

Supply

ministry he serves, that we generally wait until people are unemployed before we make these programs available to them. It does not seem to make sense, so let me propose another idea that has been used in countries of northern and western Europe that might be of value here in Canada. One of those ideas is paid educational leave.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, a story that was told to me by the principal of the College of New Caledonia in Prince George when I went to visit him a few years ago. He said that they had a meeting between the pulp and paper workers of the pulp industry in Prince George and pulp and paper workers who had come from the Scandinavian countries of Sweden, Norway, and Finland. They had meetings. They went through the mills in Prince George. They took a look at the equipment at which the people were working and the machinery with which people were working. They took a look at the amenities that were available to workers here, the payment rates and the programs that were available to workers here. At the end of this visit the Scandinavian workers sat down with the Canadian workers and the principal of the College of New Caledonia asked them to be perfectly frank about what they felt was right and wrong about the Canadian pulp and paper industry.

One thing that the Scandinavian workers mentioned about Canadian workers was that they could not understand how people with such low level of education could survive in such a high technology industry involved in competition world-wide and that has some of the highest technology in terms of the equipment they use in that industry.

It was a fact, and I think if you analyse the workforce across Canada you will find that education levels in our workforce are much lower than they are in places like northern and western Europe where paid educational leave is encouraged.

I was listening to the member for Burlington when he talked about the fact that he was training his own workforce. He was worried that people who took the training in his workforce would then be snapped up by other employers. That is a problem. I think that is one of the reasons why the government should share with industry in paying for paid educational leave.

One thing that is going to happen is that many people may take the training they have always wanted to take in order to make a career change so that they do not have to go back to work in the same industry. You can understand, Mr. Speaker, that if a person is working in an industry he does not want to work in he is not going to be as productive as if he does make a career change, gets the required education, and goes on to work in an industry where he feels he will be more productive and wants to make a greater contribution.

On the other hand, everybody who leaves the workforce in order to take advantage of that paid educational leave will create a vacancy for others, younger people who want to move in. I think that is the value of paid educational leave. It creates employment for people who do move into the industry. In addition, it expands our education system and it makes our education system responsive to the needs of industry and to the needs of our workforce.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to participate in this debate. I thank the member for Etobicoke North for presenting this motion. I certainly hope that the government will take my positive suggestions to heart and that we can improve the employment in this country by listening to those suggestions.

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): I will be dividing my time with the member for Ottawa West. In the few minutes that I have, Mr. Speaker, I would like you to think back with me to a couple of days ago. I was sitting at home—one of the rare occasions I had—and I happened to catch one of the American League play-off games when Boston edged out the Blue Jays. There was quite a pitchers' duel going on. We got into the eighth inning and before we knew it Boston had been blown away. Their bull pen was not up to the task of facing the hitters from Oakland.

I could not help but think as I sat there watching how that game went that what we are seeing in Canada today is that pitching-catching duo that the government has put up of the Minister of Finance as pitcher and John Crow, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, as catcher. They are just letting the economy drive them out of the game.

The Minister of Finance has a few pitches that he likes to throw. He has a fast-ball. That is his deficit reduction pitch. He has a curve ball. That is his tax reform pitch. He has a spit-ball. That is the GST pitch. Now some of them have got past a few of the batters, but lately he has been getting hit. His fast-ball, his deficit reduction pitch,