I would ask the members on the other side a question. How many constituents have come to your office and said: "I and my employer have paid into a long-term disability insurance plan and I am being deprived of it."? What do you do? You get on the phone and you start making calls on behalf of your constituent because this constituent is entitled to benefits from an insurance plan that he or she and his or her employer have paid into and you expect them to get benefits. If you say you do not expect them to get benefits, then I venture to say that you are not telling the truth. Therefore, why is it any different with unemployment insurance that people pay into?

Why are this government and these members trying to tell us that the victims of unemployment are the bad guys in all of this? They are victims. They do not want to be unemployed in most cases—in all cases as far as I am concerned—because if they quit or are fired the employer decides the reason and the employee has to prove otherwise. They are entitled to the benefits.

I held a press conference today in 130-S. I had witnesses at this press conference from my riding who have been victims of the unemployment insurance system. They have appealed the decision. Let me tell you that the whole process started last May and their first appeal was in November. That appeal has been denied. Now they have to appeal to the umpire. Their appeal, along with those of others, will go on the waiting list.

There is another case where I am entering into my second anniversary of waiting for a hearing with an umpire. These constituents are here. They are parents. They have five children and they have no income. The husband has been denied benefits. He has been denied welfare because he is on an OSAP loan. It was not a grant but a loan. He cannot collect anything. Fear not, the appeal system is there for you. Thank God there are not that many more waiting for an appeal. The fact remains there are far too many who have to wait two years for an appeal.

We had witnesses at this press conference today from *Action Chômage* in Montreal who brought four typical cases with them that they talked about. The people went through the appeal system and the original decision was overturned. They won the appeal.

It was asked at the press conference what the percentage was of wins and losses on appeals. They said they won about 80 per cent of them. In the meantime, the point is that people have to wait. They have no income. Also, as a result of being denied UI they are being denied welfare because the welfare system cannot subsidize UI.

One other witness there—a very important one—was the president of the unemployment insurance employees' union that represents the front line workers who have to administer these kinds of legislation. They are the ones who have to answer the constituents who come in and say they have case. The front line workers have to apologize and say their hands are tied. They have to cope with the legislation.

The minister said tonight that we should not fear. These people will be trained, coached and taught to cope and deal with these cases.

The problem is that their work force has been reduced by about 25 per cent. They are overworked. They are under extreme stress. They lose patience. They get short tempered. Let me tell you that they are people and I do not blame them. They are experiencing a lot of difficulty right now. There is massive unemployment in this country.

When we look at this piece of legislation and when we look at what is going on in the country, I think we should stop attacking the unemployed. The reason they are unemployed is thanks to the current government and its economic policies. Why does it not spend as much effort in job creation?

It wants to take shots at the unemployed. It wants to change legislation. It wants to reduce benefits from 60 per cent to 57 per cent. It is attacking the unemployed. Why does it not attack the problem of a lack of jobs?

There is another announcement from CP that they are going to lay off another 1,600. How many more companies are going to close? How many more thousands of people will be laid off?

I wonder what it is that this government really wants to do.