

enough to have just completed school and therefore are without any work record and have not contributed to any insurance program, they are not eligible for any income either. That does not make much sense to me.

● (1150)

I believe, therefore, we must do some very dramatic rethinking about the prerequisites and requirements for people who are out of work, with no prospects of work. I believe we could begin by telling these young persons that if they are available for work, regardless of their age, and if, after having gone through all the various and many registration requirements, there is still no work available for them, then they are eligible for unemployment payments because they are unemployed. The fact that they did not work before is immaterial; they are still unemployed.

If a young person is available to enter the workforce, and the workforce has not grown enough so that there is a position available for them, that does not mean that they have to stop eating or stop paying their rent. It does not mean that they do not need any income. So it seems to me that we must begin by making a fundamental decision about income before we make any decision about employment. We have to make that decision now, and that decision must be that people who are available for work and for whom no work is available must be eligible for some kind of unemployment payments. We must start there.

Then, second, you say to the young people coming out of our educational institutions that if there is no work in the traditional sense, they will be eligible to draw certain payments. But they will also be encouraged to embark upon co-operative programs, self-employment programs within their community and in other communities. We must encourage those young persons to create the kind of jobs which are currently not being created.

I visited a high school the other day and put to the students something which I recognize in the long term is not going to work but in the short term is a good idea. There are any number of young people just about to leave their high schools for the summer. They will be looking for temporary summer employment. They used to get hired by the very companies I mentioned earlier, but these companies are not hiring now. They have already laid off employees and have no room for any young people. I suggested to these students that they are going to have to go out and seek work on their own.

One of the drawbacks they have is that they have no income to enable them to go out and do that. However, I suggested to them that there are things they could do. They could, for example, conduct a survey of all the agricultural communities surrounding the City of Hamilton. They could work in teams and go to each of the farmers and see whether or not there is work which the farmer requires and for which the farmer is prepared to pay. I told them they should do that to start with. And I feel that we should be prepared, as a national program, to provide some income directly to these young people in the form of employment income in order to enable them to go out

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and undertake that search for work. There is a lot of work which needs to be done but the trouble is that these students do not have any income to get them from where they are to where the work is. Second, they have no way of making contact with those individuals who might be willing to hire them. I am talking now about temporary employment.

I also suggested to these young persons that perhaps they could take two or three small jobs and make them into one job. Perhaps they can go out and discuss with prospective employers the possibility of working for them one day a week, or even less. If they find three or four employers willing to hire them on that basis, that would enable them to get into the workforce and to gain experience. These suggestions are all short term but they do address one of the problems which confront, I believe, a large number of young people who will now be entering the workforce in a temporary way.

However, that is not going to solve our problem, Mr. Speaker. It is just a short-term solution. It will not do very much for the long-term difficulties. As far as I can see from looking at the future of employment in Canada, we must establish that everyone in Canada has a right to a job, given the fact that we require of people in our society that they do have a job. Our whole society was built on the basis of people working, and unless we are prepared, as a matter of principle, to ensure that everyone has the right to a job, they will never spend the time and effort seeking out the kinds of employment necessary to meet the demand. We must place an onus of responsibility upon ourselves and upon the Government.

I believe that all across this country there is work of varying kinds which requires doing and for which there are people available, but it is not being done. Two or three years ago we suggested, for example, that there was a need for an additional 100,000 housing units to be built yearly over the course of the following three to four years in order to meet the demand. If we had done that, we would have created 280,000 jobs annually. If we had done that we would have taken the pressure off the other employment areas which are being filled and we would have opened up an opportunity for some people to get back to work or to enter the workforce for the first time. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that at the same time we were saying that we suggested there ought to be an immediate move to complete the east-west pipeline in Canada in order that we would create not only energy self-sufficiency but tens of thousands of jobs for people in the construction industry and the manufacturing industry. Had we done that, we would have reduced the number of people unemployed and opened up other job opportunities for those now entering the workforce.

You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that we said there had to be a complete revitalization, in fact, of the transportation system of Canada. We had to complete not only the railroad transportation system but the port facilities, inland and on the coasts. If we had done that, the tens of thousands of jobs which would have been created would have taken the pressure off the other employment areas and opened up jobs for young people entering the workforce. That would have been a helpful way to begin to solve that particular aspect of the problem.