

*The Address—Mr. Malépart*

benefits! They have found someone who could collect \$600 in unemployment benefits for a couple weeks. Fancy that! The executioner from Treasury Board said: It is outrageous! Let's save this amount for the presidents of our major banking establishments. It does not make sense.

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister brags about consultation, even in that field. A company in my riding sought the agreement of the union and decided that, instead of laying off 60 employees among those with little seniority, it would urge workers aged 55 or more to take early retirement, and it offered them a cash settlement for leaving their jobs, in addition to allowing them to draw benefits from the private pension plan. But with the new measure, those people stand to lose \$12,000, so they are quite reluctant now. As a result, young employees with little or no seniority will be laid off, yet 126 people had willingly agreed to go on early retirement. That is just another senseless measure taken by this Government.

When it comes to housing, Mr. Speaker, social housing does not weigh heavily in the balance.

In the City of Montreal and surrounding areas, some 15,000 applicants are waiting to move into low rental units, \$9.6 million. Residential rehabilitation: the RRAP program had gained wide acceptance throughout Quebec, but all the Conservative Members from Quebec rose to cheer. I can hardly wait to see them face to face with the mayors. I can hardly wait to hear what they will reply when the mayors say that rehabilitation is fine, but who is going to pay for it? The people will pay, or else the city will be left with slums because this Government has decided to shelve that program.

The Minister responsible for housing sent us a press release full of statistics about the decline in rental housing starts. True, he said, we will look into that, it is important, the situation is deteriorating. He did look into it—he cancelled the program and withdrew \$7.8 million. Who wants a press release! But that is not all, those cuts are only part of the picture. Quebec Members from the Lac-Saint-Jean region are aware of the \$80.5 million cut in the Natural Gas Laterals Program. I can just see them telling their constituents that they support that. Then there are projects in the riding of Trois-Rivières, in the riding of Lotbinière, \$4.9 million, and the Members . . . The President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret) tells me that they have been consulted. Fair enough, cut those programs out, there is no unemployment in our ridings.

And now, the National Capital Region. The National Capital Commission had several projects, but it so happens that the projects which have been dropped were in Quebec. The Members from the Quebec side of the Ottawa River rose and cheered, Mr. Speaker.

Another \$3.5 million . . . The Vieux-Port in Montreal, the marina in Chicoutimi, VIA Rail cuts, all those projects were slated for the western part of Montreal and would have created jobs. Mr. Speaker, I fully expect that certain Members will wake up at the next caucus, because the people will give them an earful. I referred earlier to the cartoons dealing with the minibudget or the Throne Speech. I have another one with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), above the caption: Ladies and gentlemen . . . and showing knives stuck in all the various expenditures the Government has decided to slash.

Concerning commitments, I would have understood that that party could not implement all its promises; this is normal. They could have done so over four years. But the shame of it is, they did the exact opposite of what they had promised. I would like to quote from an article by Gilbert Lavoie published in *La Presse* in 1979. 'From an about-face to another, election promises are made to be broken, said John Crosbie'. He is a Tory, and I am happy to see Quebec Members say: 'Yes, I fooled the people at home and I am happy.'

The Mulroney Government is no exception to the rule. It reneged on universality for social programs, which was held as a sacred trust by the Prime Minister during the election campaign but they are now preparing to throw that overboard. Mr. Mulroney and his ministers have tried to rebut the charge of reneging on one of their election promises; only, they forgot to agree between themselves on how to explain that. The Prime Minister admitted during a news conference that he promised not to tamper with universality, but he denied having reneged on his word, saying he was merely launching a public debate. One hour earlier, the President of the Treasury Board had said the Government was not tampering with universality because universality has been abolished with the introduction of child tax credit for needy families and the guaranteed income supplement for certain pensioners.

On Friday—according to Mr. Lavoie—the Minister of Finance had another explanation. He suggested Mr. Mulroney had only promised to maintain the universality feature of social programs for the less privileged. When the reporters appeared to be taken aback, the Minister, being a true gentleman, abstained from insisting. Such were Gilbert Lavoie's comments in *La Presse*. Mr. Speaker, not only were they satisfied with delivering a minibudget, but after creating unemployment and taking money away from the people, they put all that together and said: We are going to bring down their earnings, we are going to put them out of work, then six months after we are going to hire them back. From what we have saved, we will use a billion dollars to create jobs.

But there is something which is not bad which they have decided to do concerning new directions for Canada. Again, I thought they had promised to create jobs, but the title of the document is *An Agenda for Economic Renewal*. If that party had truly wanted to create new jobs, the title would have been