

*Employment Support Bill*

interests. I, personally, would find this a terrifying fate for people who deserve better.

It is interesting to observe that some American labour leaders who originally opposed some aspects of the emergency U.S. policy, quickly changed their tune when they found that their obstructionist reflex actions were out of step with the views of their rank and file membership. The NDP had better rethink their position before they do irreparable harm by their obstructionist tactics. I had hoped, too, Mr. Speaker, that we could give further thought to measures which are essential to our long term wellbeing. By that I do not mean to delay this vital legislation in any way, but after and beyond it.

To compete on today's market, we must take measures to improve our productivity. It is only in this way that we can assure our long term independence and survival. Those concerned with the degree of foreign domination of our economy had better think of ways for us to do better ourselves, rather than restrictive measures that will not stand the test of economic realism. Economic realism is a positive manifestation of negative economic nationalism. This will require better management training and practices. It requires imaginativeness and encouragement to technological innovation and entrepreneurship. It will require a better understanding of what profit is and how it is directed. There is a significant school of thought which somehow considers profit per se as evil. There are those who would like to see profit reduced or eliminated without considering the critical importance of profit in investment, in research, in the risk-taking which creates new and better paying jobs. I am not suggesting that all profit is sacred, or that excessive profit—particularly that at the expense of monopolistic or exploitive labour practices—can or should be tolerated, but profit is going to be essential to the process of taking advantage of our own opportunities and resources.

I would like to see a less timid approach to the encouragement of productivity by greater capital investment. Presently, there is some slight encouragement by permitting capital cost allowance on 115 per cent of the value of a new capital asset. I suggest that this is hardly worthwhile at all. It amounts to some 3 per cent per year and is inadequate to affect investment decisions, yet is costly to the treasury in its aggregate effect. One of the greatest periods of industrial and job expansion in Canada was in the early fifties when we had a system of double depreciation. The U.S. downturn, perhaps coincidentally—I am not sure it is all coincidental—followed the removal of their 7 per cent additional writeoff on capital equipment. They have now replaced this with a new 10 per cent additional writeoff incentive on U.S. built equipment, a factor which adds to our problems in addition to the 10 per cent surcharge. Britain, in its efforts to spur industrial growth and efficiency, is now allowing an 80 per cent writeoff in the first year. I believe we should study these moves carefully and if they suit our circumstances, and I believe they do, we should be prepared to act in a similar manner. I also believe that we should initiate a productivity program with labour, management and government co-operating to find the means to increase our competitive position and thus our standard

[Mr. Danson.]

of living and level of employment. It is possible that our failure to give proper priority to this area may well seriously threaten our ability even to maintain the status quo.

I would challenge those who call themselves economic nationalists,—and I call myself an economic nationalist— but especially those who wring their hands in anguish and blame others for our condition, to find those positive ways to ensure our independent survival and lesser dependence on external forces. Many of our youth are properly questioning our traditional values. This leads to a rejection of involvement in the industrially productive segments of our society. I would challenge them to opt in before they mature in a society and economy which has been completely dominated by foreign interests or those domestic interests which do not share their idealism or values.

The truly admirable response of youth to the challenge of the Opportunities for Youth program, for all its imperfections, has shown that they want to opt into society energetically and constructively. This response is a counter-challenge to us to respond with wise direction and opportunity to harness their enthusiasm and idealism constructively. In seeing them and speaking to them over the summer, I am convinced of the rightness of motivation in the Opportunities for Youth Program and the need to refine and continue it. I further believe that we should give very serious consideration to a program of voluntary non-military national service. The invaluable infrastructure of the armed forces could be utilized, particularly as Canada's forces are winning increasing respect from this segment of our population. By the same token, our industrial infrastructure could be utilized to channel our interested youth into the economic mainstream of our life.

I am, however, drifting from the main focus of this debate. We are discussing emergency legislation to deal with this, and perhaps unforeseen, emergency situations. This requires fast action and a minimum of delay while ensuring adequate parliamentary scrutiny. I hope all members of this House, and particularly those members of the committee to which this bill is being referred, will direct their energies to improving and passing this bill, rather than engaging in partisan tactics in an effort to place the blame for the actions of another government onto this one, or to drag up the past in bitter recrimination.

In concluding, and since this debate deals with economics, Mr. Speaker, I would not wish to resume my seat without taking this first opportunity to publicly pay tribute to the retiring chairman of the Economic Council of Canada. Arthur Smith has been an outstanding chairman of this excellent body and has proven himself a distinguished Canadian. In his eight years with the Council, four as Chairman, he has served with dedication and distinction. Under his leadership, the work and reports of the Council have served a unique and valuable role for all levels of government and industry. The reports themselves have been amongst the most valuable and interesting reading available to parliamentarians and officials. Certainly, there is room for disagreement with aspects of