

The Address—Mr. MacLellan

In my constituency the Government has cancelled a \$2.1 million program which was the decentralization of the income security office, a move from Halifax to Sydney. This was an office with a potential of 75 to 85 jobs. These jobs were coming from an area in Nova Scotia which certainly needs jobs—everybody needs jobs—an area with one of the lower unemployment rates in the country, and the jobs were going to an area in my constituency which has, by Manpower's own admission, an unemployment rate of over 30 per cent. This decentralization was planned, the leasehold accommodation was renovated at a cost of \$400,000, and over \$1 million has already been spent on this decentralization from Halifax to Sydney. People were trained. People were taken from other jobs. People gave up other jobs. They stopped looking. They turned down other job opportunities to be part of the work force of Incomes Security that was going to be operating in the City of Sydney.

What kind of treatment is that for people? What kind of way is that to treat Canadians? Not only are these people unemployed, not only can they not get back the jobs they had, not only will they not have the other job opportunities they turned down, but, because there is the possibility lurking that decentralization will go ahead when the government changes again in four years time, the people who worked for Incomes Security in Halifax who now have other jobs will not go back to the Income Security office when it re-opens in Halifax. This means more retraining. You have to take other people and retrain them for the office when it re-opens in Halifax. What sense does that make?

There is also an unemployment factor that results. The people who would have had the jobs in Sydney, a higher unemployment area, are unemployed. Without the economic stimulus in this area which this office could provide the natural economic spin-offs are no longer present.

What is the reason for this cancellation Mr. Speaker? The reason is political, of course. There is a political ideology at the back of this particular decision. It is important to look at what is being done. This Government is denying areas, such as mine, job opportunities and the chance to develop themselves.

If there is to be growth in the private sector or in the public sector, you either have people who will voluntarily choose to locate in these sectors, or the Government has to provide directives in the placing of companies in these regions. Which will it be? If the Government is asking for jobs to be created through the public and private sectors then it has to create an economic environment which will be conducive to this happening in areas of regional disparity.

● (1550)

What is happening? Nothing. What has been planned in these areas is now being cancelled. Initiative for regional development is being removed by the Government. The services have to be there. Subsidies to VIA Rail are being cut back. CN Marine is a vital link in Atlantic Canada between various provinces. It has been cut back substantially. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) is now saying that

there will be a reduction of 300 jobs in the next five years. This will be in addition to the 1,000 jobs lost in my area alone. When the Government is asked where these 300 jobs will come from it cannot tell us. It is really promoting a name in the hat economic policy. It says that 300 jobs will be cut back but it cannot tell us from where. It is not saying that the subsidy of \$6 million provided to a private sector shipper, Atlantic Container Express, to operate direct water service between Montreal and Newfoundland will not be renewed when it expires at the end of March. We have the possibility of a subsidy to a private shipper to ship between Montreal and Newfoundland at the same time as a complaint about the subsidy to CN Marine, which is higher because of the subsidy being paid to the private sector. In both cases there is a higher subsidy through this name-in-the-hat economic policy of the Department of Transport. Also the Government indicated that the capital investment program for dredging will be cancelled.

In addition to cutting back jobs and destroying potential for economic growth, which is time consuming enough, it is now saying that the people in these areas who are undergoing severe economic hardship will now be faced with a social housing budget reduced by \$9.6 million and a Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program reduced by 25 per cent. These people have to maintain their homes. They are on low incomes, are unemployed, and some are senior citizens. Not only will there be reduced employment in low-income areas, but these people will be told that they will be unable to maintain their homes during the period of time when the Government says it is vehemently searching for job opportunities. Not only will there be an erosion of economic possibilities, there will also be an erosion of infrastructure and social and residential aspects in these particular areas.

What about students? The Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) realizes that students need summer work, yet she cancelled the \$85 million Summer Canada program. She said that would be replaced but she does not say how; she did not say by how much or when. Even now students are looking for summer jobs. The Government says that jobs have to be created through the private and public sectors. Now it is telling students in Atlantic Canada and elsewhere in the country that if their parents are not wealthy, and they cannot obtain jobs through the private and public sector, then they cannot return to college. What kind of way is that to treat university students? What kind of investment in the future of our country is that? To make it worse, the Canada Student Loans Program has been reduced by \$5 million. A program must be put forward for students who are now faced with the next academic year without the prospects of the employment they enjoyed for this academic year.

The Government indicated in the economic statement that it will commit an extra \$1 billion to job opportunities through the private and public sectors. At the same time it reduced the employment assistance entitlement by \$200 million. It is also reducing the mobility program of CECI by \$2.8 million. The Government is not only saying that Canadians cannot work, but they cannot fix their homes or maintain the infrastructures