

*Supply*

We know that while the tax burden on corporations in the last five years has gone up 28 per cent, the tax burden on individual Canadians has gone up 62 per cent. Evidently, this has an effect on the ability of Canadians to spend, to consume and to keep the economic wheel turning. This is a remarkable differential in tax burden that has to be brought to Your Honour's attention.

Among industrialized nations we find that our standard living has gone from second place to eighth place. We find that between 1986 and 1990 in terms of sheer competitiveness, which is the latest political expression or the latest political concern when we want to describe our ability to function properly on international markets and on our domestic markets in relation to imports, we have fallen from ninth place in 1986 to sixteenth place in 1990.

• (1700 )

This is a very serious slippage, if not a very serious drop, that must be highlighted; evidently something is going wrong. In an attempt at least to interpret the causes of unemployment, we must identify the roots, and this is one of them, obviously.

If you do not want to look at competitiveness, Mr. Speaker, I would urge you to look at research and development efforts. In that case, you will find that from the 10th place in which we were among the industrialized nations in 1984 we are now, in 1990, in 17th place. Here again something is not functioning properly. Should we blame the government for that?

I see the former minister in charge of science in the Chamber. Perhaps he may have some thoughts as to why we have gone from 10th to 17th place. If the public sector has been cut consistently and repetitively by seven consecutive Conservative budgets, then it would be interesting to know whether that slippage has been picked up in the private sector; and if so, where?

However, according to total accounts, nation by nation, in combining private and public, we seem to have performed very badly. We have gone from 10th to 17th place. One has to ask oneself, in light of 10.2 per cent of the Canadian workforce presently unemployed, what is it

that makes this happen? We have to conclude that the strategy of this government is not working.

We heard earlier from the Minister of State for Finance and Privatization about his profound belief in the marketplace. When I asked him, since he so profoundly believes in the marketplace and its wonders, to explain why in this latest budget the government has removed the instrument of collective agreements, which is a marketplace instrument, from negotiations between the government and federal employees, he did not answer that question. So there are contradictions within the government's attitude to let the marketplace do it.

Second, in our reliance on investment, we have increasingly relied on foreign investments.

Third, in removing trade barriers, we have exposed jobs and companies to competitive forces which are stronger than their ability to deal with them.

Fourth, we have seen over the last six years an intensification of the belief that government should be doing what big business tells it to do. This has come across in a variety of ways, and we witnessed that particularly intensively during the last election when it came to the free trade debate and the role of the BCNI, the Business Council on National Issues.

We also have to bring into this ever-enlarging equation the fact that since the government took over in 1984, there have been over 4,000 foreign takeovers and not one single application has been rejected. In other words, Canadians and Canadian capital are increasingly losing control of the Canadian economy, because control of the Canadians economy is the result of the foreign investment policy of this government, which is more and more in the hands of foreign investors.

In some cases we have seen also the irony of Canadian taxpayers having to pay for some takeovers, such as occurred when Boeing bought de Havilland and subsidies had to be paid to Boeing in order to make the takeover more attractive.

We have to take into account the fact that unemployment insurance, as a result of Bill C-21 has been privatized. It is no longer an institution in the hands of the government as far as its funding is concerned. We have to conclude, regretfully, that the regional transfer