

Supply

including February when the unemployment rate reached a record high of 28 per cent in Abitibi—Témiscamingue under a Liberal government. In 1984 unemployment remained very high: 21.7 in February, 20.3 in March, 25.7 in September. Such was the situation when we took over in 1984. Today I can tell my political opponents that unemployment is at 12.5 per cent.

Another thing must also be mentioned. Since 1984 when it was first elected, we have solved regional problems in my part of the country. Keep in mind that my riding is the largest one in all of the ten provinces. The day after I won the 1984 election, we discovered that some issues had been neglected for 26 years, some for 10 years. When people speak today of faulty management, I can tell you it is shocking. I could call my critics on the other side many collective names, but I will refrain from doing so.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, speaking about issues left unsolved for 26 years, about the housing facilities in Barraute, 26 years without giving the people a place to live. We had the Pavillon d'hébergement the very year I was elected. The new terminal at the Transport Canada regional airport was another problem that had been neglected for many years and so were the Cadillac stadium, airports for northern Quebec, developed in cooperation with the federal government, and the Amos municipal airport. Listen, that was a financial matter and the liberal member was a native from Amos and he never could find one penny to invest during the four years he was there. After only three years we solved the financial problem of that airport. I could mention numerous other cases like that.

However, there is one issue I would like to refer to. We were speaking about manpower training. The Parti québécois member for Rouyn-Noranda, Mr. Rémi Trudel, said last year that the best consultation program in Quebec was the communities program created by the federal Tories. It included a Business Development Centre and a Community Futures Committee. With the help of the government in place, we succeeded in doing some patching and we tried to find solutions after a 20 year liberal reign. It is fun to give one's first speech during an electoral period. They want an election. Well we are ready.

It is my first speech. When we go on the election trail, I will be able to say this is my second speech. But I want to warn them before they come to Abitibi. In any case, when they do come, they get there in the afternoon and go back the same night. They make a speech, but they are out of there the very next day. We never see them again. There is one thing I want to tell you though, Mr. Speaker. When I was elected in 1984, I was elected to serve the population be it Liberal or NDP; that is my mandate. If we speak about what we did, we certainly did our bit to maintain jobs. I have here the newspaper from Sunday, October 18, 1992. That is not so long ago. This, the oldest newspaper in Val-d'Or, said the Business Development Centre helped maintain 89 jobs. What is that? That type of thing did not exist in the liberal days. People were starving. They had trouble finding two meals a day.

In the *Courier de Malartic* of June 5, 1990 they said that the Business Development Centre of the valley of gold was now ready to fulfil its mission. Those are concrete measures that were implemented in all of the Abitibi—Témiscamingue region. I say to our Liberal opponents that if they want us to call an election, they had better examine our political and our financial accomplishments before they come to our part of the country.

There is one issue I hate to raise in front of the Canadian taxpayers, but I will do so.

• (1440)

Of course there are some good members in the Liberal caucus and the NDP caucus as well. However, according to an article in Montreal's *La Presse* which appeared on Wednesday, September 30, 1987 the Liberals made Canadians lose billions of dollars. That is what it says. By being excessively concerned with political considerations—this is about 1987, during a press conference held by the Auditor General of Canada, Mr. Ken Dye—the former Liberal government wasted billions of dollars of taxpayers' money.

Early in 1984 the Department of Finance knew the scientific research tax credit program was in trouble. This was early in 1984. It is now 1992, and they want us to call an election. They have forgotten they were in power for 20 years. They have forgotten they left us a debt of \$209 billion. They have forgotten that from 1984 to 1992, the compound interest totalled \$238 billion. We all have loans. I do, and I pay compound interest on those loans. But the Liberal government left us a present of \$238