

Canadians can change this government and hope to have a better life, as the Americans just did south of our border.

Mr. Charles A. Langlois (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, last night in this House I had the opportunity to provide answers to some of the concerns of the hon. member for Saint-Léonard regarding the economy of Montreal. I find it particularly hard to take that in all his statements, he never said anything positive about the economy of Montreal and the dynamism of its people.

Through my involvement with the Quebec Chamber of Commerce, I have had the opportunity in the last several years to meet the business community of Montreal and to work closely with many of those involved in that region, and I can tell you that the people of Montreal and the participants in the economic, social and political life of that region are extremely dynamic. Through their efforts, they were able to make up for the losses incurred in certain traditional sectors, which were doomed in any case. Some industries were going to disappear but the business people and successive municipal governments in Montreal have worked hard, to strengthen the aeronautics, high technology, pharmaceutical and research and development sectors. For instance, we can think of Bombardier, which is an extremely dynamic company, run and controlled by Montrealers.

One must recognize that Montreal remains a strategic location on the St. Lawrence Seaway. Montreal is still at the crossroads of the major airlines of the world. Since 1984, our government has supported all the efforts to stimulate the economy of Montreal and to maintain a strong economic activity in that city. Our government has also supported the efforts made by these involved in Montreal's economy.

I tend to believe that the negative aspects in the Montreal region are much more the result of short-sighted policies implemented by the previous federal government and the government of the Parti Québécois. Could the hon. member for Saint-Léonard tell us at some point if he sees anything positive about the situation in Montreal?

Supply

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, last night my colleague and I had a little discussion on that issue. I deplored the situation, as I just did again, because for a year now, I have been asking questions in the House about the bad situation that prevails in Montreal.

Yet, last night and again today, my colleague talked about the aeronautic industry. Indeed, there have been some small investments here and there. We know that the aeronautic industry is very important for Montreal. But when Montrealers look at what is going on today in that field with our two air lines, they get very worried. What does the government do? It was aware of the problems, which have existed for two years. The government drags its feet.

As for pharmaceuticals, I agree that this sector has attracted investments and created hundreds of jobs. But the problem still remains. The unemployment rate in Montreal is now over 17 per cent. Therefore I cannot talk about anything else. This unemployment rate of 17 per cent is for the east end of Montreal. In my area, it is as high as 25 per cent. This situation is unbearable.

The hon. member says that the government has always supported those who have wanted to launch projects. In Montreal we had the PAREL program which was very important for the city of Montreal. It provided for the renovation of houses and gave work to the construction industry. This government eliminated the program.

The mayors of Montreal and of several suburbs support our request for the implementation of an infrastructure program because it would provide work for just about everybody, not only skilled workers. That is what we need. This is why I say that the government should heed the requests made by every group and sector of our society for the immediate implementation of an infrastructure program to stimulate the economy and put Canadians back to work.

[*English*]

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to stand in this House and speak to the motion which reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government is incapable of providing leadership and direction in the economic and social affairs of the nation and has lost the confidence of this House and of the Canadian people and that, therefore, an election should be called forthwith, in accordance with the Canadian custom, practice and tradition of holding a general election at least every four years.