

Employment Tax Credit Act

hard core unemployed. How is this program going to help them? I submit that it will help not at all. I reiterate that it will help large companies and no one else in this society of ours. In fact, in the long term it will not even help large companies because they will have been helped by a band-aid measure, and if they cannot see through this very devious program of spending \$100 million of taxpayers' dollars, then they are not running a very efficient shop either.

Communities like Meadow Lake, The Battlefords, La Loche, Patuanak and many others have very little manufacturing and very few large businesses. What help is this program going to be to the people in those places? I think of young people who are suffering the largest amount of unemployment or the brunt of unemployment in places like Loon Lake, Hafford, Turtleford and Frenchman Butte. What will this program do for them?

The other day I looked at the youth employment program that is being offered by the federal government. Five applications came in from two communities in my constituency. The deadline has passed, but I do not think the government had any commitment to telling the people about the availability of that program. I am sure many young people throughout this country want to work, but when I know that only five applications came from the riding I represent and that they came from just two communities, there has to be something wrong with the way the government has put this program out. The people do not have access to information about the program until after the deadline cuts it off.

On becoming a member of Parliament and moving into my seat in the House of Commons, I received a press release about the youth employment program the federal government had introduced, and by the time I got information about the program it was only a couple of days before the deadline. How can people have access even to these band-aid programs, with which, incidentally, I disagree, if they do not know about them? The government does not pass out information. There is no good, clear line of communication.

I say that Bill C-19 must be repealed. We should not extend a program which helps worsen the economic times of this country by spending taxpayers' dollars with no clear direction. There is no clear commitment to the Canadian people. We should be more concerned about addressing ourselves to high interest rates and the lack of economic policy and industrial strategy which I mentioned before.

● (1610)

I think this government, instead of bringing in such temporary measures as the employment tax credit program, should be looking at problem solving, the first step of which is to raise an awareness of the problem among members of the government. I think all members of the House and also the Canadian people realize that we are in troubled times now and that we face problems in this country.

The second step is to define the problem. I believe a gross error has been committed by the Conservative government which was just defeated as well as the Liberal government

which is in office now because the problem to which this bill is addressed is defined as the problem of unemployment. That is wrong. The problem is not unemployment, the problem is that we have no economic policy to guide this country and no industrial strategy.

The NDP has been calling for an economic policy and an industrial strategy for some time now. These policies are set by the Canadian people through our conventions on the basis of thorough research which has been done by those people as well as by our research people. They have developed programs which I believe the government should study seriously so as to guide us with some kind of economic strategy.

The next step in the problem solving method is to establish some criteria on which this House would be willing to work so that we could have rules to follow. It is obvious that members of the House do not always wish to follow the rules that are set down for them. On the basis of those criteria we should look at all possible solutions instead of keeping a closed mind and pushing through all the measures possible because there is a majority government opposite. What we should do is to provide solutions following consultation, as was promised in the throne speech, with all members of Parliament, and members of Parliament should seek out solutions and ideas from their constituents.

It is amazing to see the large amount of information which can be gathered from one's constituents, whether one travels by car, by train or by aeroplane. The ideas of the Canadian people are very important and are often overlooked. I think we should gather together all the solutions at our disposal to implement an economic policy and an industrial strategy. Once we have all these solutions in hand, we should look at the criteria.

Implementation is the next step in the problem solving process, and it should be carried out jointly instead of trying to push through a band-aid program, as the Conservatives did and the Liberals are doing now, asking for the extension of a program which does nothing but compound the problems in this country by spending money which should not be spent and, in the long term, creating more unemployment. It appears that in the short term this legislation would actually reduce unemployment, but in fact it does not.

After implementation, I should like to convey to the minister, through you, sir, that some kind of evaluation of all the programs we have had for many years should be made. Part of that evaluation should take into consideration the recommendations contained in the Auditor General's report, the 15 or so studies that were implemented during the six-year term of office of the Auditor General to improve the efficiency and accountability of the government to the Canadian people. The evaluation process should consider all those studies in the context of the definition of the problem and compare them to see whether or not the problems which existed last year are no longer here today. That should be implemented after the evaluation has taken place.

That is what I mean when I say that long-term planning should involve a problem solving method and should develop