

We are no longer talking about words in an economist's manual. We are not talking, Mr. Speaker, about some figures the advisers of the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) can offer him for speeches. They know we have over a million unemployed and we just found out there will be another 175,000 unemployed by March. They know that this morning the CNR laid off 1,800 people. When those things happen they ask the government, they ask all of us, Mr. Speaker, not to look at the figures but to look at what the true face of unemployment really is.

If you have ever been without a job and without much hope of getting one, Mr. Speaker, it affects everything in the whole of your world. To every person the whole world is themselves. That is what they understand best about it. Employment means they can do things they dream about doing for their own futures; unemployment means the opposite. It is the frustration, the despair, the sense of lost opportunity and self-esteem, and the increasing loss of confidence in oneself. That is what affects them. That is why the anger in people begins at a low level and gets higher and higher. Unemployment, and the government's deliberate policy of creating it, is something they are no longer willing to accept because it means their own destruction.

The reason I dwell on it, Mr. Speaker, is that when we are in an economic downturn, historically it is like going to war: most people think it is the other guy who is going to get shot and that is what keeps them going. However, if it increasingly hits your neighbours who have been doing pretty well and all of a sudden are not, then it comes home to them more and more. It is the cost to them in human terms which is the reason the government's policy is bound to fail, Mr. Speaker, because it will not be accepted any longer by the people of this country.

People want that policy improved and made more fair. Canadians have a great instinct for being fair. They want that policy to be fair. If we need to have interest rates at such high levels in order to protect the dollar, if that is the reason—and that is the reason given by the Bank of Canada—then there should at least be some shield or protection for those segments of our society who cannot protect themselves. That is why people were angry at the budget. They understand the part about protecting the dollar. What they do not understand is why the government insists that they need not provide protection for those who cannot help themselves.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, in our budget two years ago we included tax credits for people who were going to be hurt by energy prices, and for those who have mortgages.

There are certain things the government is able to do to protect those segments of society who cannot protect themselves from a policy which acts like a meat cleaver. People want a little more sophistication from the government and not the single, brutal reliance on the regressive aspects of high interest rates.

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

**Mr. Crombie:** Not only do they want protection for certain segments of our society, but they also want to begin the

### *Employment*

process of recovery. I need to repeat that word, because I listened to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) the other day, I listened to other people at the federal-provincial conference, and what struck me was that no one was really talking about the necessity of recovery. It seems that we have accepted the idea that the whole matter is some kind of sub-zero game, that we have nothing more to expand, that we have nowhere else to go, and that we can do nothing but cut the pie up into a lot of pieces and give less and less to everybody. That is the sickness that people see.

● (1540)

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

**Mr. Crombie:** That is what they are worried about. That is why all working people, whether they are organized or non-organized, know that it is important to have investment, and that the only way we will have recovery is through investment in the private sector. However, the budget went ahead and struck out the major, fundamental incentives for people to invest so that people could have jobs. That was when they understood that the government was not intent on recovery. We need protection concerning this interest rate policy, we need investment for recovery, and we also need job training.

I notice that the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) is in the House. People understand that a new economic world is being born and that an old one is withering away. Times change. It has happened before. Generations of Canadians have had to cope with that change. What they do not understand is a federal government which is unwilling or unable, or both, to create a co-operative environment whereby job training can occur between the federal-provincial governments and between labour and business. They do not consider a policy of confrontation and divisiveness to be one which will put them on the road to recovery. It is not good enough for the minister simply to shoot from the hip and say, "This is where I want to go." The minister and the government cannot create jobs in this country through job retraining, so they can be ready for the recovery as it comes, without the active participation of the provinces, the municipalities and the private sector.

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

**Mr. Crombie:** The minister and his government have spent most of their time making sure that we do not have that co-operative environment, because they think it is probably good for their politics. Canadians understand co-operation. They understand it in their Constitution. They certainly understand the importance of investment and co-operation between the private and public sectors and between levels of government.

Let me conclude by stating what I consider to be the major problem. Because of the government's inability in job creation, the government's inability to create an environment for private sector investment, the government's inability to protect people who cannot help themselves against the high interest rates, the major victims have been the Canadian people who have lost