

*The Budget—Mr. Dawson*

before the budget speech last evening. Mr. Speaker, I could quote the right hon. Prime Minister who said that if we wanted answers concerning the budget, we would have to wait until after the minister made his budget speech. He said the following:

Mr. Speaker, I can repeat for the information of the hon. member that a job creation program aimed at providing job experience for young Canadians will be included in the budget.

This took 30 seconds, Mr. Speaker, and two paragraphs over 25 pages. I do not believe that this can be considered as fulfilling the promises or commitments made by the government. That same week, Mr. Speaker, before the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, the Minister of Employment and Immigration announced that the budget would contain concrete measures, but without giving any details. The next day, he spoke before the Canadian Club in Toronto and gave them scoops on some details he refused to give us as members of Parliament, he refused to give to this House and the committee. That kind of arrogance will destroy the government.

In that budget the minister tried to get rid of the problem by passing it on to private industry, or by blaming rising unemployment on the population explosion. Mr. Speaker, I see no reason why an increase in the population growth rate should penalize the young. It is my view that young people born in times of high birth rate have a right to work as much as those who were born in times of low birth rate.

Mr. Speaker, the same minister announced a program for the placement of 105,000 young Canadians by March 1981. In his budget he repeated this last night, but he brought no concrete measure that could show us he is going to achieve this. All we know is that they reduced the Canada Works projects, they froze the manpower training budgets. In that statement he tried to pass the buck once more by suggesting this will require total co-operation from private industry. What the minister is ignoring is that private industry is waiting for government leadership and this has not yet been forthcoming from this government.

It is wishful thinking to imagine that the tax credit programs will solve every problem, because there must be a tax liability in order to receive credits, and under the current conditions many companies do not pay tax. Where are the programs to help municipalities and co-operatives that do not pay tax, companies that do not have enough money, that do not make enough profits to pay tax, Mr. Speaker? We find nothing in the minister's proposals that could be of help to them.

● (1750)

[English]

Since I represent a riding with one university and five colleges, and 56 per cent of the unemployed in my riding are between the ages of 17 and 25, I must say that it is a subject of interest for me. I would not pretend to have found some

[Mr. Dawson.]

miracle solution to a problem which plagues the economy of the whole western world. But I would say that it is our duty to do the utmost to "sensibilize" and to convince the government that we must make a supplementary effort if we are to heal this unacceptable situation.

As I mentioned before, we are not the only country to be faced with this situation. Hon. members surely know that youth unemployment in all countries is higher than the national average in each country. But for reasons I have yet to discover, whether they be historical, economical, seasonal or what, Canadian youth are, or at least seem to be, harder affected than the youth in other countries. We have statistics on that. In 1976 there was a 10 per cent unemployment rate for youth in Canada, and it was half that amount in most European countries. Those are the figures of the O.E.C.D. It is even more dramatic in the part of the country I represent which is French. They do not have the same possibility as those in the rest of Canada, the same possibility to pick up their belongings and move away, leave their province or leave their country. That is because of the linguistic situation which does not always guarantee the Francophone his rights all across the country.

[Translation]

In Quebec's case, the difference in language and culture limits the mobility of young people towards provinces offering more job opportunities. Statistics show a lower mobility rate for all Quebecers. The most recent figures unfortunately date back to the 1966 to 1970 period. The study from which these statistics are taken points to the difference in language and culture as one of the causes for the lower mobility rate.

Thus Ontario, where the unemployment rate is lower, has a higher mobility rate than Quebec even though its net migration is positive. The same study points to the high proportion of young people among the migrants and the importance of economic reasons in the migration phenomenon. Therefore, the difference in language and culture keeps the unemployment problem among young people in Quebec at a higher level than would otherwise be the case.

[English]

Some technocrats in our present government and in past governments have found many reasons which explain our present predicament, such as the lack of effective bridges between the world of school and the world of work; the baby boom, or the demographic aspect of Canada; the general weakening of our economic situation and the structural factor of our labour market. These reasons might be acceptable to technocrats and government officials, but I do not think they are acceptable to Canadian youth and Canadian politicians. They cannot explain the fact that as long as 15 years ago youth unemployment was 1.7 times higher than adult unemployment.

Youth unemployment is not the difficulty of a splinter group or minority. At present there are 2.5 million to 3 million young people under the age of 25 in a labour force of ten million people. Since 1966 the number of young people unemployed