

000 Canadians in December of this year, the largest number for that month in Canada's history, and inflation which is running at a rate of five per cent on a year to year basis.

The government in its Speech from the Throne said that it is giving top priority to finding a solution to Canada's economic problems. I contend, Mr. Speaker, that we would not have these problems now if the government had not chosen to pursue a bankrupt economic policy in the first place. Nevertheless, we are faced with finding a solution. The government's solutions, as usual, are too little, too late. I am speaking here of the new winter works program recently announced by the government, which will cost the Canadian taxpayer approximately \$350 million.

The winter works program is supposed to alleviate peak periods of winter unemployment. Unfortunately, as in previous years, the government announced the program too late to accomplish its stated objectives. The result will be a winter of high unemployment and unnecessary misery for many Canadians. The throne speech says that the government is giving top priority to promoting—

—stable economic growth at a rate that will sustain rising standards of living for all our citizens and provide for more satisfactory realization of the potential of the economy.

Yet statistics released by the finance department on November 29 revealed that the government's present fiscal policy is becoming more restrictive rather than more expansionary, and that the June budget in fact contributed to rising inflation and rising unemployment.

We have been told that before too long the government intends to bring another of its endless series of budgets before this House. I can well imagine that this budget will try to tie up some or all of the loose ends left dangling by the throne speech. However, Mr. Speaker, what confidence can this House have in a government that says on the one hand its most urgent priority is jobs, when on the other hand the statistics compiled by Statistics Canada tell us a completely different story? These figures tell us that not only has job creation lagged behind growth of the labour force, but the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has increased since the last budget. With what confidence can we treat the new budget, if and when it comes, when the first priority of the old budget has still to materialize?

Reasonable projections now show that real growth of the gross national product during the whole of 1972 will be approximately 5.3 per cent. To bring unemployment down to the 4.5 per cent recently recommended by the Economic Council of Canada will require real growth of our gross national product, between 6 and 7 per cent. Once again, the government has fallen short of its own objectives and one can only wonder how all this mismanagement will suddenly be changed in the new budget. This government has not produced over the past four years, and on the basis of its record I cannot really believe that its intentions are serious this time, either.

Much has been made of the lesson this government apparently learned during the election campaign and as a result of that contest, but I do not credit them with humility and I do not see any change in basic attitudes. We have a government which is still basically arrogant, which is

The Address—Mr. Rowland

still basically smug, which is still basically not a government of the people and which will, because of that, not be the government of the future.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I wish first to express my congratulations to the four hon. members whom this House has selected to preside over its deliberations. Three of these hon. gentlemen previously occupied the posts to which they have been re-elected, and did so with dignity and distinction.

I think it will be understood if I make specific reference to my special pleasure at the re-election of the hon. member for Stormont-Dundas (Mr. Lamoureux) to the high position he occupied in the previous parliament. It is not enough that Mr. Speaker knows the rules and applies them with impartiality. To be truly effective, he must be able to sense the mood of the House and understand when a rigid application of the rules would not be in the best interests of the chamber. Mr. Speaker has consistently demonstrated just that sort of sensitivity in his judgment.

I must also add my expression of appreciation for the manner in which Mr. Speaker discharges his important duties outside this chamber. It always pleases me to learn that Mr. Speaker has hosted visiting foreign dignitaries, because I know that the hospitality he and his wife habitually extend to their guests can only result in adding lustre to the reputation of this country and its parliament. It is among my fondest hopes that this parliament will create a permanent speakership and that the present Mr. Speaker will be the first incumbent.

The hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave) assumes the Chair for the first time this session. I am delighted at his selection. Few members have demonstrated for this institution a feeling to equal his. His interventions in procedural debates in the past have been invariably knowledgeable, designed to maintain decorum and expedite business. I am sure that he will bring distinction to his office. While I am giving out bouquets, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of hon. members who congratulated the mover and seconder of the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

A lot of nonsense is commonly heard in this place, but if some of the remarks of distinguished members of the Progressive Conservative Party during the past week are any indication, this will be a vintage year. Let me refer to two recurring themes. First, members of the party sitting to my right have argued, implicitly and explicitly, that in deciding to permit the Liberal government to present a legislative program before deciding upon its fate we in the New Democratic Party have somehow betrayed our mandate. I consider it no part of my mandate to express a preference for either the Conservatives or the Liberals.

Given the fact that my party cannot at the present time form a government, and given the fact that I was elected after running on the New Democratic Party platform I consider that my instructions from the electors in my constituency were to use all the means at my disposal to bring into effect the policies which I advocated during the campaign. To me, that means that the New Democratic Party should employ the somewhat strategic position it