

LIP program, its LEAP program, its OFY and so on, but it has not operated these in a serious, broad and consistent attack on unemployment. It has used these as political ploys too often manipulated for partisan purposes. These have never been part of a serious mass campaign against unemployment. The programs they have permitted and which we are discussing today reflect this. They bear no consistent relationship to national unemployment or to the needs of this country.

Now we are getting a new approach. Instead of the 4 per cent unemployment which some ten years ago was considered by the government and by members of the Economic Council to be full employment—or as the Economic Council said in 1965, 3 per cent—now we are given the rationale that probably 6 per cent unemployment is full employment. Why? Because there are two members of a family working, as if people work only because they want to, as if they do not work in order to buy a house in these days when two incomes are required to meet the mortgage payments with an interest rate of around 12 per cent.

We believe, and have outlined on many occasions, that this country can and must have full employment. I think the lesson of the election of yesterday is that the people of Quebec will not stand for unemployment of 10 per cent or more, and that is what forced them to vote for a party with which they do not agree on a very fundamental issue, the question of a separate status for Quebec.

We believe that if the country is to be kept together and is to meet the needs of the Canadian people, is to do the things which are required to make life comfortable and enjoyable for all the people of this country, we must adopt programs which will insure full employment, not just full employment in the city of Toronto, the city of Hamilton, but also in the Maritimes, in Quebec, and in the inter-lake area of Manitoba. We believe this can and should be done and we believe this government has completely misunderstood the needs and desires of the Canadian people. We believe the government must change its course. I suggest that if it wants to survive politically it must change course very quickly of its fate will be that suffered by its party in Quebec yesterday.

● (2130)

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, in making a number of comments on the contents of Bill C-19 I want to show members of the House that for all intents and purposes this bill is another cosmetic approach by the government to cover up what has become a long standing problem between the government and the Canadian people, that is, that this government is correctly perceived by the Canadian taxpayers as having become in the last years the spender of the public purse to such a degree that it has completely lost control of the amounts of money that are being spent. Now that the government is preaching restraint one can almost compare it to a drunken sailor trying to preach temperance.

The government has not committed itself to a restraint program on government spending, but rather it has committed itself to doing something about its perceptual problem, that is,

Restraint of Government Expenditures

the perception which exists among Canadians that the government has lost control over its spending. The government does not want to stop spending, although it may make slight modifications in it, and it wants to continue on the path which it has set for itself, but it hopes that the Canadian people will not perceive it as the high finance spender which it has turned out to be.

Let us take a look at some of the clauses in Bill C-19. First of all, let us take a look at the repeal of section 272 of the Railway Act. By repealing this section I understand the government would like to abolish the subsidy on the movement of grain and flour to ports in central and eastern Canada. In testimony before the Standing Committee on Agriculture the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) indicated that there would be a saving of approximately \$11 million. One must say that any attempt the government makes at saving money, if it is a well thought out and considered plan, must be lauded, but when you look a little further you find that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) then gave a \$9 million subsidy, which offsets the saving which the government was going to make. The irony of this is that in the cabinet they cannot agree on whether or not the section should be repealed in the first place.

The Minister of Transport wants the section repealed, but what does the Minister of Agriculture say, who supposedly should have some say in the management of the ports on the Great Lakes and the movement of grain to central and eastern Canada? In report No. 84 of the Standing Committee on Agriculture dated May 4, 1976, the Minister of Agriculture had the following to say about this bill. I should indicate that the same clause was before the House before the summer recess, but it was brought back. The Minister of Agriculture said the following at the meeting of the standing committee:

The ships will not stay loaded in the ports because it is the last run they can make in the fall, if they are down to the St. Lawrence they will not have time to get back to the lakehead to load and come into the bay port elevator. So you can rail that grain out in the winter because you will lose the subsidy on that movement of grain by rail. That amounts to about \$11 million, if I remember correctly.

The hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Towers) then said:

You are in agreement with that bill then.

And the minister replied:

No, I am not. I think it is nuts. I want to clarify that; that part on which I voiced my opinion, I think, is very wrong.

Mr. Parent: Who said that?

Mr. Epp: I hear an hon. member opposite from the province of Ontario questioning that statement. I suggest they check with the Minister of Agriculture to see whether or not he said it because it is on the record, or they could check with his executive assistant or a few other people. Who speaks for agriculture, the high flying Minister of Transport, the Minister of Agriculture, or the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald)? The point to be made is that eastern interests, farmers in Ontario and Atlantic Canada, do not want a subsidy such as has now been offered by the Minister of Transport to the flour milling industry. What they want is the retention of section 272 and the retention of at and east rates.