

*Adjournment Debate*

provinces and municipalities on improvements in the transportation system.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources will establish a National Advisory Council to promote government industry co-operation and to establish energy efficiency targets for each of Canada's industrial sectors. Alternative energy sources will be encouraged through accelerated development of market penetration of alternative transportation fuels, including expansion of natural gas markets, increased availability of alternative fuel vehicles and support for research and development.

• (1920)

This hon. member is incorrect in his statement that EMR has reduced funding for efficiency and alternative energy in the fiscal year 1991-92. The government's estimates tabled recently projected expenditures of \$34.7 million, slightly higher than the level of expenditures for the fiscal year 1990-91.

While the hon. member chooses to criticize the government for its current spending levels on efficiency and alternative energy programs, he does so most selectively. What he fails to acknowledge is that for all intents and purposes, spending reductions on these programs were due to the government's commitment to erase the last vestiges of the National Energy Program. Moreover, spending on efficiency and alternative energy under the NEP provided for a cumbersome and ineffective manner.

Four years and millions of dollars later, taxpayers were shown little return on their investment.

This government and our department is committed to the green plan and committed, Sir, to ensure that all Canadians have an equal opportunity to work and also being able to ensure that we have an environment for the future.

[Translation]

**MONTREAL'S ECONOMY**

**Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard):** Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to speak on a subject of the utmost importance for the people of the Montreal area. I am referring to the disastrous job situation and economic conditions in Montreal.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time I raise this question. I raised it over six times since February 25 and I have not yet received a satisfactory answer.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that this government has forgotten Montreal. On December 10, 1990, I asked a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration regarding the deplorable job situation in the province of Quebec. At that time, 87,000 jobs had been lost in Quebec just over a six month period.

The minister told me, at the time, that employment programs were available in Quebec and that I would be happy with the results they would produce.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I am still not satisfied with the efforts made by this government to create jobs in the Montreal area. That is why I raised the question again on March 18. So, Mr. Speaker, let us look at what results the employment initiatives of this government have produced.

In Montreal, today, one person out of four is living below the threshold of poverty. The unemployment rate for the region encompassing the Montreal area reached 15.1 per cent in February according to Statistics Canada.

These are the results of the employment policies of this government and the reason why I raise the subject again tonight.

Economic conditions in Montreal are so bad that the unemployment rate is higher there than in any other city in Canada. The situation is getting worse and we have no economic recovery programs in place.

Based on the report the SECOR consulting group presented to the Quebec government, an estimated 615,000 people are living in poverty in the Montreal area. Nowadays, that is unacceptable!

On March 18, the Minister of Labour told me that his government had invested millions of dollars over the past two years to help stimulate the economy in Montreal.

Where has that money gone? The economic situation in Montreal only got worse. In the *La Presse* issue of March 28, we can read that 60 per cent of the welfare recipients in Montreal have been on welfare rolls for more than two years.

We must conclude, that this government's action does not improve in any way Montrealers' standard of living. Indeed, one would be wrong to say that because the