

*Government Orders*

I received a call from a nurse in a hospital suggesting that the number of cases of malnourished babies in our hospitals is growing. It took time to find out why. What was the problem? It was found and proved that parents of babies of underprivileged families, through no fault of their own, are forced to cut corners. One way to cut corners is rather than buying very expensive formula for their children, they dilute Carnation Milk and say: "I hope that this will do the trick for our children". It does not.

What a condemnation of our system if we cannot provide the basic food for children in our country. That at this point in time is not addressed and I suspect it cannot be addressed. I was in China. What most impressed me about that country that has, I believe, 7 per cent arable land and 1.14 billion people was that, as far as I could see, everyone ate. I could not see people going hungry. We did see a lot of that country. Yet in Canada babies are going hungry. That is a condemnation certainly of the system. Bill C-32 will only exacerbate the problem.

We have talked about timing. This along with Bill C-21, the changes in UI, the clawback on family allowance and pensions, the attack on medicare that we are only too aware of, all of these factors are happening at the same time, which puts a tremendous load on the system. As I have said before, unless we co-operate, unless we get this country back to work, the problems will only continue and get worse.

May I talk about something that is difficult to talk about, which is mental illness in this country, something that is elusive, but we know it is out there and growing. When people are distressed economically, they are distressed mentally.

In my community, depression not only means economic depression. It means mental depression. The suicide rate has increased dramatically among young people. This will not be addressed by attacking the deficit. Attacking the deficit will not make people feel better. People have given up hope. There is no hope. They cannot see the government participating in the rehabilitation and reactivation of the economy.

Certainly there are ideas out there. If we can put people back to work, that despair will subside and hope will come forward. I think the best idea is this public works project. The FCM agrees with it. They initiated it. George Bush, that right winger, even says it is a great

idea. Our Prime Minister says that it is a silly idea. Once again, when everyone thinks it is a great idea, the Prime Minister describes it as silly.

Obviously we are on a course that we cannot continue to follow. We can restructure an economy. We can restructure businesses, all with difficulty. We can restructure industry, as we will have to do in my community with Algoma Steel. We can restructure the responsibilities, although it begs co-operation. We can restructure the debt. We can do all of this with great difficulty, but we can do it.

But we cannot restructure people's lives. We cannot restructure families. We cannot restructure educational opportunities without a loss of opportunity for the people and the country. We cannot restructure medical services without mental and physical pain. Restructuring is the buzz word, and they say that we have to do it. We realize that, but you cannot restructure people. It is impossible, but it is happening. Families are being forced to restructure in ways that fly against what is human nature. We cannot restructure people's feelings when they are down. They will remain down unless there are changes in what the governments of the country are doing. They see no change. "We are staying the course", says the federal government, "We are staying the course, despite what is happening around us". It says, "We understand". Well if it understands then bring about change and Bill C-32 does not bring anything to us.

• (1050)

I have said it before, it cuts and it cuts and it cuts, and it cuts some more, and then it says "we are wrestling inflation to the ground". But if the country is wrestled to the ground, if it wrestles the manufacturing base to the ground, if it wrestles people's hopes to the ground, when it is finished with all of the things that have been done in the name of policy, what benefits it and what benefits the country if at the end of it there is nothing there?

It can say, "Well, we went through with our policy and it is the only policy that we know". But what are the benefits when there is nothing left at the end of the exercise? It benefits no one.

I beg the government to get off this course because the country is asking you, imploring you. It goes from begging and asking and imploring to one of great anger and cynicism. So it is time to stop staying the course and do something to address the problems, and we can only address the problems together.