

nation and the thousands in Atlantic Canada who have stopped looking for work, who have given up the search for employment, and who stay at home or find other ways to eke out a living other than seeking employment through government channels. They are not included in this group of people.

If you were to conduct a fair examination, Mr. Speaker, you would find that the employment rate in a province like Newfoundland is not really 15.2 per cent, it is more like 20 per cent. Similar figures can be extended for the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. While the statistics may be valid in a comparative and continuing sense, they are not valid as an indicator of how many people are actually out of work and suffering from lack of employment.

Even with the horrifying statistics that we have of 891,000 people unemployed across Canada, 109,000 of them being in the Atlantic area, it is even worse than that, Mr. Speaker. What will we do about this situation? It is in that context of the serious unemployment situation that we must approach the subject of job creation.

What action has Parliament taken? Last Thursday, November 12, the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) introduced his budget to the House. The minister claims that there are positive steps taken in the budget to relieve the unemployment situation. In response to questions, the minister said that the government is mounting employment programs through the community employment program and other programs and that the government will spend as much as \$500 million on those programs. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce continually indicates to the House that the government will launch programs of a similar magnitude. One has to place that \$500 million in line with other government expenditures. I will name you some of them.

The Government of Canada has spent at least that amount of money on Mirabel airport, and it continues to chalk up deficits at the rate of an additional \$50 million each year. The Canadian Post Office in past years has accrued deficits of \$500 million. The St. Lawrence Seaway wrote off a debt of \$600 million. The Government of Canada has spent over \$140 million relocating those groups of unfortunate people, who are generally described as the boat people, across Canada. That is the way in which the Government of Canada spends money. It spends hundreds of millions of dollars.

When the government said it would allocate \$500 million for job creation in employment programs to relieve the drastic unemployment that exists in Canada, it is really accomplishing very little in comparison with its other expenditures. I am not impressed with the government's efforts.

We need positive action; we need to address the real problem of unemployment. What do we receive? We receive general statements from the Minister of Finance, as stated in the Speech from the Throne and repeated in the House by people such as the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The statements are of such a general nature as to be totally meaningless to the nearly one million Canadians unemployed, statements such as "We have to work to bring the interest rate down so as to generate industrial activity and relieve unem-

ployment in Canada". The task is much more concise and cogent than that. We must have definite programs that attack the problem, not only to relieve the immediate situation but to expand beyond that and create solutions of a more permanent nature.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce has referred, for example, to the difficulties in the auto industry. The unemployment problems in the auto industry have much to do with the auto pact that was negotiated between Canada and the United States. The terms of the auto pact did not take into account the changes in customer preferences, namely, the move to small cars because of the increased cost of energy. Why have the costs of energy increased? Because the government did not have the foresight to recognize the problems that have now arisen and, in the same way, the government did not have the foresight to recognize the types of problems that would beset the auto industry as time went by.

The government cannot simply and categorically characterize the problems of the auto industry as a problem that has to be resolved by the private sector, because the government is very much responsible for making that a problem in today's context by the kind of negotiations that it carried out. Anyone who is knowledgeable of the problems raised by the auto pact will tell you that it will be years before Canada again receives the benefits that were intended to be bestowed by the auto pact. In the meantime, we have and will have substantial unemployment in the automobile industry.

On the surface the issue may not appear to be relevant to the situation in the Atlantic area where we have other reasons for our unemployment problem, but one has to look at these problems in the national context. Indeed, the government has recognized that by stressing the importance of mobility of the Canadian labour force and stressing the issue to the point where it has been included in the constitutional proposal. The government has underlined and entrenched the rights of Canadians to travel across this country to seek and obtain employment.

When the maritime provinces become concerned about job losses in the fishing industry and in other maritime industries, we want to know that jobs will be available in other parts of Canada. We are affected by the difficulties in the auto industry. We have to realize and recognize that the unemployment problem affects all Canadians not only in that they are unable to earn income but also it affects them in social terms. It is destructive to family life. It is impossible for many people accustomed to employment and to earning an income for them to carry on a normal life without the benefit of that employment.

It is one of the most serious problems that we can have in Canada, and it is a problem that goes beyond the difficulties that are created by constitutional changes and beyond the difficulties that are created by other measures in which this government is involved. It is a problem that demands immediate attention and immediate action.

What will we do about the problem in the future? The answer is to establish job-creation programs that will relieve