

S.O. 21

campaign a certain individual in my riding, who had been helped considerably through government grants and subsidies, got all enthusiastic about free enterprise, and wanted the country and the Province to stop all giveaway programs to the people on general welfare assistance. He said that this assistance robs those people of initiative.

This individual's daughter had received, during the past year, a subsidy of \$3,975 to the university she was attending, along with a scholarship of \$400. The man was the proud recipient of \$500 to have his house insulated, and a subsidy of \$800 to have the heating in his home changed from oil to gas. His wife received \$683 in family allowances for their two children who are under 18, along with a Child Tax Credit this year of \$450, making a total of \$1,133 this year.

Some Hon. Members: Name him.

Mr. Parent: The children are getting high school educations at public expense. Not a penny was paid for his wife's serious operation which was followed by two days in intensive care and 12 more days in the hospital. The grandfather and grandmother, who live in a small house on his property, both receive pensions from the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security, and some \$500 from the provincial Government to pay taxes.

My dilemma, Madam Speaker, is this: what do you do with people who like to take but do not want to give? Oh, I know, Madam Speaker, I will tell him to join the Conservative Party.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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CANADA POST CORPORATION

REINSTATEMENT OF WORKER CONVICTED OF THEFT

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Madam Speaker, in December, 1981, a postal worker in Calgary was charged by the Calgary city police under Section 314(1) of the Criminal Code, which deals with theft from the mails. The worker was suspended from the Post Office and, seven months later, on July 15, 1982, was convicted in Alberta provincial court and sentenced to 30 days in jail, which were served on weekends because of her status as a single parent.

The Canadian Union of Postal Employees launched an appeal to have the worker reinstated, and the case went to arbitration. The arbitration hearing was held in August, 1983, and in early December the arbitrator, who was appointed by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, reinstated the employee and, furthermore, awarded \$40,000 back salary. This represented not only her regular salary but what she might have earned through overtime since July 15, 1982, the date on which she was convicted of stealing from the mails.

Madam Speaker, something is absolutely rotten when a convicted thief cannot be suspended and, in addition, receives financial compensation, including compensation for the time the thief was supposed to be in jail. Apparently crime does pay if you work for the Post Office.

[Translation]

DISASTERS

FLOODING IN RICHMOND, P.Q.—REQUEST FOR HELP

Mr. Alain Tardif (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Yesterday, Madam Speaker, I went to my riding—to Richmond, more precisely—to see for myself the extreme seriousness of the situation. Again, the Saint-François River has risen above flood level and is a direct threat to a good many families and to the entire business district. The threat was so real that many families had to be evacuated and most store owners had to move their inventories or put it in a safe place. The whole community of Richmond has again experienced hours of absolutely indescribable tension and fear, especially at this time of the year. A few months ago, the provincial Government announced its intention to subsidize part of the cost of a dike construction project. Although it was only last week that we received this file from the provincial Government, I think it is imperative as well as extremely important and urgent that our Government allocate the necessary funds to correct and remedy immediately this flooding problem which has so far caused several million dollars worth of damages. We would thus protect Richmond residents, the innocent victims of gross negligence on the part of the provincial Government, which could and should have given us the complete file months ago.

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[English]

EMPLOYMENT

LACK OF TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR MIDDLE-AGED UNEMPLOYED PERSONS

Mr. Girve Fretz (Erie): It was with great sorrow that I listened to the parade of promises revealed in the latest Throne Speech, Madam Speaker. How any Government, let alone this bankrupt and dispirited one, could hope to carry out half of the very ambitious program before an election is held, I cannot imagine. There are new provisions for this group, and new provisions for that. Almost every interest group has been catered to, but one group has been forgotten. That is the unemployed person over 50. What retraining programs are available for him or her?

The youth ministry cannot help, neither can the pension office. The individual is caught in a lonely abyss—too young to retire, yet too old to be easily redirected into another career. This applies very specifically to executives who have forged their careers in one company, then suddenly find themselves out in the cold, replaced by someone younger.

It is high time that serious energies were directed toward making the situation for middle-aged unemployed people a little easier. Consideration should be given to extensive retraining courses through Manpower. Perhaps assistance could be