

Employment Tax Credit Act

civil servant structure of it, stating that the benefit to the community must have high priority as part of the selection process, the ones which I find now denied all would have been approved. However, by virtue of other regulations they were cast out of hand without consideration of this value. Will the minister take that into serious consideration and issue such a letter, or have a change in the regulation?

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Chairman, I do not think there is any disagreement between the hon. member and I. I hate to read from my own words of wisdom, but just to assure the hon. member, I made the following statement on Monday. I announced three principles upon which the job-creation program would be based, and I quote:

The second principle upon which today's measures are based is the recognition that employment must have continuing and genuine value.

I went on to announce that that value will be set according to very specific priorities and that those priorities will be judged based on the worth of the project to the community. To check to make sure that happens and that it is not just a regulatory instruction but in fact will be implemented, we will have the advisory group, which is the best way of ensuring that an assessment of what is really of great concern and of great value to a community can be introduced into the evaluation. So we have built in a number of safeguards to ensure exactly what the hon. member is asking, and I think he will find, as much as an imperfect world allows the system to work, that it will work according to those criteria.

The Chairman: The hon. member's time has almost expired.

Mr. McCain: Mr. Chairman, I just want to give one example. The Woodstock branch of the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded applied for assistance to build a workshop. The only reason I can determine that that application was rejected was that menial work was involved and that they would only be painting and driving nails. That is the type of regulatory structure I want to get out of. I think the minister does too. I cannot think of a better group than that group in Woodstock New Brunswick, which is working so hard for the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded. That application will be included in the letter which I am sending.

My time is up, but I plead with the minister that if there are additional moneys which are not spent, or if there is anything the minister can allocate to these from any other source, I think these are special cases. I think the regulatory structure should not force them through the griddle of selective exercises long before it gets to the minister's desk. I think the minister would have approved all five of them had he been making the decision, and I say that sincerely.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Chairman, I could not begin to make a few comments without making some reference to that somewhat snide remark by the hon. member for Bow River when he suggested that the reason there is such low unemployment in Saskatchewan is that people from Saskatchewan are leaving to go to Alberta. The hon. member surely knows that that is not true. If he can read, and if he looks at the reports which are

made by Statistics Canada, the hon. member will know that the only province in this country which has lost population or which has had a net decrease in population in the last two years is the province of Manitoba, which, unfortunately, has had a Conservative government since 1977. Last year, the last year for which we have figures, according to Statistics Canada the province of Manitoba lost 20,000 people.

● (2130)

I hope the hon. member for Bow River is not attributing the prosperity which his province enjoys purely to the present Conservative government or to the former Social Credit government, about which he knows a great deal more than I do, because surely the hon. member knows that provinces such as Alberta and Saskatchewan, which has an NDP government, are doing extremely well, not because of the kind of government they have—although, of course, government actions can help or hinder prosperity—but mainly because they have tremendous resources which are now needed to a great extent in all parts of the world.

Manitoba, at the moment, is a have-not province, and I would not suggest, for a moment, that an NDP government or a Liberal government could make Manitoba as prosperous as Saskatchewan or Alberta. But what we have seen in Manitoba, with a Conservative government, is a very sharp slowdown in the economy, and more unemployment than Manitoba has had since before World War II.

We have seen a Conservative government which was elected largely by convincing the people of Manitoba that they had done too much, and that a Conservative government would get the economy moving in Manitoba by leaving it to the private sector, not having government interference.

We have seen them, in the last three months, suddenly have a conversion. Suddenly they are prepared to spend money. Suddenly they are prepared to invest with private industry and in the development of mines.

I would suggest to the hon. member for Bow River that he look at what is happening in Manitoba, that he look at a daily newspaper like the *Winnipeg Tribune*—which is not, by any stretch of the imagination, in support of the NDP; indeed, in all my years, it has been in support of the Conservative party—and see the kinds of reports that they have been publishing lately about what has happened to Manitoba universities, and about what has happened to Manitoba hospitals under a Conservative government.

I want to say to the minister that I wish he would not be so partisan, I wish he would not be so enthusiastic about the Liberal party that he could forget all the things that he saw before he came here. I am not going to suggest, for a moment, that the NDP government of Manitoba solved all the problems of the inner city, or anything else, but the minister cannot help but know, because he is not blind, that there are few, if any, cities in Canada in which he will see as many senior citizens housing, retired people, living usually with only their pension, living in comfort, in up-to-date apartments, and paying a very small rent.