

Business of Supply

strengthen or add to the student aid programs, and if not, whether he contemplates any such meetings.

The whole purpose of the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon was to find out how much importance the government attaches to this problem, and to find out whether the government is working on any policies, either alone or in conjunction with the provinces, that might help meet a problem that is extremely serious now and that is bound to become even more grave over the next three or four years. I regret more than I can say that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen) and the government are seemingly completely unaware or unconcerned about the wastage of our manpower resources.

This afternoon the Leader of the Opposition asked whether any studies had been made by the government as to how many members of this year's graduating class are likely to be absorbed in the labour force. That question was not answered by the minister. If this is so, what policy conclusions have been drawn as the result of such studies? What are the projections over the next three to five years?

The Leader of the Opposition also asked the minister to what extent the Department of Manpower and Immigration is involved in such problems as the shortage of medical and para-medical personnel in Canada, a question which was so ably asked again tonight by the hon. member for Simcoe North (Mr. Rynard)? He asked to what extent the Department of Manpower and Immigration is concerned about the loss of scientists to this country? Far from attempting to answer any of these questions, the minister this afternoon ignored them completely. This is why I am compelled to speak as I am speaking now.

Nobody is asking for miracles. What we are asking is for some evidence that there is some thinking and planning taking place in the department which is primarily responsible for the utilization and retention of our young manpower resources, particularly the growing graduating classes each spring. The evidence given this afternoon by the minister indicates that no such planning is taking place in his department. If there is, we have not heard about it.

It must be a bitter and disillusioning experience for many young Canadians—and I speak to my fellow members in this house because I am sure we are all in contact with this problem—to find that the first people to be betrayed in the just society are the young

[Mr. Thompson.]

people, many of whom gave it such support a few months ago. It appears as if the Prime Minister and his colleagues are telling their young supporters "Don't call us, we'll call you, at the next election". The government is in for a rude shock.

If this government and this country is willing to tolerate a situation in which more and more young people are being trained and educated and cannot find careers in Canada, this country is bound to have an increase in the incidence of conflict and violence. Perhaps more than any other minister, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration and his department have the responsibility for developing the policies, providing the leadership, and showing a concern to make words like "involvement" and "participation" in the development of the Canadian society a reality.

We have an amendment to the motion. It is moved by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent). I want to make a few remarks with regard to it. The amendment criticises the government because of its failure to emphasize the role of the public sector. A few days ago I returned from Great Britain. We have seen what has happened in a country where a socialist government adhering to the principles that are advocated by the New Democratic Party has failed because of its emphasis on the role of the public sector. As we were saying here tonight, we have a problem in Canada, but the problem that Great Britain has as a result of placing the major bulk of the responsibility on the public sector makes our problem almost insignificant. I emphasize that this is not the answer to the problem at all, and therefore this amendment is completely irrelevant to the need and to the problem which we face.

Mr. Broadbent: Would the hon. member permit a question?

• (9:10 p.m.)

Mr. Thompson: My time is limited, Mr. Speaker, and I am trying to finish. The hon. member can ask his questions later, if he wishes.

A free enterprise economy in which all individuals have an opportunity to participate is more desirable than a state regimented economy. For this reason, the amendment is not in my opinion relevant to the real problem. They have had an opportunity in Britain to proceed on the lines suggested by this amendment and we can see the results of their doing so all too clearly.