

It occurred to me in Question Period today that the responses of the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) were absolutely untenable—

Mr. McGrath: Unbelievable.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: —unbelievable—

Mr. McGrath: Incredible.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: —incredible. My colleague from St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) has every adjective which would be appropriate to list. If he would provide me with a list at the end of my speech I will table it with the unanimous consent of the House.

It reminded me very much of the Christmas ditty. Here is the Liberal version of how moneys are going to be expended for job creation. I am not going to sing it, but as I recite it you will understand what I am saying.

● (1520)

In Question Period today the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) said he was making a list, checking it twice, and was going to find out who was naughty or nice. Santa Claus is coming to town!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: That is exactly what is happening with this group. The Minister was asked a direct question today with respect to the misuse of public funds which is occurring. I tried to bring out the magnitude of the amount of the slush fund. Do people realize how much money is dedicated for political patronage purposes in the country? It is \$300 million, with no criteria applied with respect to employment levels in any part of the country but, rather, whether some Liberal somewhere says that there might be political advantage with respect to the expenditure of the moneys in one part of the country or the other.

This is an unacceptable fast track and it is the difficulty with the "grants by government" approach to job creation. The imperfections are clear. The program is subject to abuse, subject to the kind of political influence which bears no relationship to the efficient and proper expenditure of money.

I am glad that the New Democratic Party has raised this issue on the floor of the House of Commons. The Minister of Employment and Immigration refused to bring forward the criteria although a request was made some months ago. The real problem with the Minister is that he was afraid that if he let the criteria out, it would be understood by all Canadians. He was worried that all the money had not been given away at that time. That is a simple fact. By the Minister's own admission there is \$19 million left which is available for Members of Parliament on an equal basis. The criteria were only released by a memo of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) on February 1. That is not an irrelevant amount of money but it is crumbs in comparison with the \$300 million or \$150 million per year.

Supply

As the Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail) points out, and I could not agree more, the money is needed. I know the Hon. Member for Restigouche and the Hon. Minister of Public Works, (Mr. LeBlanc), both from the Maritimes and for whom I have great respect, are not the type of people I would associate with seedy, corrupt and unpalatable patronage practices. They take their responsibility seriously so I know they will understand that many people in the country are suffering as a result of unemployment. We can argue back and forth about whether Government policies or lack of policies have much influence on the rate of unemployment. I am simply saying that the facts are that the official rate of unemployment is 11.2 per cent while it is 24 per cent for youth unemployment. Then there are the hidden unemployed who are not even trying to get jobs, which would raise the total unemployment figure even higher.

Why are we raising this issue with respect to the exercise of patronage by the Government, Mr. Speaker? We are doing it because on this side of the House we believe that the moneys available should be spent in a fair, equitable and effective way on behalf of the people of Canada who are unemployed. If it is necessary in order to get appropriate spending for Saskatchewan, I will be glad to work with the Cabinet Minister from Saskatchewan in the other place, Senator Argue. He was our version of Santa Claus. When he came into Cabinet he had a beard. He shaved it off so he is no longer Santa Claus, but simply a Liberal Minister going out, without consultation, and spending money in Saskatchewan. As the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) has pointed out on a number of occasions in the House, he is spending it without any reference to employment levels or unemployment levels in the province.

In 1983-84, \$30 million was spent on the job corps and in 1984-85 it will be \$40 million. How does that compare with \$300 million that the Liberal Cabinet has in its slush fund? A group of unelected, unaccountable advisers to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is manipulating, to use the words of the grass roots of the Liberal Party who in open convention by resolution condemned the Government and leadership of the Party. They accused the Government of patronage and manipulation. They accused it of disregarding the parliamentary wing. They said that the parliamentary supporters were nobodies. They are somebodies now for they each have \$500,000. That is a very cynical way in which to garner support for the leadership of the Party.

When we see that kind of public expenditure, Mr. Speaker, I can only quote Oliver Cromwell in 1653 in the Rump Parliament when he said:

You have sat too long here for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Questions, comments? Debate.

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this debate. I will deal particularly with the first part of the motion which condemns the Government for employing corporate tax hand-outs to