

*The Economy*

we live in an advanced democracy, it is impossible to consider going back to such practices in Canada. Nothing short of a marxist regime could force Canada to destroy the work of past generations. However, the government cannot be commended for one million unemployed, not to mention all those on welfare. When you realize that almost half of the unemployed are young people between 18 and 30, this is quite demoralizing. It is urgent to take strong action to get these young people on the labour market. They were led to believe in a great future, provided they completed their schooling and graduated, only to find doors closing on them, now that they are trying to enter the labour market.

The problem facing young people is a crucial one, Mr. Speaker, because not only are they rejected but they were fooled. About a hundred of them must have filed through my office recently not knowing where to turn. At the Quebec Construction Federation, which is controlled by union leaders, they were told that there was no work for them because there are plenty of workers in all fields. These young people had job offers in their pockets, Mr. Speaker, yet they could not get the working permit issued by the Quebec Construction Federation. On the one hand, you have these hundreds of young people who want nothing better than to work, yet they are being refused this right because they cannot get the working permit required by the unions.

On the other hand, the employers want to hire these young people but they cannot because the authorities refuse to grant this famous working permit. Yet, this generation has diplomas that the older generation, today's workers, never had. What kind of society do we live in, Mr. Speaker? Do you think that young people will tolerate such rejection much longer? Never! They will not accept being turned down when employers are running after them with job offers.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe the best reform to open the door to the labour market for young people aged between 18 and 30 is to allow all workers from 60 and over who want to retire voluntarily to take old age security pension if they so wish. I have already stated in the House that the government would spend far less paying retirement benefits to that group of elderly than to support thousands of young people through unemployment or welfare benefits, for there is nothing they would like better than taking over from their elders. We find that citizens having reached retirement age do not cease to be active for our economy; on the contrary, they take a different orientation and develop other activities in areas still unexplored and likely to give a new impetus to communities those pensioners live in.

As for the young people who are to take over, they will carry on the work of their predecessors and spend their energies developing their country by introducing their own techniques for ever greater modernization. All these young people, instead of spending their days searching for work which will never

materialize and staying idle, which is something unbearable at that age, would be able to set up a household, an institution which is the basis of our democratic society and they could then carry on a normal social life. Again I say this will of course depend on the lowering of the old age pension for all Canadian citizens who have reached the age of 60.

During the last elections, Mr. Speaker, the present government received a majority mandate after having promised the population that if it were elected it would grant the right to a pension at age 60 to anyone reaching that age. We were quite convinced that the government would not break its promises. Yet once again the voters have been deceived and are very disappointed to notice that only a few spouses who are 60 years old will get that pittance because I call it a pittance, Mr. Speaker, or if you prefer alms for the poor since it is based on the income of the other spouse. I suggest that by acting this way the government has grossly and intentionally deceived the population and I can assure you that the people over 60 will not forget it. They are only waiting for an opportunity to make known their discontent and the fate they have in store for those who betray their promises.

For several years we have been asking for a true old age security pension, that is a pension which would not be based on the degree of poverty or the marital status of Canadian citizens. Let me explain: that 50 per cent pension and 50 per cent supplement based on the income of the spouses is the most unfair and sneaky formula ever devised to discriminate against those who have toiled all their life to save a few dollars or collect a little annuity. If we were to grant full pension to all citizens who are 60 and over, we would thereby make substantial savings by eliminating thousands of civil servants. If we give these senior citizen a full pension there would be no need for inquiries. It would be just like a family allowance, and it would be the birth date which would determine when the cheques are to start being sent out.

And this way we would get rid of the thousands of civil servants whose job it is to go and search in the old folks homes like police investigators to check whether or not a pensioner has a few hundred dollars hidden in a wool sock or under his mattress. Imagine the millions of dollars that would be saved if tomorrow all auditing offices were to disappear with their hundreds of thousands of over-paid civil servants simply because in the future only a birth certificate would be required to issue cheques to everyone 60 years of age. No more searches, no more discrimination, no more possible injustices and even less favouritism.

Pensioners who end up with no income at 60 would get their full share of the cake and would suffer no injustice, as they would receive their full pension without even an investigation. As I said, retiring at 60, on full pension, would not be mandatory. Those who managed to put together a few hundred dollars for their old days would then have an additional income on top of their pension. They would have to file their income