

take five years to get us out of this recession if things go right. It could be worse if they do not.

What I am saying is that we need concrete measures to get us out of the recession. I know the members across the way say: "Oh, well, a government should do nothing. Things will resolve themselves". Perhaps they will, but why should we take that chance? Are we not elected to govern? Or are we elected not to govern?

I suspect that we are elected to do something. I do not want to pretend here that we need to dig holes and bury them again to find things to do. That is not what I am advocating at all and that is not what the hon. Leader of the Opposition suggested either. He suggested that we invest in capital works, real works, real jobs.

I will give an example. The Perley Bridge in my riding between Hawkesbury, Ontario and Grenville, Quebec was built in 1931. I know, Mr. Speaker, you were wondering how long it would take before I got around to talking about my riding. It was built in 1931.

That particular bridge in 1975 was declared to be virtually finished, done. It needed to be replaced. As a matter of fact, I have correspondence from the Ontario Minister of Transportation at the time when he, the Conservative Minister of Transport, was refusing to get involved in the construction of a new bridge. This was at the request of the federal government.

We are in 1992. The bridge has been repaired a countless number of times. It needs to be replaced. Government has said that it wanted to replace it in 1995, but so far it has not even obtained an agreement with the two provinces in order to proceed with, not the construction of the bridge, but with the environmental assessment necessary prior to the drawing of the plans which are a prerequisite for the tendering which will be followed by the construction of the bridge.

Do you think the bridge will be finished by 1995? Surely not. I wrote a letter to the Minister of Public Works about two weeks ago and challenged him. He said: "The Ontario NDP premier", the guy who is busy closing hospital beds, Bob Rae, "has said that if the federal government wants to participate in a capital works project, it would match it dollar for dollar".

Government Orders

"There it is," I said, "surely, we will have a new Perley Bridge now if the federal government can get the province to match. We will have a new bridge." It did not happen. There was nothing in the federal budget.

[*Translation*]

What is worse, Mr. Speaker, is the number of closures and lay-offs in the riding of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. Allow me to give you a few examples just for the Hawkesbury region and Prescott county. I could also go on all day about closures in Glengarry county. You will remember the closure last summer of Glengarry Transport, GTL, in Alexandria, which meant the loss of 1,804 jobs. However, in the next few minutes I will tell you about some closures in the Prescott county area. Listen to this.

The Firogan plant closed on November 29, 1991: 20 people were laid off; the Fashion Town plant closed on December 28, 1991: 28 people were laid off; on October 31, 1991, Hawkesbury Paving went bankrupt: 8 people were laid off; in Saint-Isidore de Prescott the candling operation belonging to Maurice Lamoureux closed down following a sale: 35 people were laid off.

In December, Canadian Plastics laid off 16 employees; Bertrand et Frères laid off 40; Noreast laid off 100 for two weeks; the Fib-Pak plant in Hawkesbury laid off 18 in November because of a drop in the market; Amoco Fabrics laid off 16 because it said it was restructuring. *Le Droit* reported that Dominion Textiles laid off 86 employees on January 17, 1992.

I have a paper here which says that in December, the unemployment rate in Prescott county was 15 per cent.

[*English*]

Here is a story from the *Standard Freeholder* in Cornwall entitled: "Claims for UI come close to setting record." That was on December 28, 1991.

Here is another story. This is for the government across the way which thinks things are getting so much better. I really wish they were, but that is not the case right now, at least not in my riding. "All-party committee told eastern Ontario needs job help". That was August 28, 1991. Imagine if we needed job help then how much we need it now.