

*The Address*

We feel that it is very important to solve this problem because these people need jobs.

There are 186,000 children in Canada who go to bed hungry every night. Can we accept that in a country like Canada?

**Some hon. members:** No, no.

**Mr. Chrétien:** There are 19,000 Canadians who in the first three months of this year have lost their assets through bankruptcy. What about their dignity when they go home at night? Do you not think that we have to do something? We have to move on this problem quickly.

We see the former Minister of Finance coming to his seat. We heard brave words on the debt of Canada. The government was elected to reduce the deficit. It was another great promise. The government blamed everybody. In seven years it has accumulated more debt than in the previous 117 years of this Confederation. It is because the Minister of Finance made a lot of mistakes by always believing his own predictions. The first mistake he made was when he went abroad to borrow because he could get a better interest rate. A big part of the debt is now in the hands of foreigners. That is why he has very little flexibility.

After that, because he had predicted that interest rates would go down, he shifted the long-term debt to short-term debt. A big part of the debt is in treasury bills which are coming on the table every day and every week. With that error, it is no wonder that he has to maintain high interest rates and a high dollar. He does not want people who have invested in Canada in short-term money to run away with the money.

When I was Minister of Finance I could have borrowed money at 2 per cent in Switzerland. We could have if I had rolled the dice with the economy. I would have looked good in the short term. Who would have paid the capital 10 years later—perhaps three times the capital? No, we were responsible.

When I read the phrase in the Speech from the Throne "Finances have been put on a sound base", who are they kidding? What a joke.

[*Translation*]

There is 13 per cent unemployment in the riding of Charlevoix. The Prime Minister told them: I am going to create jobs, jobs, jobs. Thirteen percent unemployment in his own riding!

[*English*]

In Windsor last month, almost 13 per cent of the people were out of work. This is the Prime Minister who promised jobs, jobs and jobs. Where are the jobs for those 17,000 people in Windsor today?

[*Translation*]

In Montreal, again 13 per cent. Today, more than 200,000 people in the Montreal area are jobless. Where are the jobs the Prime Minister promised them during the election campaigns in 1984 and in 1988?

• (1100 )

[*English*]

In Saskatoon almost 13 per cent of the people are out of work. This is the Prime Minister who promised jobs, jobs, jobs. Where are the jobs for those 12,000 people in Saskatoon?

In the city of St. John's, Newfoundland, 13 per cent of the people are unemployed. This is the Prime Minister who promised jobs, jobs, jobs. Where are the jobs for those 11,000 people in St. John's, Newfoundland today? It is always more bad news: decline in output in January by 1.2 per cent; inflation 6 per cent; retail is down by 4 per cent; automobile sales are down by 7 per cent.

We can talk about problems of this nature for hours. Some of my colleagues will get up in this debate and give a lot of these problems to the government to solve.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, the facts are quite clear. If you are a person living on a low income, you cannot rely on this government. If you are a young person, you cannot rely on this government. If you are an elderly person, you cannot rely on this government. If you are sick, you cannot rely on this government.

[*English*]

If you own or work on a farm, do not count on this government. If you work in fisheries, it is the same