

gave them a backhander, warning them that the next letter he looks at will be one of resignation. Why did the hon. member for Montreal-Mercier not tell us that?

Everyone knows now who the Prime Minister scolded them and warned them he would not put up with such letters being made public. But today, Mr. Speaker, I feel that for the sake of Canada and Quebec, the matter is much more important. Something is more important and vital. The minister responsible for housing said that Canadians are suffering; yes, it is true, Canadians are suffering. But the Canadian people are victims of an economic doctrine which is inconsistent with their needs and their aims. The tremendous failure of this government became apparent lately and it is being confirmed every day. Those members have a responsibility, Mr. Speaker. How can I appeal to their pride? Is it still possible to plead with them? What can be done to convince them that the Canadian people deserve better than the Minister of Finance's proposals, that they deserve better than a prime minister who ignores the suffering of the people and is indifferent to their plight? What can I do to touch the heart of those men and women who will not stop for one moment to defend the Canadian or the Quebec nation instead of supporting the partisan interests of a political party intent on bringing about the country's ruin? That is the issue today. And I am a Quebecer sitting here.

I will always be blamed for supporting the Quebec government, but if the Quebec government introduces measures designed to stop massive plant closedowns, I will not hesitate to support it or any other government that would do that, Mr. Speaker.

• (1600)

But as long as they look for excuses and blame others for the government's dismal performance, I will have no hesitation but to discharge my duty as a Member of Parliament to severely criticize not only those who will not honour their signature but also the others who have no respect for the confidence put in them by their constituents just two years ago. And of all the members from Quebec, Mr. Speaker, I am the only one who can condemn the government. There are two or three dozen others on that side who would like to, but who once more today do not have the courage to do it. They are afraid of losing their seats. They deserve it because day in and day out they betray the interests of their constituents. Of course, Mr. Speaker, they believe that truth is on their side, but it is beyond understanding how once more this afternoon they are going to follow blindly the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister who are leading this country to bankruptcy. They are aware of it and they are ill at ease in their constituencies and if they do not have enough courage to proudly put the interests of their constituencies ahead of the interests of a party that is hurting the country to such an extent, I hope that their constituents will make all kinds of representations to them over the weekend.

Maybe those people think we are still preaching in the desert. Well, let them think what they will. However, I will

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waste no opportunity to remind the people of Canada, the people of Quebec that on this side of the House we have people who believe that their first duty is to meet the most cherished aspirations of a nation that wants to survive and that does not want to be driven to ruin and disaster, as has been the case for too long. My view is that Canadians will jump on the first opportunity that arises, hopefully within a short time-frame, to take the country out of this mess and restore pride and the will to live to thousands of people who are now broken-spirited.

There is rising uncertainty in every area right now, Quebec is no exception, and things are even worse there, because of those 74 Liberal members who have been around for the past 15 years. How come Montreal lost its status as the metropolis of Canada with 74 Liberal members for the province and 22 Liberal members out of 22 for the island of Montreal, plus five or six ministers? Because of the poor performance of the people opposite.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I now recognize the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Mr. Rémi Bujold (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate today on the motion introduced by the official opposition. Yesterday, we commemorated in this House the second anniversary of our return to office. This day brings back to me the rout of the Progressive Conservative Party at that time. When I heard those who spoke today, first the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark), then his colleague from Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Beatty) and, finally, my good friend from Joliette (Mr. La Salle), I said to myself that they were still in a rout. Firstly, their motion is taken directly from a letter written by some Liberal colleagues. Their speeches were almost entirely made up of quotations from Liberal colleagues throughout the country, and everything we heard concerned the Liberal Party. This means, Mr. Speaker, that the official opposition should thank the Canadian people for re-electing us two years ago, because they had nothing to say. The members opposite have gone to the trouble of having a motion put on the Order Paper on behalf of the official opposition so they could speak only about the Liberals. Have we heard any valid solutions today? Have we heard any suggestions? None whatsoever, Mr. Speaker. In the minutes at my disposal, I would like to ask them why they did not take any action in certain areas since they would like the population to believe that they could have done so. It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that our government, and especially the Department of Employment and Immigration, have taken and will take action to respond to the present economic situation.

We shall have to face some very important issues in the next few years and we shall have to do what is needed to meet the demand, as concerns both the economy and manpower. Yesterday I read an article in the *Montreal Gazette* about a confer-