

The Canadian Economy

it is realized that the United States is determined to be isolationist in economic matters. We will need to stand independently on our own feet and we need programs which will be long lasting and involve labour, banking, incentives, exports, insurance and the CBC. All these things must be involved.

Mr. Skoberg: When?

Mr. Otto: I think, and this is my own view because I have nothing with which to back it, that this is the first phase of the government's program. I hope that the next part of this long-range program will be introduced within the next month or so. I think that then Canadians will know we intend to make our own way in this world. The very fact that this government is betting \$1 billion means in all certainty that we will be able to do this on our own.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have been here all evening listening to speeches from both sides of the House. I have heard a great many reasons for this program and a great many explanations about it.

• (12:20 a.m.)

I listened to the engaging Minister of Labour (Mr. Macksey). When everything is going so beautifully in the country, when the government has made such a beautiful job of doing things and apparently we have more employment than ever before, it is a mystery why we should have this program. The minister did not clear up the mystery. He did a wonderful job of trying to throw us off the track of thinking clearly. Although he was very engaging, for him, unfortunately, he failed to bamboozle some of us at least.

I will give my explanation for the government bringing in this program at this time. I think it has been forced out of the government by sheer necessity. It has been forced out of a government which has never shown any real concern for the unemployed. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is willing to live with 6 per cent unemployment: he said this. I do not care how many apologies are made for what he did or did not say 20 years ago; I let the facts speak for themselves. The actions of this government speak louder than their words.

I believe this program has been hastily put together. It has been put together by a government which has never shown any real concern for unemployed people. Now that the members of the government face the danger of becoming unemployed in the near future they are beginning to realize for the first time what unemployment might feel like. Consequently, the government has thrown together everything it can from its various departments and will be spending this enormous sum of money as a result.

Unemployment in Canada did not happen yesterday. It did not happen when the surcharge came into effect. For years we have had a steadily growing unemployment problem, increasingly so in recent months. The opposition has been recommending to the government the sort of things it should be doing. We have recommended that it should not be putting all its eggs in the corporation basket. When dealing with problems, this government has the habit of giving the most to big businesses to carry on. We told them that was not the thing to do.

As far back as a year ago last summer we pointed out to the government that business concerns were unable to cope with unemployment. We stated that funds should be given to the municipalities, which were in a very bad way indeed, to enable them to continue their work. The municipalities did not have the wherewithal to carry on this work. The government turned a deaf ear; it paid no attention. Suddenly, out of a hat it picked this enormous spending program. The government is bleeding all over the green carpet tonight for the unemployed.

The government has not paid one iota of attention to the problem of unemployment until now. It is only doing so now because it is losing sector after sector of the Canadian people, having shown such disregard for common, everyday men and women and their families. This government does not care about people. As long as the gross national product is increasing, and as long as some people are getting jobs, the government does not give a hoot about those on the scrap pile, the unemployed. They do not demonstrate this by their words, but by their actions.

Talking about the increase in gross national product is no consolation for those people who cannot share in it or cannot share in making it possible. Talking about the growth of employment is small comfort to those who have looked in vain for jobs for months and even years. This insensitivity to people, this throwing around of professional jargon and concern only for industry rather than people is the reason this government is losing the confidence of section after section of the Canadian people. This program will not win back the confidence of the people. That does not mean the program is a dead loss. It is better than nothing; we know that. Many people who have studied the matter have predicted that three-quarters of a million people will be unemployed next January or February. A maximum of 50,000 jobs is not going to loom very large in the picture.

People may be impressed when the huge figures are publicized tomorrow. Many people were impressed when the Benson budget came out in June, but by the fall they had a chance to see what it was doing and what it meant to the ordinary person. The Benson budget had all kinds of incentives for industry. It let the corporate people off paying their fair share of taxes. The ordinary people will have to pay more than their share of the taxes.

This program will cost a great deal of money. Who will pay for it? Once again the corporations are being let off. The ordinary people will have to pay for it, the same as they are paying for other things at the present time. The financing of this program will merely compound the evils in the tax bill which is before us. It will take years to pay for the program. The people who can least afford it will be paying and paying because of this government's foolish notion that the way to look after the ordinary people is to pay great amounts of money to large corporate businesses and hope the result will trickle down to the ordinary people. It will not. It never has.

One of the most startling figures in the whole unemployment picture published today is the number of people seeking jobs in the month of September compared with September going back to 1956. These are people who have been looking for work for seven months or more. In September 1956, 8.6 per cent of the unemployed had been looking for work for seven months or more. There are