

Government Orders

put aside Bill C-32 and Bill C-21 and begin to talk among the parties in the House of Commons as to how to reconstruct the social support system in this country.

Third is the removal of these pieces of legislation and perhaps have an all-party committee begin to review ideas such as the one put forward by the premier of Ontario and others on the social charter. Perhaps we should review other initiatives and see where we are headed in order to protect people, particularly in terms of international competition.

Fourth, the Liberal Party recommends that the federal government redesign the tax system to make it more equitable, to help families cope with the added expense of raising children and simplify the child care benefit system by April 1, 1992.

In other words, in the measures being presented in this budget, let us deal with the fact that families are having a difficult time.

• (1250)

Let us not just talk about the people who are on social assistance. Some families make between \$20,000 and \$50,000 a year but cannot make ends meet because of the cost of housing or because they are temporarily on UI. The tax system is burdensome for them. We cannot turn around and say they should be able to do it themselves. The reality is they cannot do it by themselves.

Metropolitan Canada has changed in the last 10 years, and our tax system has not caught up with the cost of living for these people. I am sure every member sitting in the House today can present stories from his or her own constituency about these living conditions.

We turn away from families in that income range and tell them they should be okay and we have done enough for them in the tax system. They do not sympathize with other people who are getting assistance. Instead of having a coalition among the different groups, you in fact create divisions. Creating divisions only exasperates the social harmony we require in this country at this time.

Fifth, the Liberal Party recommends that the federal government immediately establish a winter job creation program to counteract some of the damage already done by anti-employment policies that have had a direct impact on child poverty. In other words, as the newspa-

per article said and as just about every expert says, when you talk about poverty, you have to talk about the fact that the head of the household does not have a job.

With the UI system being what it is, there is a real crisis developing in this country. As people move from unemployment benefits to social welfare, the burden is going to be transferred tremendously from the municipality to the provincial government. This government can perhaps take satisfaction that its deficit is going to hover around \$30 billion instead of being higher, but in reality it is creating tremendous public debt for other governments.

The historical responsibility of the federal government is to ensure that Canadians have access to jobs. When the private sector collapses as dramatically as it has over the last two years, we have a responsibility to make sure that people who want to get back to work have a program in front of them.

Some people say that all we are talking about is make work programs and they do not work. Of course they do not work, but there is a real backlog of infrastructure decisions that have to be made in this country. There is probably several billion dollars worth of work that can be identified by municipal leaders almost overnight. It is the same on the provincial side, but they need access to funds. A dollar put forward by the federal government is going to create more dollars by others.

We should not take the attitude of Canadian Conservatives in the 1920s and early 1930s, that they will all get back together again, so do not worry about it. During Diefenbaker's government they refused to respond to the 1960 recession. We have to respond. We have to show Canadians that we are not self-satisfied and we understand that they need work. We understand that people want the chance to be off social assistance, even if it is for 10 or 20 weeks.

They want to build roads. They want to replace sewers. They want to create spaces in day care, perhaps. There are things we have to do, and we are obliged as a Parliament to find ways of doing them. If we are in debt for \$30 billion and do not offer Canadians any hope, then why not take the initiative, deal with that in a Keynesian sense and use the federal government's borrowing powers to create wealth and get people back to work.