

The President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret) has stated in this House and outside that 15,000 person years, not individuals, but person years is the sum total of the reductions over the five fiscal years involved in this program, despite the recommendations—whether they are accepted or not and obviously not all of them will be—of the Nielsen task force. I think it is highly irresponsible of the Member to say otherwise.

We have a serious situation in the City of Ottawa. As a local Member of Parliament on the Government side, I am doing my best, as are my colleagues on the Government side on both sides of the river, to deal with the particular situations of hardship of those employees who have received lay-off notices. The President of the Treasury Board has introduced a very attractive Workplace Adjustment Program, much more attractive than that under the previous Government. A longer period of notice will be given, training services and counselling services are provided. People are being placed in other jobs in the Government. We hope to reduce the 15,000 person years by attrition. Attrition is the key word, Mr. Speaker, and that process is working.

In terms of natural attrition in the Public Service, some years it has been as high as 10,000, certainly well in excess of 5,000, the highest in the five year program, in this fiscal year. In subsequent years it will be 2,000. That is right across Canada, not just in the nation's capital. I think it highly inaccurate and irresponsible for the Member from Ottawa—Vanier to imply otherwise.

May I say in closing that some of us want to do something about diversifying the local economy here. That is why I and other members of the Conservative Party are encouraging high technology development. That is why we are encouraging small business so we will not be as reliant as we have been in the past; and be a industry town.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, there is enough comment from the Hon. Member for Ottawa West (Mr. Daubney) for me to make a speech on. That comes from a Member who spoke about diversification to this Member, who over the years in the high-tech industry is well known to have done his utmost to try to create whatever could be created and supported high-tech in the Ottawa area. Let me say that I do not have to take any lessons from him.

On the question—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, as concerns the issue of reassignments and growth in the Public Service, I can give you the data since 1980—

[*English*]

I have it here. Agencies under Treasury Board control experienced annual employment growth rates of 1 per cent from 1976 to 1981 and 1.5 per cent from 1981 to 1983. That is not cut-back, as the Member said. That is growth. He is

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cutting them back. Agencies not under Treasury Board control experience annual growth employment rates of 6 per cent, Mr. Speaker. I want to talk about—

[*Translation*]

—the matter of the reassignment of surplus employees.

Mr. Speaker, recently, 265 maintenance workers at the Department of Public Works were designated as surplus to requirements, but only 15 of them were reassigned to other positions. Yes, only 15 people! This clearly shows that the policy of this Government is completely bankrupt, unreasonable and ineffective. Reassignment of surplus workers does not work, Mr. Speaker, it is—

Mr. Isabelle: It is worthy of R.B. Bennett.

Mr. Gauthier: Yes, as the Hon. Member for Hull—Aylmer (Mr. Isabelle) points out, it is worthy of R.B. Bennett

I see the Hon. Member for Gatineau (Mrs. Maily) who is smiling and making gestures to say: Again, for heaven's sake! Would you like to rise and to make a nice little speech? Perhaps we would learn something about Gatineau if you spoke more often, Madam.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to remind the House that the Public Service Alliance, and I shall close with these comments . . . Jean-Robert Gauthier, Member for Ottawa—Vanier, and many people in the National Capital region do not believe this Government. It has lost all credibility. The figure of 60,000 which I have mentioned and which we are anticipating will be the result of this bankrupt policy, and it is based on an announcement of 15,000 jobs lost and a similar announcement of another 15,000 jobs lost, which makes 30,000, and the 1 to 1.5 per cent normal increase over the next five years, which makes a total of 60,000 jobs which will disappear in addition to the casual workers and term employees.

● (1430)

[*English*]

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Mr. Speaker, I find it amusing to see Liberals and Conservatives taking turns doing the same things, and then taking turns criticizing one another for what the other did. There is nothing new about that. It goes back to before 1867. I find it amusing to hear the kettles calling the pots black about the economic situation which the country is in.

When I spoke on the second reading debate I urged the Government to borrow an extra \$1 billion to \$3 billion through this Bill as a constructive, self-liquidating part of the deficit rather than the dead-weight deficit which we have. The Conservatives and Liberals conveniently forget that 80 per cent of the deficit is comprised of interest being paid on interest to pay off old borrowings. Eighty per cent of that is money which was lent by individual Canadians, pension funds, brokerage firms, and banks. They buy Canada Savings Bonds