad that the Hon. Member asked what we have done. I remind him of the several hundreds of millions of dollars which we have brought to the Province of Alberta in the last several months in terms of the developments taking place in Cold Lake and Wolf Lake, and the developments which will benefit Saskatchewan and Alberta at Lloydminster, with the heavy oil upgrader. We are putting hundreds of millions of dollars into Alberta and British Columbia through the expansion of the rail transportation system, thanks to the amendments which have been passed through the House, against Tory opposition, in order to change the Crow rate situation. These are things that we have done, rather than the empty rhetoric coming from the other side.