

Government Orders

Canada, faced with market globalization, has put in place more consistent measures than those that are in Bill C-9.

Mr. Speaker, we also asked the Liberal government, when we considered Bill C-9 at first reading, not to repeat the mistakes of the past, not to repeat the mistakes of the Conservative government and to apply such a restrictive monetary policy, that at the peak of the recession, between the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991, there was a 5 point difference between American and Canadian interest rates.

It was an unacceptable situation.

Therefore, we suggested that the government review the whole monetary policy to ensure a fairer balance between the desire to control inflation in the long term—which is a very commendable objective—and our short-term need to create permanent jobs that about 1.5 million Canadians, including 500,000 Quebecers, are still awaiting impatiently.

But instead of that, since first reading of Bill C-9, the government of Canada, that is to say the Minister of Finance, has appointed Mr. Thiessen, the right-hand man of John Crow, the former Governor of the Bank of Canada, as his successor.

At the time of this appointment, the Governor of the Bank of Canada restated the monetary policy of his predecessor, which consisted in struggling against inflation at any rate no matter if, in the short term, we were following the same pattern the Liberals had denounced before. And yet, the need for jobs is desperate.

Mr. Speaker, from the first through the second readings, we have been asking the government not to repeat the errors made in the previous budgets, the Conservative budgets and in the present one, which shows a lack of long-term vision.

Not only did the Liberal Party of Canada repeat the same mistakes, but it has done worse and that is where the actions of the government are most reprehensible.

When I discussed Bill C-9, I would never have thought that the first Liberal budget would be so terrible, so outrageous, that it would be even more so than the most dreadful Conservative budget.

Let us recall the facts. I think it is important when considering a budget, when one is about to pass budgetary measures, to remember that this government without vision has taken similar measures, sometimes harsh ones, as a result of Bill C-9.

• (1025)

First, cuts of \$5.5 billion in unemployment insurance over the next three years, by reducing the number of insurable weeks of employment and by targeting the poorest in years to come.

As you know, for years members of this government denounced, not lightly but in the strongest possible terms, any Conservative initiative that they deemed antisocial. For years, Liberals have practically portrayed themselves as leftists. They portrayed themselves as champions of the poorest in our society; yet, as soon as they came into office, they slashed unemployment insurance by \$5.5 billion. Since last week, desperate workers, unemployed people actively seeking employment and trying to regain their dignity, have come to realize that they have been fooled by this government. I understand that the budgetary measures reducing the number of insurable weeks have really been applied only since last week.

Since then, in my own riding of Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, I have met desperate people. Those people are desperate because they had put some hope in this government and in the measures announced in the red book, but mainly measures announced elsewhere because the red book is nothing but a rag when assessed on its own merits. Those people had a lot of hope and saw this government, unlike the previous one, as a government that had a long-term vision, one that would create permanent jobs and would give them back their dignity.

For instance, I think of Yan, 20 years old, who wants to finish high school but who, because of this careless government, its laxness and the fact that it tends to consider every request of Quebec regarding decentralization of labour training as a whim, because of that, Yan, 20 years old, living in the riding of Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, will not be able to finish his job training. There is also the case of Jean-Yves, 45 years old, who will not be able to get training this year because of red tape and delays. He was told perhaps next year or in two years, depending on the federal financial support that has already been cut in several areas.

Claude, 25 years old, has a university degree and is looking for a job, but he has just been penalized by the unemployment insurance reform. Claude, 55 years old, who lives in Quebec, is the victim of a plant closure, is unemployed and has been on social assistance for a week. Last week, I was really shocked by the story of Jacques, 35 years old. Unemployed, he was given training by the federal government, but by the time he entered the labour market, the training he had received was completely outdated and would not meet business needs. I met many people in that situation. Every week, the movement Action-chômage meets with many people in that situation, such as Rachel, 40 years old and a mother of two children, who is on welfare.

Instead of helping those people by introducing humane measures such as the ones we need right now to allow these people to go back to work, to get adequate training and to obtain permanent jobs, the members opposite, the Liberals, who were saying that they wanted to give back their hope and dignity by creating