

Supply

Madam Speaker: In his notice the hon. member raised two points to try to convince the House that he did have the substance of an emergency debate. The announcement of a delay of two years or more of the Alaska highway natural gas pipeline was the first point he made. The second point was the possible collapse of what he believes to be the largest construction project in our history. Neither seems to me to constitute a matter that requires immediate and urgent consideration. If the hon. member feels that the subject requires early consideration, it could be dealt with on a supply day, of which there are nine remaining.

For these reasons, it is not possible for me to set aside the normal business of the House today, which, by the way, is a supply opposition motion, to consider the matter referred to in the hon. member's notice.

• (1510)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe) moved:

That this House condemns the government for its increasing use of Canadian taxpayers' dollars for self-serving advertising and public opinion surveying, and in particular, for spending millions of tax dollars for unnecessary advertising at a time when it demands financial sacrifices from ordinary Canadians.

He said: Madam Speaker, as hon. members were coming to work over the course of the last month or so, they would have noticed just two blocks south of Parliament Hill a billboard which featured in recent days a picture of a woman who was apparently a mechanic working on some heavy equipment. The caption on the large billboard was simply "Making Canada Work". Underneath that, in small letters were the words "Employment and Immigration Canada".

Previously, there was another advertisement there which showed a man in front of three computer screens with again the same caption "Making Canada Work" and in small letters "Employment and Immigration Canada".

Anyone who was coming to work, Mr. Speaker, and saw that billboard, after the announcement that there are a million and a quarter Canadians who cannot find a job, must have marvelled at what it was that the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) was trying to get at. If you read that billboard, would you know anything about any government programs? Would it help to put any Canadian to work? Would it do anything to inform Canadians about their rights or about the need that there be full employment? No, it would not. What we find, Mr. Speaker, is that at a time of massive unemployment, unprecedented unemployment, when we have a million and a quarter unemployed, the government does not have the money it needs to create jobs, to give Canadian workers an opportunity to have a job of their own. But somehow the government has been able to find the money for self-serving advertising on billboards across Canada, to rent

promotional campaigns in the media across Canada designed to enhance the image of the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

The government itself says that the total cost of the advertising campaign, for Phases I and II, will be some \$4.6 million. Any unemployed Canadian who sees those advertisements must ask himself this first question: How can the government justify its priorities in spending \$4.6 million on advertising to promote the government's corporate image, instead of putting that money where it is necessary, to get Canadians back to work?

Mr. Speaker, there is no more graphic example of what is wrong with the government's advertising programs than that particular campaign which ended at the end of last month with the billboards. But there is more to come. We will be seeing them on television and in the media across the country. We simply do not know what the exact total is for federal advertising spending. The available figures that we have do not include Crown corporations such as Canadian National. We see the CN advertisements every night on television. The figures do not include advertising by Air Canada or by the CBC. Yet the government, in its own estimates for this year, projects that federal advertising spending will go to a total of \$70 million. That is only for advertising which is handled through the Department of Supply and Services. It does not include the Crown corporations to which I referred earlier, nor does it include a wide range of other agencies which were exempt from having to place their advertisements through Supply and Services.

That \$70 million figure, Mr. Speaker, is likely to grow by another \$10 million; it is far more likely that the Department of Supply and Services this year will be responsible for placing some \$80 million worth of advertising. Why do I say that? Because the projection in the blue book for last year was that the federal government would spend some \$60 million. Now they concede that that figure was up to \$70 million by the time the fiscal year came to an end. Mr. Speaker. It is far more likely, then, that this year federal spending through the Department of Supply and Services will total more than \$80 million. By the time we have added in advertising by Crown corporations and other government agencies, the figure will be well in excess of \$100 million in this fiscal year, 1982-83.

That money, that \$100 million to which I have referred, does not include, for example, the close to \$200 million which the government intends to spend this year on government publications. If we want to see the government's true promotional budget, we have to go beyond even that \$100 million.

While figures for previous years are not available, we simply do not know exactly how much was spent by governments going back over the years. I put a question on the Order Paper about a year and a half ago but the information has not been forthcoming. It appears as if we can divide growth in federal government spending over two periods. The first began, Mr. Speaker, in 1972 when the Liberal Party lost its majority and