

● (4:00 p.m.)

I was listening to the hon. member for Sainte-Marie (Mr. Valade), as he suggested various kinds of solutions, while blaming the government for its lack of imagination. But truly, after listening to those so-called solutions we could well wonder who is more unimaginative. We were told: Well, students should be helped to get jobs. The government was also asked: What is your program, what is being done for the students' future?

They said that some provinces were more affected than others, they urged the government to reduce immigration—which is a new task for the opposition—to have a selective policy in that field and to adapt it to our present needs.

They pointed out that companies were hiring American students instead of Canadian students and that the handicapped were not taken into account by the manpower centres.

Let us reconsider those criticisms and those proposals, one after the other.

The first proposal: What program does the government intend to launch for student employment? I suggest to the hon. member for Sainte-Marie that he would have found it profitable to be here on Friday last, when the question was debated and to read the speech of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen) in which he answered the same objections.

Moreover, we must remember—the minister pointed it out last Friday—that the program last year met all the same with considerable success, if we consider that 93 per cent of the applicants found jobs and earned \$300 million during the holidays. This year, we agree that the conditions will be much more difficult, but we also have a more elaborate program which will enable us, I hope, to sensitize the population to the necessity of finding summer employment for our young people.

Let us remember that 75 per cent of the jobs are to be found in the private sector, corporations and firms. Last year, the government carried out alone this important summer job program. This year it has the help of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and of its president, Mr. Scrivener. They have launched Operation Placement with a great deal of fanfare, making all employers in the commercial and industrial fields aware of the problem. We hope that, in spite of a 10 per cent increase in the number of students on the labour market, we will have the same success.

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It is however important to make it clearly understood that the federal government carries out its share of the responsibilities, but that it cannot hire more than 5 per cent of the students on the labour market. The provinces can and must also play their part and should hire about 14 per cent, the municipalities 7 per cent and, I repeat, the private sector about three-fourths.

It must be understood that everyone must support this vast program in order to ensure that our young people, who in some cases could not otherwise pursue their studies, will earn some money during their holidays, and as a result also regain confidence in the future of their country. We are promoting a much more valuable cause than trying solely to depreciate the Canadian government now in power in the minds of young people.

I therefore think that this program will succeed as expected, that the hon. member for Sainte-Marie is really left behind by that suggestion and that we could return the ball to him and say that he lacks imagination in this proposal.

Secondly, what is done to provide for their future? Needless to say that the hon. member is referring to a provincial field of jurisdiction, education, and that nevertheless we want to make every effort possible on the labour market. And we did not lack imagination since our manpower program is one of the most progressive, one of the most forward-looking in the world. We admit that much remains to be done, but we do intend also to make all the necessary effort in order to succeed.

An amount of \$250 million is made available to workers in this regard, for retraining purposes, for the opening of job opportunities. This program gives evidence not only of fine words in this field, but also of a sincere desire to act and to achieve something.

It is pointed out that some provinces and regions are more affected than others, and I can but agree with the hon. member on that. Because it is really a particular problem in Canada, that is in the underprivileged areas, it is a problem that is very frustrating for the young people and one that concerns them greatly. All departments, but especially the Department of Regional Economic Expansion ought to help find a solution to these problems.

As for the suggestion to the effect that we should reduce immigration and have a selective policy that fits our present needs, it is