

Supply

the elderly, expanding opportunities for the young, equality for women, the achievement of a secure energy supply at a fair price for all Canadians, the promotion of a national development policy that would provide jobs, stimulate growth, build on regional strength, increase Canadian ownership and control of our economy, strengthen national institutions while at the same time making them more responsive to provincial and regional goals, and ensure that Canada plays a vigorous part in the world beyond our borders. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has repeatedly made the point that we cannot operate as an island unto ourselves. We are a very important part of the world scene in all respects.

While this session has been the longest in Canadian history, it has been the most productive. There have been 137 Government Bills introduced in Parliament and, as I mentioned earlier, over 100 have received Royal Assent. The Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's (Mr. Simmons) mentioned earlier the decisive action the Government has taken with respect to housing. We are all witnessing and enjoying the results of increased housing starts. That is playing a very major role in turning things around.

● (1640)

The inflation rate is down to the area of 6 per cent. We know that the Minister of Commerce and Development in the Ontario legislature made that statement a few weeks ago when he joined with the Canadian Government in telling Canadians how pleased he was that we were able to achieve this through co-operative measures. The federal Government's transfers to provinces and regions of the country are quite substantial.

This afternoon the Minister of Finance did not miss the opportunity to bring good news, in answer to a question during Question Period, about the low interest rates, now around 10 per cent, the prime rate at banks, the reduced interest on one-year mortgages and an attractive figure for five-year mortgages.

Definite action was taken on the commitment to small businessmen and farmers by amendments to the Farm Improvement Loans Act and the Small Businesses Loans Act which received Royal Assent, and by the extension of the termination date for loans to be guaranteed by nine months, from June 30, 1982 to March 31, 1983. We saw action taken with respect to raising the deposit insurance limit from \$20,000 to \$60,000. Action has also been taken on the Special Farm Financial Assistance Program.

The Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's spoke about action to protect the elderly citizens with respect to the Guaranteed Income Supplement. A special committee will study our pension system in a very detailed way, and a green paper is expected to be released early in 1983. The Special Parliamentary Task Force on Employment Opportunities for the 80s was appointed in May 1980 and reported in October 1981. Imaginative action was taken with respect to the Canada Community Services Projects and Canada Community Development Programs in the summer of 1980, and in January of 1982 there was an additional allocation of funds. As well

there is the summer employment program for youth which will be announced in the very near future.

These are all important programs to assist during the winter months, Mr. Speaker. University students will soon be in the market looking for employment and these programs will play a major role in assisting them in a difficult situation.

We have also seen an increase in the ILAP, announced jointly by the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy), the Minister of Labour (Mr. Caccia) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lumley) in January 1981.

There is a range of other programs I could touch on with respect to women in non-traditional occupations, women's employment programs, affirmative action programs, a program for employment disadvantaged, for our native people, for our youth—every sector of society has been remembered and has benefited from the direct results that accrue to them from action taken by the Government arising out of the Speech from the Throne.

I began my remarks this afternoon by taking exception to the lack of creativity and imagination on the part of the Official Opposition in what has been brought forward for consideration today. They touched upon a subject of great importance to all Canadians. Once they find their way back after choosing a leader there may be some direction over there, but for the moment it leaves us in a very bad position in the House of Commons to have to consider a motion such as the one before us this afternoon.

While they talk about doom and gloom and preach the negative side of all of this, I can witness this afternoon the benefits that have been accruing to Canadians in every region of the country, certainly in the Atlantic region. I know from experience in my own Province, in the northern part of New Brunswick, that because of transfer payments from the federal Government we have been able to achieve much in terms of the general development agreement and various sub-agreements for agriculture, tourism and so on.

I would conclude by attempting something I know you will not allow, Mr. Speaker, in my remarks this afternoon. This brochure—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. In addition to the rule against displays, which the Hon. Member knew was going to be applied, unfortunately his time has expired. The Chair will now have to recognize Hon. Members for questions, answers and comments.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Hon. Member if he can try his hand at distinguishing between sittings and sessions of this House. It is a matter of some concern that the term session has been dropped from the Constitution and has been replaced by the word sitting. This suggests, as the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) mentioned in his question to the Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's, that this could lead us into the unfortunate situation of having a sitting one day and having a