

Adjournment Debate

agreements with the private sector to ease the transition between school and the labour force.

During the 1983-1984 fiscal year, more than 2.5 millions young Canadians participated in training and job creation programs of the CEIC, and this number should increase during the coming year. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, there is a program called Skill Growth Fund jointly administered by the Federal Government and the provinces, whereby students can enrol in training courses in a great variety of new fields.

I must also indicate to my colleague that, when his Party was in power, how ever briefly, in 1979, they wanted to put an end to the job creation program for youth, and that when the Liberal Party came back to power, in February 1980, this program was offered again. So, I think that this Government has done more than any other as far as job creation is concerned, and we did it again lately, by increasing the budget of Summer-Canada for youth.

[English]

EMPLOYMENT—PROGRAM EXPENDITURES MADE BY CANADA POST CORPORATION

Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, the matter that I particularly wanted to raise today relates to a question I posed in the House on February 22 to the Minister responsible for the Special Employment Initiatives Program, specifically regarding Canada Post.

Under this program the Minister, through Canada Post, had budgeted some \$5,575,640. Essentially what happened is that 95.7 per cent of that money ended up being spent in Liberal ridings. Only 4.3 per cent of that money was spent in ridings held by the Conservatives and absolutely nothing was spent in the ridings held by the NDP. Of course, it was not an isolated incident. The same thing happened in the Department of Communications where 64.6 per cent of the money was spent in Liberal ridings and only 28 per cent in P.C. ridings. With respect to CMHC, 89.5 per cent of that money was spent in Liberal ridings.

● (1810)

What made people so angry is that as one went through that program it became more and more apparent it was nothing more than a Liberal slush fund being used in the most partisan way.

The concern I have is that Canada Post has recently deferred some \$35 million in capital projects right across Canada. Of course, the reason is that it is trying to save money and ensure that it does not go too far into debt. Supposedly it is trying to be austere and look after the situation. We suddenly found that this \$5 million was available and was all spent in Liberal ridings. Immediately one becomes very suspicious.

I am particularly suspicious because in my riding we have a number of very serious postal concerns. The City of Grande Prairie was promised a new post office over two years ago. It

was the No. 2 priority, and in fact has moved up to the No. 1 priority in Alberta. Now there is no action. Suddenly, when funds become available, they are all spent in Liberal ridings.

How can the Minister justify that kind of action? Clearly it is an abuse of Canada Post for partisan purposes. It is an abuse of the power of the Government. It is certainly something that aggravates Canadians very much. If we look at the whole program we find that there was \$184 million in the program. A mere \$1.3 million of that ended up being spent in the Province of Alberta. Clearly, the Government has been very partisan in its administration of the program. It is no wonder that Albertans have not bothered to return a Liberal to the House. I doubt that they will for a very long time to come. They are sick and tired of this kind of partisan approach which the Government has used in handling government programs that are supposedly meant for the benefit of all Canadians.

I want to close my remarks by saying that we on this side of the House are extremely angered with the Government for doing that. We do not think the Minister can justify it in any honest or sincere way. The only thing we are left to believe is that it was done for partisan purposes and not in the best interests of the country, that it was an abuse of taxpayers' money to use it in such a partisan fashion.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Guy Dubois (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Peace River (Mr. Cooper) rose in this House on February 22, the day after the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) tabled an exhaustive list of the 50,000 job-creation projects funded by this government during the last two years. On this occasion, the Hon. Member raised the matter of the money spent by Canada Post under the Special Employment Initiatives Program, attempting to demonstrate that post office capital projects had been poorly distributed.

However, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Peace River carefully omitted to make any serious analysis of this government's huge job-creation efforts and especially of the 50,000 projects that were implemented in all parts of this country.

Since the Hon. Member chose not to talk about it I would like to remind him that this government spent \$2.5 billion for job creation in a two-year period through the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, that is, more than \$1.2 billion in 1983-84 and almost \$1.3 billion in 1984-85. Moreover, within the special recovery projects aimed at stimulating the economy and creating jobs, which are funded by several departments, and within various existing government programs, this government will spend another \$2.4 billion during fiscal years 1983-84 and 1984-85.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify a few points regarding the questions raised by the Hon. Member for Peace River concerning the so-called huge sums spent in Liberal ridings through the Canada Post Corporation. Canada Post was