[*English*]

Better Mr. Sunshine than Mr. Rainstorm like you.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, most people when they face a rainstorm would prefer to have an umbrella rather than a pair of sunglasses.

● (1430)

This week the government tried to divert Canadians with the so-called prosperity papers. These figures today show that the recession is still bashing people day after day.

I ask this government: When will the tricks stop? When will the treats start? When will this government start to take seriously the damage that it is imposing on people with its economic policies?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I suppose my reply to the hon. member should be he does not have a ghost of a chance.

The hon. member obviously relishes in the fact that there has been a slight drop in output in the month of August. I indicated in earlier answers that in terms of automobile sales the month of September has seen an increase by about 9 or 10 per cent. In truck sales it is about 17 per cent. Housing starts are up by 19 per cent in the third quarter over the second quarter. The merchandise trade balance has risen by $5.4 billion. There is a $17 billion trade surplus. The hon. member talks about the free trade agreement, investment shifted from a $2.5 billion outflow ion 1988 to a $4.5 billion inflow in 1990. That is what the free trade agreement is all about.

I understand in his own backyard that Chrysler Corporation is opening a third shift for the construction of a mini-van. If Chrysler sees some optimism and prosperity in the future, why doesn't a little bit of that rub off on the hon. member?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. The consultation exercise proposed by the government last Tuesday is merely a repeat of what has already been done by the *Conseil du patronat du Québec* at *Rendez-vous économique 91.* How can the minister justify spending $20 million to ask the public to provide solutions to the economic problems for which he is responsible?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am amazed that the hon. member overlooked the fact how important it is to involve business, the financial community and labour in developing a plan of action that will help us meet the challenges all Canadians will face in a globalized economy.

The hon. member may be appalled by the fact that the government has decided to involve all sectors in this exercise, but we are convinced it is in the best interests of Canada.

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, I don't think the minister understood my question. *Rendez-vous économique 91* generated 48 promising job creation projects. Fifty leaders in Quebec managed to do in three days what the minister intends to do in one year, at a cost of $20 million.

Instead of spending millions to consult the public, why doesn't the minister use the recommendations made by *Rendez-vous économique 91* and start by revising his monetary policy? That was one of the recommendations.

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised the hon. member didn't mention the drop in interest rates. I was in Montreal yesterday, and I was talking to the people there, and they were very keen on seeing our monetary policy work, because interest rates have now reached a level that will boost economic growth in Canada and Quebec. Instead of always talking about gloom and doom, I think the hon. member should get up and admit that our fiscal and monetary policy in this country is doing some good and that it will guarantee durable economic growth across Canada.

* * *

[*English*]

EDUCATION

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

In a document released this week by the government it talks about setting world-class standards in our education system. At the same time the federal government