and research and development, something this government has set about correcting.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the minister in the House taking me to task.

One of the points that I wanted to make in my speech but that time did not allow was that this government has even shattered the dreams of Canada's top scientists in the matters of research and development.

The Ottawa Citizen noted on December 15 that few of the promises the Prime Minister made when he phoned the National Advisory Board for Science and Technology for which the minister was responsible in 1987 have been met. While the board urged the Prime Minister to increase the percentage of GNP spent on research and development from 1.4 per cent in 1987, it has fallen to 1.28 per cent, less than any other industrialized nation.

Here is the Minister of Science and Technology. Maybe he will get up and defend that record. In research and development terms, Canada is a third world country. What kind of future can the people of Canada expect with a Prime Minister who does not keep his promise? He failed to keep his promise to the scientific community and also fails to keep up with research and development so essential to developing the jobs in this country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, I am from Montreal, and in Montreal, as you know, we have 14 per cent more unemployment. If I have time to speak in this debate, I will tell you how disastrous the situation is. In fact, there are more unemployed workers in Montreal than in all four Atlantic provinces.

I listened to a description of the situation in Ontario, and I wonder whether the hon. member could tell us about these three points—he told us he had three points he intended to make—so I would like to hear about the third one, because this is, of course, an opportunity to find out a little more about what is happening in other provinces. My speech, if we have time, will be about the situation in Montreal, but I wish the hon. member would tell me what the last point was he wanted to raise in this House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier has one minute to answer.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Saint-Denis.

I would have liked to talk about training. I started talking about that but I didn't really have time to elaborate. I would have liked to talk about education. We have a problem in Ontario, Mr. Speaker, at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The drop-out rate among our students is disturbing. Health care and housing are some of the concerns of the people in my own riding and of people throughout the province.

They also want a strong, central government. And I know that the hon. member for Saint-Denis and Montreal is in favour of a strong, central government. The Conservatives are leaving us a government that is tax hungry. The Minister of Finance has refused to say anything about tax reform. Just imagine, where we are heading. We have the Minister of Finance who will not tell us what lies at the heart of this so-called tax reform.

As far as Ontario is concerned, I would have liked to talk about all that, but I am running out of time. I will get back to that later.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Resuming debate.

• (1640)

Mrs. Monique B. Tardif (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should revert to the last intervention of my colleague from Ottawa—Vanier who referred to drop-outs and housing problems. If he thinks these problems are peculiar to Ontario I can tell him that we have them in Quebec as well. I would remind him that even though the federal government is not responsible for education, it has made concerted efforts—vocational guidance sessions, among other things—which I think are one way of indirectly helping people who would otherwise drop out of the school system.

That being said, I would suggest that the motion before us today deals with the priority objectives of government economic policy. The first two parts of the