

*Employment Programs*

al. Indeed, it would be very interesting to see whether it would not work in the opposite direction and whether a reduction in some income taxes would not have the effect, for example, of reducing the extent that workmen feel the need to press for wage increases. Second, there is no reason to believe that by reducing taxation in this way at this time the government would be necessarily reducing its revenue prospects to any substantial extent, because if this tax reduction did have the effect of creating an appropriate climate for expansion, expansion in employment, the economy of the country would very promptly begin to generate additional revenues for this government as well as for other governments.

Then, again, there is the argument in terms of equity, of doing something in particular for those at the lower end of the income scale rather than waiting until the whole tax reform package is implemented. A reduction in taxation at this time, is, I think, a step well worth taking, well calculated to produce expansion, not calculated to create inflationary pressures. It might very well work in the opposite direction. It is quite consistent with any cooling off that the government might feel necessary in the future. Let us see the government establish a better forecasting system if they are going to talk about cooling things off again. It is obvious that they started to cool things off too late and it is equally obvious that they have cooled things off for too long.

The measures I have suggested today, including an efficient forecasting system, are intended to help out in this area. As regards the immediate problem, I agree with the hon. member for York South that the provinces should be called together. Every municipal and provincial government has projects on its books that have been deferred simply because of budgetary considerations. They could put them into effect very quickly.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) but I do so to advise him that the time limit fixed by special order today has expired. Is there unanimous agreement to allow the Leader of the Opposition to continue?

**Some hon. Members:** Carry on.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I am reluctant to do that, Mr. Speaker. I will just say a few words more. A special order has been passed and I do not think I should speak longer. I think I made my point. Although I have not been able to end up with the proper flourish, I will defer that.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Charles-Eugène Dionne (Kamouraska):** Mr. Speaker—

[*English*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I beg the minister's pardon. It was my understanding that the spokesmen for the opposition parties would speak first. However, since the minister is on his feet, I will recognize him.

[Mr. Stanfield.]

**Mr. Benson:** Mr. Speaker, I am quite willing to listen to the hon. member for Kamouraska (Mr. Dionne) if he wishes to speak at this time.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Dionne:** Mr. Speaker, the motion now under consideration is, in my opinion, most important. Unemployment in Canada has reached such an alarming rate that it is useless to make provocative comparisons and try to establish facts with statistics which do not always reflect the real situation, since a great number of unemployed are not registered with Manpower Centre offices.

To undertake to prove, by juggling with figures, that there were more unemployed in 1970 than in 1969 or by going back to 1960, 1962 or 1963 to show that the number of unemployed was higher under another government will not solve the problem.

I have heard so many sterile speeches on this matter in the House that I have come to the conclusion that though figures probably do not lie, there are surely liars who juggle with them since there are always contradictions in this regard, depending on who is in power and who is in the opposition.

Thousands are unemployed in Canada and we must endeavour to find the means to reduce the demoralizing effects of that social evil.

During the depression from 1929 to 1939, those of my age realized that the governments were unable to solve the problem. Various plans were tried out: welfare, a type of concentration camp where people were paid 20 cents a day. The workers protested against the use of machines, mechanical shovels and others, which took away the work they wanted to do. And so, our administrators, Grits and Tories alike, proved their incompetence to a population that remained patient and courageous in spite of it all.

Their numerous study sessions only resulted in the adoption by the Canadian Parliament of the Unemployment Insurance Act, which went against the theories of the champions of full employment. The enactment of such legislation has helped many workers and has created employment for some officials—who could do better sometimes—to whom it was explained that their job was to help the unemployed faced with problems, which justified their full time employment.

The motion under study recommends that the unemployment benefits should be increased and the eligibility period extended. This is logical, considering the present situation. However, being aware of the mentality of the public service within the present financial system, which enjoys discretionary powers, I can imagine the groans that will come from those who seem to be commissioned to protect the fund before the unemployed.

Let us hope that they will show more realism in front of the present alarming situation.

It will no doubt be answered that the new legislation is still being studied and that it will not take effect before several months. This is no reason to delay a decision called for by the circumstances. Besides, the act has often been modified since it came into force.