

it. No words of mine or anyone else's can adequately condemn the government for this sort of thing.

I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That the motion be amended by adding at the end thereof the following words: "and that, instead, the government has slowed down public investment and has pursued fiscal and monetary policies deliberately designed to increase unemployment".

[Translation]

**Mr. G.-A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to avail myself of this opportunity to say a few words on the amendment moved by the Progressive Conservative party, which reads as follows:

That this house regrets that the government is not presenting programs to achieve a rate of economic growth which will reduce unemployment and also ensure that the economy will be able to absorb the large number of new entrants into the labour force this year.

That motion, Mr. Speaker, deals with two specific matters: reduce unemployment and absorb the new entrants into the labour force this year.

I am pleased, Mr. Speaker—and I wish to emphasize it—to see that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) is here, as there is something we have wanted to tell him for a long time.

We could write to him but it seems to me that when he is in the house, when he appears in public to the knowledge of everyone, it has a different effect not only on the minister himself but also on the whole staff of his department. I believe it prompts officials to find more realistic solutions, for if I have any critics to make this afternoon, I should like them to be most constructive. Indeed, I should like to offer suggestions, not only critics. I should like especially to suggest to the minister and to the department a few solutions to certain cases.

I intend to speak mainly about my riding because they are mainly cases I come across during the Christmas holidays. All hon. members probably had the same experience. There are many unemployed in my area as well as in the whole of Quebec. Well, as a matter of fact, I hardly took a day's rest during my vacation. The rest of the time, I spent in my office, even on Sundays, seeing people out of work.

They were all lining up in quest of information, inquiring about this or that form. I

*Alleged Failure to Reduce Unemployment*

could not help thinking that, if the government fails to take action, hon. members should have in their own office a full time representative to act as an agent of the unemployment insurance people.

Unemployment is growing and, to provide it, I will read a few excerpts from an article published on January 24, 1969, under this heading: Unemployment. It was written by a chap who is very well known in the House. I quote:

160,000 unemployed in Quebec.

That is an impressive figure indeed.

Out of six million inhabitants. Don't you think it is too much? It comes close to being the highest total in industrialized countries.

There was a time when we had winter works but they went down the drain.

There was a time when we had \$500 allowances to build houses in winter, but they went down the drain.

There was a time when we had premiums for hiring unemployed people over 45, but they went down the drain.

The only thing that didn't come down is the number of unemployed. No wonder: our governments are much too busy elsewhere.

Yes, indeed, we have two governments, one in Ottawa and one in Quebec. They are so busy fighting each other, quarelling, bickering, that they just don't have the time to think about the unemployed. We have two Ministers of Labour, two Ministers of Public Works, two Ministers of Manpower, one in Ottawa and one in Quebec, with the result that there is nobody left to bother about the unemployed. Besides, how could they find the time? They are too busy tearing each other apart.

It is indeed a mad game, that game of two governments.

If only they complemented each other, but no, they destroy each other.

Mr. Speaker, I have no time to read the whole article but that gives you an idea of the climate in which the workers in Quebec live. I think that reflects faithfully the opinion of the workers in Quebec, in general.

Mr. Speaker, there are many unemployed people in my constituency. I think that if we do not break the record it is because the Maritimes are still in a worse position than we are. In my constituency, the percentage of unemployed people is very high. The government often says, when we talk about the high percentage of unemployed, that it is the result of the newcomers on the labour market.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to deal with two distinct subjects: unemployment and the labour force.