

*Supply**[English]*

Mr. Parent: Mr. Speaker, not only is the question the hon. member poses valid, but there are two or three other points he touched on I would like to address.

First of all, we keep hearing members of the government coming back to the way things were some seven or eight years ago. How far back do we want to go? Do they want to go back to the depression years and say how terrible the Tories were? Or, do we want to go back to the time of Sir John A. Macdonald? There comes a time in the history of a party when it has to take responsibility for what is going on in the country.

They have been in power now almost seven years. I say that if their economic policies have not begun to work after seven years, then who do we look to? Do we look back 15 or 20 years ago to point the finger? My suggestions are not so much in the form of blaming someone. My suggestions are made so that hopefully they will have a look at what has gone wrong and they will be able to make some corrections.

The member asked also about the native youth. One of my colleagues is to address that during the course of the day. He will be discussing native youth employment issues.

The member also said that there were two ways of looking at it: whether the glass is half full or half empty. He prefers of course to put forth the very rosy vision that everything is going well in this country.

On Saturday I was at a graduation in my riding at Niagara College. I was speaking to the president. There were 1,600 graduates. This graduation took place over a three-day period. Of these 1,600 graduates there are 450 who have jobs. Are they telling me that their economic policies are working when only one in four of these graduates are getting jobs? These are people with hands-on experience. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that whatever your responsibility is surely you should live up to that. Some of the responsibility is with the government; I have no quarrel with that. However, for those things which you can alleviate, which you can in some way correct, then that is what you should be doing.

That is what we are trying to help them with today with our suggestions as to how these things should be done.

The hon. minister, in answering a question of mine about two weeks ago, said there is a great program underfoot for youth dropouts.

• (1130)

I wish him and I wish this program well. I am an educator by profession. I taught in the high schools. I know that the dropout problem in Ontario where I worked is very severe, but I suggest with all respect that these problems are not going to be solved by taking us back to 1983 or 1974 or wherever it is. The problems are going to be solved by facing them here and now and by putting programs in place which are going to help our young people rather than simply by us going back and forth and saying that it was done many years ago.

Mr. Garth Turner (Halton—Peel): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to say that I think everyone on all sides of the House applauds the concern that the hon. member has shown for youth and youth unemployment. Certainly when you are young and trying to find a job and there are none available it is a crushing experience. Our society measures people by the work they do, so a first and positive experience is extremely necessary.

I would like to ask the member about his view on where we are going. There are two ways of looking at economics, short term and long term, and it strikes me that the member is focusing his concern on a short-term view of our economic problems. His concern is for right now, this summer, the next 90 days or 120 days, and for finding appropriate jobs for students essentially by throwing government money at the problem.

I am wondering if the member could give me some comments on how he feels about the longer term structural solutions. Many of the problems we face today because of high taxation or government restraint have been put into place to address that structural long-term concern of debt reduction.

Does the hon. member feel we should abandon the strides we have made in terms of reducing government expenditure and overhead on a short-term basis in order to solve this problem with more cash? Or, does he feel that the goals, the needs of students in the long term, would be better solved by listening to those other political voices that are saying no, the government still spends too much? The government right now is not