

Adjournment Debate

much as the man who did not. Some provinces have different plans for crop insurance. Some have a no bare land type of policy. If there is no planting, that is available for farmers. Some are using it here.

The hon. member made reference to those people who over a long period of time have found PFAA essential. PFAA was established a long time ago to serve a specific need. It served that need well, but times have changed and now PFAA is no longer adequate. I urge the hon. member to study the benefits of crop insurance. I am sure he will come to the conclusion that it gives much more protection than PFAA. The hon. member has already stated this. I quote again from the press release:

Crop insurance is available in all of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Peace River area of British Columbia. Only in Alberta are there areas without crop insurance and where PFAA will be available in 1973.

● (2210)

The hon. member can rest assured that no prairie farmer has been left without protection unless he himself so wishes. The fund, to which contributions have been made by the people of Canada, since the national treasury contributes to it, will be used in the most proper fashion to help those in greatest need.

MANPOWER—POSSIBLE UNIFICATION OF LOCAL INITIATIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT

Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton-Strathcona): Mr. Speaker, on July 5 I asked the Secretary of State (Mr. Faulkner) whether he would explain to the House the criteria which are being used in arriving at a decision about the Opportunities for People program which the minister had previously said the government was contemplating as a merger of LIP and OFY.

The minister did not give a full answer to the question I asked, so I am returning to the subject tonight. I do so because it is one which merits far greater examination in the House than we have so far given it. Both programs are now multimillion dollar efforts. They were brought in by the government a couple of years ago as temporary programs to help solve the unemployment crisis. They were make-work projects, intend to be temporary in nature, and in the past few months we have received complaints from people who have been affected by the discontinuation of some of these grants and the dislocation consequently suffered.

What we are experiencing now is a move toward what I would call transitional permanency. Though brought in to help solve the unemployment problem, the programs have shown a tendency to become built into the framework of government, to slide into permanent acceptance without this House giving any formal endorsement, as far as I am aware, of the idea that emergency make-work programs should be maintained in being.

Mr. Maurice Western, writing about this subject in the Winnipeg Free Press recently, had this to say:

The puzzling fact is that there appears to be a growing reluctance within the federal government to part with its emergencies . . . To cancel programs once they are part of the welfare state would invite political criticism and so, like the emergency gold

[Mr. Whelan.]

mining legislation, they must be preserved forever, come what may.

These are my sentiments. The fundamental question which must be answered is this: Are these programs truly meant to be a solution to unemployment, or are they now crossing the threshold; that is to say, on the verge of being justified by their social value to the community?

I ask the minister to tell us whether the maintenance of LIP and OFY is justified by him on the ground that these programs are a solution to unemployment, or whether it is because they make a social contribution to the communities in which they operate. In the absence of an answer to this question we shall be unable to reach a proper decision in the House as to whether there should be a permanent Opportunities for People program.

I think the LIP and OFY as presently constituted should go because they are increasing the dependency of people on the government. I think the function of the government is to create an economic climate in which jobs will become plentiful, in which opportunities will be given and in which there will be a natural flow of business in this country. The federal government should not have to mount multi-million dollar programs which are very often run in a political way that is totally unacceptable. We have seen some examples of this in the OFY program. I think that the Opportunities for People concept has some value if it will help young people to find a career.

I think the project money should be given to existing institutions and not be given out at random and in an ad hoc way to young people to use as they wish, even though their programs are monitored by the government. In this country we face escalation of government expenditures. We are now at the \$20 billion level. As I say, there will come a point when we must pull back and say we will stop adding government programs, increasing taxation and increasing the dependency of people on the federal government.

That point will be reached very quickly, if it has not already been reached, as a result of the very severe strain that is made on the vast majority of Canadians who are overtaxed because of over-expenditure on the part of the federal government.

I think there is a real responsibility on the part of the minister to inform us what his criteria are so that we can decide if make-work programs should be given any further consideration. I say that as constituted now they ought to be ended. The government should not be able to get off the hook in regard to its own responsibility to the people of the country, and its responsibility for providing opportunities for permanent employment. Make-work projects need very careful examination. I think the government ought to reveal its criteria now so that we can make that examination.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Marceau (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, the question put by my hon. friend, as recorded in *Hansard*, contained so many points and aspects that it was difficult to know in what direction his blows would fall and it is strange, at this stage of our work, that the member asking a question has seven minutes to do so, while the person answering has only