

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, that is an interesting comeback. Rather than leave that dangling in *Hansard* and somehow suggesting that a contrary reply was made to a different question, let me remind the Hon. Member that he asked about butchery in the public sector.

Mr. Lewis: Of the public sector.

Mr. Langdon: I had provided the Hon. Member with a detailed list of this. This Hon. Member himself spoke a few moments ago about how the public sector was no longer to carry responsibility for certain services in his own constituency. He cannot describe that as being the public sector at that time and now turn around and say that the public sector consists only of public employment. We too are concerned about public employment but the public sector provides leadership in the country because of the services and help it provides to grant programs and through direct work with the private sector. It is an element of our economy which consists of far more than just the jobs that are involved within that sector.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If there are no more questions or comments, we shall now resume debate.

[*Translation*]

We shall continue the debate with the Hon. Member for Chambly.

Mr. Richard Grisé (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased with this first opportunity to speak to the House, especially since you are in the Chair and my father is celebrating his 76th birthday. I feel very privileged.

Mr. Speaker, I am also very pleased to be able to take part in this debate. However, I am surprised by the cynicism of the motion before the House today. This attitude can hardly be justified, considering the new Government has been less than three months in office. This Government is certainly capable of great achievements, but one can hardly expect it to remedy in three months a truly appalling legacy which has been nearly two decades in the making. This is just too much, Mr. Speaker. After all, we cannot work miracles. Canadians voted for change because they recognized threats to our economy. By voting for us in vast numbers, they demonstrated their dissatisfaction and discontent. They had had enough of the practices of the previous Government, something the Opposition seems to have trouble understanding today. Canadians want a new direction for this country, they want a change in policy and a new perspective on Government activities. That is the challenge we were given, and we intend to meet that challenge!

Canadians not only voted for change, they voted for decisive leadership. We shall not disappoint them. In fact, the Government has already started its economic renewal program. Canadians also want leadership that is attuned to their needs. We realize they do not want the kind of change that will disrupt their lives or that is lacking in compassion and understanding for those Canadians living in very difficult circum-

stances. Canadians across the country want to participate in the national decision-making process. They have had enough of decisions made without consideration for their needs. They want to co-operate and communicate more with their neighbours, both their next-door neighbours and those further away. They want relations between the federal Government and the Provinces to get off to a fresh start.

• (1230)

Mr. Speaker, I would like to stress an important aspect of this desire for change as expressed by Canadians on election day. Canadians want to be able to trust their Government again. That trust has been undermined in recent years by a Government that refused to consider the needs of Canadians and that gave us budgets like the one it brought down in November 1981. Governing this country is not a game, Mr. Speaker. To rebuild that trust, this Government intends to change the way the Government operates and the way it treats its citizens. I have elaborated on the significance of the outcome of the election because Opposition Members have failed to understand what Canadians need and are refusing to face up to the consequences we must live with today.

There was a massive vote for our party because our philosophy attracted voters and because it reflects the state of mind of Canadians today. The Government is not in disarray, Mr. Speaker. I have taken its bearings and changed a course that had been followed until September 1984. Unfortunately, some people refuse to accept this new direction and to look at new perspectives. They see only the old route, a route studded with rising government deficits, rising unemployment, uncertainty, a radical drop in foreign investment, briefly, a route that has brought this country to the brink of disaster.

We believe that today, our Government must set a priority on creating sufficient jobs for those people who are able and willing to work. To that end, we intend to focus our energies on getting the Canadian economy going again, so as to show Canada's true economic potential and reduce the federal debt, which by the end of the fiscal year is expected to be \$190 billion. We also believe that the size and rapid growth of this debt is one of the vital issues we must deal with during the initial years of our mandate. A debt of 190 billion dollars! That is the legacy we received.

For years, the previous Government spent money it did not have. Successive budget deficits, from year to year, from decade to decade, have had grave consequences. The size of our public debt is putting pressure on interest rates, since it creates pessimism about inflationary trends. Servicing the national debt is responsible for 21.5 per cent of Government expenditures and constitutes a serious handicap for, and is probably the greatest obstacle to, economic growth. It means that our financial room for manoeuvring is seriously limited, since steadily increasing sums of money must be spent on interest payments, money which could otherwise have been put