

Government Orders

The recent change in the ACOA action program that affects all existing and potential applications trot out new ground rules that preclude this action program from going through. So, no money, no mines, no jobs.

I would remind the House of the de Grandpré report about which there was great publicity in this House. The government paid \$1.5 million to have this report done. If I remember correctly it consisted mostly of businessmen. There was one representation from labour. They were unanimous in agreeing that there should be a change made to training, and there should also be a safety net of unemployment. I think they called the safety net unemployment insurance and the training program was the trampoline, but they made a very important recommendation. They recommended that training be paid for separately, not taken out of unemployment insurance as it is now happening.

I felt the purpose of the task force was not to produce a report that was not followed by the government but was to get things done. If you pay \$1.5 million and get a recommendation but do not follow it, I am not quite sure what to make that of that.

Another aspect that concerns us is the over-all business of the government not making downstream its over-all contribution to the UIC. Now, what sort of a backdrop have we got here? You may recall that in the budget the Minister of Finance admitted that unemployment would probably rise at the national average of 7.7 per cent to 8.5 per cent—that is a 10 per cent increase—as a result of the budget.

Let us have a look at the proposed goods and services tax. There is another coffin nail. The finance minister predicts between 2.5 per cent and 3 per cent rise in inflation will result from the GST. This is not a very bright picture at all.

Let me quickly review some of the concerns one more time. First of all, Bill C-21 represents a breach of trust. It breaks a promise that was solemnly made by the government last fall. It redirects money for the unemployed into training jobs that do and will not exist in rural Canada. It provides the level playing field insisted on in the free trade agreement, as was suggested earlier here this morning, for the benefit of the United States.

It hurts the people it was meant to protect. It was done without warning and consultation. It was sudden and abrupt. I know the province of Newfoundland was not consulted. It attacks the very heart of the Canadian social security system. It is a program which Canadians care deeply about. It runs contrary to the expectations of Canadians, all at a time when we are going to have a 10 per cent rise in the unemployment rate and we are going to have a 3 per cent rise in inflation. In Newfoundland we do not know what the quotas are for the fish allocations, but there are other indications that the economic future for the next few years in Newfoundland is going to be very dismal.

This is a constitutional right of Canadians, and the government has attempted to privatize it. That is not on. Like every other member in this House I could go on because there are an awful lot of people listening to what is being said in this House today, and there are 8,000 people who signed a petition telling me to make sure that their voices are heard. I hope they believe their voices are being heard. Of the 80 per cent of the submissions that were made out of the 200-odd submissions—and I sat on the committee—90 per cent were against it, 80 per cent were vehemently against it, and only 10 per cent had some support.

• (1250)

In closing, there is a somewhat sombre thought. In my previous incarnation I was a mariner. Mariners will tell you that of all the flag hoists raised there is one they watch very carefully. It is the phonetic, alphabet flag uniform. When uniform is close up the international meaning of that is you are standing in danger. People pay attention to that. A mariner believes that somebody is trying to tell him something so he checks his navigational position, his sounding, the water under his keel, his course and his speed to make sure that he is not going to get into irretrievable trouble.

I have some advice for the Prime Minister. Mr. Prime Minister, rural Canada has hoisted a flag and its flag uniform close up, be aware.

Mr. McCreath: I listened with great interest to my hon. friend for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception who has had a very distinguished naval career. I must say I am well aware of the fact that sailors are well known for their stories. It seems to me he has been telling a few here today, and I suspect from what he just said that he may