

● (1540)

I suggest that it is that kind of action which undermines the viability of the Canadian manufacturing sector. It is that kind of action which makes it possible for that young woman, 13 years old, to speak with such feeling about the effect of a company lay-off on her family. That kind of action does not require sorrow or sympathy. It is the kind of action which requires immediate attention.

This government has absolutely no plan. It has no strategy. It has no vision of Canada. The government does not even have an understanding of the greatness or the potential of this country. Where else in the world would one find a country with resources like ours? Where else in the world would one find a country which has unused manufacturing capacity in excess of 20 per cent? Where else would one find a group of employees laid off in such a vast number, which now exceeds one million? If one would take into account hidden unemployment, the number of unemployed is probably close to 1.4 million, Canadians who should be working, who want to be working, who have been out in the work force looking for jobs, knocking on doors, trying to provide for their families. Where else would you find all of the natural benefits that this country has? Canada, relatively speaking, is self-sufficient in energy; it has the ability to harness its energy, together with its resources and people, to build employment opportunities and a better life for everyone. Where else would you find neglect of such resources? There is no other place. Given that these resources could be mismanaged in the way they have by years of Liberal government and a brief interlude of Tory government, just for seasoning, one wonders just where we are going.

I was looking at some devastating statistics for the first half of last year which show that, in the province of Ontario, 130,000 people were laid off; people were being laid off at the rate of 1,000 for each working day. When we brought this to the attention of the government, the government shrugged. I mean, after all, what could they do? It said: "Well, we'll do the best we can. We'll make some temporary, makeshift work programs. We'll throw a few dollars into each constituency. We'll hire a few people." But did the government bring forward an over-all strategy? Did it do anything about the bank profit margin, the ever-increasing interest rates which undermine consumer purchasing, and the very manufacturing sector which was laying these people off? No, there was just an apology.

The number of people on indefinite lay-off reads like a "Who's Who" in terms of the municipalities of the province of Ontario. In Brantford 750 people were laid off in July; in Chatham-Sarnia, 2,440 people; in Hamilton, 275; in the Kitchener area, 2,950 people; in London-Stratford, 450 people; in Montreal and Quebec—to go outside of Ontario—485 people; in Niagara-St. Catharines, 2,700 people. In northern Ontario, another 115 people; in Oakville, 2,130 people; in Oshawa, 1,320 people. Ottawa-Kingston might interest some hon. members; there were 415 people laid off. These are indefinite lay-offs. In Toronto, 10,335 people were on indefi-

### *Unemployment*

nite lay-off in July of 1980. Most of them have not yet been recalled to work. In Woodstock, 500 people were laid off.

One must ask oneself, how can it be in this country that these statistics are staring us right in the face yet the government can sit and talk about its Constitution? How can it be, with statistics like this and the people of this country suffering as they are, that the government can fail to come forward with an economic program which would make some sense and stimulate consumer purchasing power to allow for a regeneration of the desires and the hopes the people?

I want to relate the most recent statistics, those which dealt with the first half of last year. In *The Financial Post* dated April 11, 1981, under the normal categories for measuring progress in the economy, average weekly earnings were down from the previous month from \$329.37 to \$324.97. That means that purchasing power went down. However, the consumer price index in February went from 224.1 to 226.4. Bank loans in February went from 96.80 to 98.57. Housing starts were down from 179 to 177. The all-industry output shows a marginal increase of .2 per cent. The labour force increased .08 per cent. Then one finds that manufacturing capacity usage—taking into account how much we produce and how much of our capacity we are using—has gone down this year to 79.9 per cent from 84.3 per cent last year at this same time. Why? Because the very things I am talking about—consumer purchasing power, the ability of people to go into the marketplace and buy, their wages, every measurable item—are under pressure. There is less being manufactured and less manufacturing capacity being used.

I note with interest that in the month of January manufacturing shipments were down 2.2 per cent; new orders were down 3.5 per cent; inventory was up .8 per cent—all of these facts speaking to an even worsening economic situation in this country and to even greater numbers of people being unemployed.

Where is the government's program? The Tories suggest we shuffle the cabinet. I must ask you, Mr. Speaker, do you not think that in this country it is possible to take advantage of what we have inherited, of what we have by virtue of the strength of the country itself? Surely it is possible for us to take advantage of that and build a society which is second to none. Surely it is possible to harness our energy and other resources, take advantage of industrial capacity, build a nation in which everyone will be able to have a job and where no child will ever have to say what the young child I have quoted said.

I look at plant closings in the province of Ontario in the year 1980. They occurred in every community: Beach Foundry in Ottawa; Bendix in Windsor; Canada Ferro in Brampton; Chrysler in Windsor; Crown Fab in Oakville; Essex Wire in Dunnville; Firestone in Whitby; Ford (Engines) in Windsor; Gabriel in Orangeville; Houdaille in Oshawa; Rockwell in Parry Sound—the same Rockwell I mentioned, incidentally, only a little while ago; Sealed Power in Stratford; Vulcan Equipment in Fergus; Winchester Western in Cobourg. And it goes on and on; one could read for 20 minutes and still not come to the end of the list. We are supposed to feel sympathy