

The Budget—Mr. La Salle

At present, the government makes thousands of young people believe that they will be able to develop a project. Unfortunately, these young people will be greatly disappointed. In spite of funds amounting to about \$35 million earmarked for this year's program—which is a commendable effort on the part of the government—it will find that thousands of youths will be very disappointed with this policy because out of six projects only one will be accepted. In view of these circumstances, I should like to remind the government that it would be better to change not only the selection of the projects, but also the manner in which the program is outlined.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but wish for the disappearance of this evil which is unemployment. Also, I should like to tell the government that in my constituency north of the St. Lawrence River between Montreal and Berthier, springtime erosion has for many years caused problems to the municipalities of Saint-Sulpice, Lanoraie and Lavalltrie, which are situated along the shore of the river. Would it be possible to ask the minister that funds be earmarked for the construction of a retaining wall? The St. Lawrence River is a waterway very important to navigation. The technical innovations in the area of shipping are progressing as rapidly as in other areas.

• (1610)

East of those municipalities, a dam was built a few years ago so the riparian owners send me every spring requests for subsidies from the Department of Public Works to check the devastating erosion. The hon. member for Terrebonne (Mr. Comtois) could say the same since the city of Repentigny is in the area I am referring to, between Montreal and Berthier. The hon. member for Berthier (Mr. Yanakis) is also certainly aware of that problem.

Now instead of spending such amounts of money every year, as it has been done for a hundred years only to carry few stones for makeshift repairs, I believe we should build a permanent retaining wall. An important project of that kind would provide employment for a good number of unemployed and riparian owners would be secure. Indeed, they are worrying very much this year about erosion that threatens not only waterfront lots but buildings also. Therefore I should like the hon. minister to consider the possibility of appropriating credits for carrying out such a project. Municipalities made several representations to the Department of Public Works but on account of the standards established a few years ago, nobody wants to assume responsibility for that erosion. Now, we know very well that the water level was raised for shipping purposes, which is a serious cause of concern for waterfront owners. A project of such magnitude would give jobs to anxious workers for a certain time.

Also I would like to mention that the riding I have the honour to represent is still awaiting a review of the designated areas which was promised and which hopefully should be announced by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand). Saturday last, the city of Joliette officially requested from the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion that it be given a more advantageous designation than that granted to the riding I represent.

[Mr. La Salle.]

The economic situation of my riding is neither better nor worse than in other regions. But I believe that my riding is as much in need of these benefits as some neighbouring ridings—of which I am not jealous—which have been granted a more advantageous designation.

I am again inviting the hon. minister to consider once more our request most carefully as he always does. In fact, two years ago, it was my pleasure to be informed by the minister himself that my riding would be granted 10 per cent on all investments and \$2,000 on all new jobs. But since some ridings may be granted up to 20 per cent and \$5,000 for each new job, the situation is becoming quite difficult for my riding and mainly its municipalities, not counting the city of Joliette which is making tremendous efforts with a well-organized industrial commission. But we have lost the odd economic injections because of unfair competition.

As we are living in a just society, the minister will no doubt study this question very seriously and be in a position, before June 30, to give some good news not only to the voters of Joliette but also to the whole area which owing to that development will experience an extensive economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, I am under the impression that my time limit has expired. I regret being unable to carry on with my remarks as I had more to say, but I shall end by further calling the attention of the Minister of Finance to the urgent needs facing the voters of the constituency of Joliette that I have the honour to represent.

[English]

Mr. C. Terrence Murphy (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, may I extend my congratulations to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) upon his first budget. I add my congratulations to those of others who preceded me in this debate. I was most pleased to find that the government had finally decided to leave behind the concept of the 2 per cent cost of living escalator and adjust payments so that the actual increase, in percentage terms, in the cost of living will be added to the incomes of those in Canada who are 65 and over. I have been questioned by many on this point, particularly by people in the middle income groups. They suggested that the government was abandoning the principle of selectivity and returning to the universal type of program. May I say, for the benefit of those who feel that way, that the new approach does not conflict with the principle of selectivity. Inflation hits everyone, not only those who are lucky enough to have saved a fair amount of money and have an income for retirement. I am happy that the present Minister of Finance was the one who introduced this cost of living escalator which will apply to those I have mentioned. No one in this country needs help more than those who have served their time, so to speak, in the work force of Canada, who are now retired, and who have little or no defence against the onslaughts of inflation.

I was pleased to recognize, as everyone here recognized I believe, that this budget is a growth budget. It indicates great faith by the government in the private sector of the economy. Over the past few years, the country has faced the problem of unemployment. Without doubt, the problem is serious and the government has taken a number of public measures in an attempt to correct this problem. It