

*Motion Respecting House Vote*

What has this government been doing, Mr. Speaker. That program continued quite successfully until last April 30, and then the Minister of Manpower and Immigration brought in a brand new program with brand new rules. The proof of the pudding is in the eating so let us look at the results of this training program. When the minister changed the program to bring in the new rules, in Ontario there were 19,500 people who were enrolled in the training program and learning new skills to make them better able to do a job and to increase their productivity. Seven months later, after the minister had brought in his new program, you would think that the enrolment numbers would have increased by 50 per cent, or something like that. Instead we find that there was a decrease of 43 per cent in enrolment. It was down to 11,200 persons, and it is going down every day.

Enrolment is decreasing because the program is impractical. This minister does not know what he is talking about and neither do his officials. They will not listen to the Ontario authorities; they will not listen to the people who had a good program going. So the one program that can increase this country's productivity is going down the drain. That is why we have no confidence in this government; that is why we voted non-confidence the other day.

Take a look at manufacturing production, something on which we rely to a major extent to give the people of this country employment. In the 20 years between 1945 and 1965 manufacturing production increased in this country at an average of 5 per cent per year. According to the figures we have for last year, the increase last year over the year before had dropped from the average of 5 per cent a year to 1.1 per cent a year. That was one fifth of the average increase for the previous 20-year period. And what is being done by this great Department of Industry, which is spending hundreds of millions of dollars each year to do a job which was done for a fraction of that sum previously? Back in the days when the party to which I belong formed the government, we had the department of defence production, and the industry section in the Department of Trade and Commerce. We had productive industries then. Now this government has set up this fantastically expensive Department of Industry, and manufacturing production has dropped. The increase has dropped to one fifth of what it was.

We have no confidence in this government because they are mishandling the economy of the country—and this includes the employment of our people and the prosperity of the country—and are taking it downhill at an ever increasing pace.

To sell our goods we must keep our costs low; we must keep our production costs competitive. Let us look at what this government has done to our main costs of production, costs that affect the ability of Canadians to sell goods and provide jobs. First let us look at the cost of money. It is the highest in history. And why is it the highest in history? Because the cost of money is directly influenced by the rate of interest on government bonds. If the people have confidence in the government, the interest rate charged or paid on government bonds is low. If the confidence that the people have in the government is low, then the cost of the money that the government must borrow is high. Today the rate of interest charged on government bonds is the highest in the history of this country. What is the result? The cost of the money that farmers, businessmen, storekeepers and individuals need to produce their goods is the highest that it has ever been, and the rate is going up every day.

Let us look at labour costs, since these are an integral part of our costs of production. Everybody would like to see people who work for a living get a very good increase every year. The more they can get, the happier we would be. But again, whenever we price ourselves out of the market by raising our costs, our goods are not sold and there are no repeat orders. Workers are no longer employed in the factories to make more goods, and unemployment develops. So by paying higher increases in wages each year than our competitors, we are simply denying jobs to our people. It is as simple as that.

• (5:10 p.m.)

What happened last year? Due to the fiscal, economic and other policies of this government the cost of labour in Canada increased by 8.7 per cent as compared with 4.4 per cent in the United States. It is not possible to double the increase in one of our prime costs without losing sales or jobs. Why did this happen? It happened because of something this government did 18 months ago when it intervened in three labour disputes—the longshoremen's strike in Montreal, the threatened C.B.C. strike and the threatened strike on the St. Lawrence seaway. In each case they saw to it that a 30 per cent wage increase was