

Alleged Non-Support of Employment Programs

necessary because the government has not been taking any action. Therefore, we must spend our time today discussing matters which are of concern not only to the people in the cities but to the people in Canada as a whole.

I should like to simply stand here and holler, for the four minutes I have at my disposal until six o'clock, "incentive, incentive, and more of it." We must provide some incentive for the Canadian people and some hope that they will be able to get back to work. They need hope that work will be found for them in this supposedly great and fantastic nation called Canada.

This is a great nation. There are opportunities, and so on—but they are not being developed by this government. This is the terrible thing about it.

The answer is not welfare costs on a long-term basis. Welfare costs are important on an immediate, short-term basis so long as our citizens do not have the means with which to eat and pay their rent. This is the situation all over the country. There are no other means but welfare, and welfare costs of the municipal and provincial governments are increasing constantly.

One of the Liberal members from Winnipeg said there is no problem, that everybody is eating and everybody is happy. The hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Carter), however, referred to specific cases. In Winnipeg, particularly in the constituency of the hon. member who spoke, apparently they do not have this situation because they have a glorified and sophisticated society. But in other areas there are serious problems and solutions must be found. The hon. member opposite and his colleagues asked why we do not offer suggestions. Suggestions have been brought forward every day, not only by the opposition but even by government members, as well as by the Economic Council of Canada and our financial people who wish something done about this situation. But the government does not listen—no, sir! They do not care at all because they are eating, they are happy and everything is fine.

Mr. Ricard: They created unemployment.

Mr. Comeau: They created unemployment, as the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Ricard) said. All kinds of suggestions have been made. I hope this motion is approved tonight, because the government deserves to be condemned for some of the things it is doing to this country. The leader of my party has suggested all kinds of things to get the country moving both on a long-term and on a short-term basis. We should look at the tax proposals and at what is happening to our tax system. It is all wrong. I am not an economist but I know something is definitely wrong. For example, yesterday we had a debate on the CDC and a lot of enthusiasm was expressed about economic nationalism, and so on. Yet we offer a better tax proposition to foreign companies than to Canadian companies. These are the things that are wrong with the present system. But the Minister of Finance wants to increase our taxes still further.

[Mr. Comeau.]

I believe you are becoming impatient, Mr. Speaker, so I shall call it six o'clock.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Robert P. Kaplan (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, I very much regret that the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Ryan) is not in the House at the moment because I have risen partly as a result of the challenge that he hurled across the floor this afternoon. He challenged hon. members representing Toronto ridings to explain how they could look after the interests of their city and still support the government.

Mr. Alexander: That is right.

Mr. Kaplan: I am not answering for other members from Toronto; I am only answering for myself. It is to that particular challenge that I should like to address myself. We have passed the point in this House of talking about the evil of unemployment and the importance of doing something about it quickly. For the same reason I do not propose to take much time in talking about the causes of unemployment, its relationship to inflation and what the underlying policies of the government are. A few days ago I spoke in the House on that subject.

What I should like to do this evening is respond to the motion which has been put forward by the opposition, in which it is alleged that the government could be doing more in certain areas and that it has wilfully and arrogantly refused to do certain things. I should like to look at the list of those things and see what it amounts to. Let us turn to the suggestions of the hon. member for Spadina. If I could suggest ways in which unemployment could be reduced more quickly, I would suggest them; and if I could propose schemes that the government has not proposed, I would do so. But I cannot do that, Mr. Speaker.

If I believed that our economy could be fired more quickly without danger, or that our expansionary policies could be accelerated more than they are, I would say so. But I do not think that, Mr. Speaker. I think that the government is responding to the problem. As I say, I will not go into the origin of the problem, its causes or its depth. I think nevertheless that, given the problem, the government has responded to it in the only way in which it could respond.

What are we going to do, we are asked, about unemployment in Toronto and in other Canadian cities?

• (8:10 p.m.)

I come first to the principal suggestion of the hon. member for Spadina. He turned southward to the United States and said, "Look at what President Nixon is doing." He stated it is proposed that millions of dollars of massive aid be pumped into the cities of the United States by the federal government. He said there are to be massive