

Supply

The member raised the comparison with a seed. Before getting into this position I used to grow my own vegetables so I know how a tiny seed can grow into a very large plant. In this case, although the government may have the intention of planting a seed and having it grow, we all know in our hearts that it is not going to work. There may be the occasional good program that comes out of this but there are plenty of examples already. I made a statement in this House about this a few days ago. There are already many examples of where this infrastructure program is being used for political rewards: private boxes in stadiums and things that do not contribute to the overall benefit of society.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Madam Speaker, I have a couple of comments and a question for the hon. member from Vancouver.

I do not think we Liberals need to take any lessons from the Reform Party when it comes to small business. We realize how important small and medium sized businesses are to the economy. It has been said many times and I will repeat it here. Small and medium sized companies have produced about 85 per cent of the new jobs in this country in the past few years. They are an important segment of the economy.

I would warn the hon. member from Vancouver to be careful in his simplicity about reducing taxation. I know that taxation is sensitive and one can take taxation too far with respect to business. In many cases we have taken it too far. When he uses the Hong Kong example, I can come back with the example of the United States of America which has an unemployment rate of about 6.5 per cent. It sounds good at the surface but there is an enormous price to pay for that because of their inability to distribute wealth in any reasonable way. The United States of America has an enormous problem when it comes to poverty. Poverty turns into disaster. There is the matter of crime in the United States. It is directly attributable to poverty.

When the hon. member talks about taxation he should also be very mindful about distribution of wealth or does he not care about the distribution of wealth? Would he just leave it to the marketplace and all of its inherent injustices?

Mr. White (North Vancouver): Madam Speaker, since I have to be brief I will only make a comment on the distribution of wealth.

It is well known that if one took 100 per cent of the income from all of the people who earn more than \$100,000 a year and gave it all to the poor, they would get a couple of hundred dollars each. What use is it taking money off people with high taxes on this pretext of redistributing wealth? It does not work.

• (1520)

Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Good afternoon, Madam Speaker. I extend my congratulations on your

Speakership. This is my first opportunity when Madam Speaker was in the chair to say that and I wanted to very much.

Now I want to do some other things. My good friend from Mercier brings before this House a resolution. Let me say something else, Madam Speaker, that as long winded as I love to be, I am going to be all of 10 minutes because my good friend from Durham is going to follow me for the second 10 minutes of our 20 minute period.

My friend from Mercier would have the House deplore the government's lack of vision and lack of concrete measures relating to job creation policies.

I say to her that is a marvellous resolution. It is certainly grammatically correct. All the words are in the right place. It is procedurally correct. It is in the correct form for the House. It is certainly politically correct. That is what an opposition normally does. It says that it is not good enough, we want more.

Procedural, political and grammatical are three of the four litmus tests that one must always apply to any resolution before this Chamber. The fourth is whether the motion is substantively correct. Is it correct in substance?

My friend from North Vancouver as always is in the Chamber. He is nodding so vociferously I have a feeling he has something going with the member for Mercier. He must have written the resolution. He is pleased with the wording in the resolution and annoyed at me for suggesting it might not be absolutely letter perfect.

How gracious do you want me to be? I have already conceded that it is at least three parts correct, so we are 75 per cent of the way there.

Let us look at the other 25 per cent. Is it correct in substance? By analogy I say to her you can lament the poverty of a rich man, but that does not render him poor. You can cry in your beer about the low alcoholic content of your beverage, it will dilute the beer, but otherwise will not prove your overall thesis.

The smart thing to do, I say to the member, before rushing out to deplore, to lament or to cry in your beer is to analyse the beer, find out what it is you are about to deplore, and satisfy yourself that you know what you are talking about before you begin deploring it, let alone talk about it.

What are some of the cold hard facts? There are several, but there is a word in this motion, I love it, vision. Vision connotes something down the road. It suggests that somebody back there had some perception of what ought to be or what might be and so you say to yourself: "Who's the author of this resolution". Ostensibly it is the member for Mercier, my good friend, but just possibly it is her House leader.