

Supply

Mr. Keeper: And he goes on reshuffling existing funds. When we look closely at some of the announcements we find this. In one he has said there will be a \$200 million effort. That was \$200 million for job creation. When we look closely, what we find is that there is only \$20 million in there which had to do with direct job creation, one tenth of the figure announced.

A couple of weeks later, he made another \$200 million announcement with regard to mining and forestry. When we examined that closely, we found there was only some 50 million new dollars in that package over a two-year period. These are inflated announcements. They are attempts by the government to set up a smokescreen behind which it can hide so that it does not have to face the economic realities which ordinary Canadians have to face in their day to day lives.

But this is not the end of these public relations gimmicks. Yesterday the Minister of Employment and Immigration held a national conference on work-sharing in which he was expressing his enthusiasm and his feelings that work-sharing was a success. That is like saying that unemployment insurance is a success because there are so many people on it. The fact that people need help is a demonstration of the failure of the economic policies of the government, and not of their success.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Keeper: The work-sharing, using the minister's own figures, has been able to help 13,600 people to retain their jobs. Well, I am sure that for those 13,600 individuals that is a welcome measure, but for the other real, though not official, two million Canadians who remain unemployed, it is a pitiful response, inadequate and insensitive. It is simply a public relations gesture, it is not an economic response, it is not a compassionate response; it is an attempt to use the media to protect the government from the anger of Canadians at a time when that anger is justified.

Mr. de Jong: Right on.

Mr. Keeper: While we have the Minister of Finance making his philosophical statements and the minister of employment engaging in his public relations exercises, what is going on in the economy, what is happening in Canada? Well, if we look at it closely, Mr. Speaker, we can see quite clearly what is happening. I am going to quote from some objective sources. I will quote from *The Globe and Mail* of Tuesday, April 6, 1982. The picture that we find is that Canada is suffering from the worst economic crisis since 1947. The Conference Board of Canada recently did a survey of the findings of economic forecasters. I quote from *The Globe and Mail*:

Canada is gripped by what is probably the worst recession since 1947 and unemployment will remain at near record levels for the rest of the year, according to a survey of 18 economic forecasters.

The report in *The Globe and Mail* goes on to say:

The Conference Board of Canada survey found most forecasters much more pessimistic about 1982's economic rate and unemployment prospects than they were last fall yet no more hopeful about the chances for bringing down inflation.

The significance of that last phrase is that every action by this government is justified in the name of fighting inflation. Clearly, inflation is not going down, their policies are not working, so why do they not re-examine them and why do they not consider the people who need work now?

It is not only the Conference Board of Canada that draws this picture of the economy for us. We go to a government agency, Statistics Canada. They indicate quite clearly that there is no end in sight to the recession in the following statement:

There is still no end in sight for the current economic recession, according to the government's chief statistical agency. In fact, the few indicators that surfaced in last month's report suggesting that the economy might improve have practically vanished.

I go on to some solutions they suggest:

One way the government could pull the economy out of the recession is by lowering the value of the dollar hence making exports more competitive on the world markets.

A little further on, report says:

The Bank of Canada has warned that it will not relent on its tight money policy, that it will not allow the dollar to decline, it has pushed up its lending rate slightly to 15.40 per cent from 15.32 per cent.

They are not willing to accept or consider changes in policy but they are willing to push up the interest rates and thereby up the inflation rate and thereby put more people on the unemployment rolls.

It is not just the members of this party here who are drawing a gloomy picture of the economy. It is objective agencies of the government and the community who point out that we are in an economic crisis. But is this economic crisis one that is as the Minister of Finance described it, an international crisis under which we have no influence or no control? Must it always be and is it an act of God? Is it an act of fate? Is it an historical inevitability? Must we continue in this sea of troubles with no hope for relief?

We probably must, if we share the economic philosophy of the government, if we believe, as the government seems to believe, in an unregulated free market economy.

I believe somewhat differently, Mr. Speaker. I believe in a mixed economy but I also believe that the government can take hold of the economy, can make the economy serve the needs of the people and can provide employment. That is not only a philosophical position that I take in saying that, it is also a philosophical posture that can be translated into practical proposals.

I want to refer to a comprehensive proposal that was made by the leader of our party recently, which is described as "a new employment option for Canada". There are five parts to it. Quite simply, it is a practical, humane suggestion to the government as to how we can get the economy moving again and get Canadians back to work. I will describe it fairly briefly and quickly, but I would like to get the essence of it across to the government so that it can realize that it is possible to do something about the economy and to do something now.

The first point focuses upon the domestic Canadian economy and really says that what we have to do in Canada is be