

Appropriation Act

am afraid it might become redundant and that we will return to the original tariff.

There is a small escape clause which says that this matter will be reviewed prior to the expiry date of the bill. I fear the government may not only maintain all the tariff reductions presently incorporated in the bill before us but may bring in further reduction. We may at that time have a further list placed before parliament in respect of greater tariff reductions because the government states it is interested in free trade among nations. What always bothers me when I hear the government talk about free trade among nations is that the phrase seems to have one meaning to the government and another to every other country with which we trade.

We have no tariff barriers with other countries, and when we protest as producers our protests fall on deaf ears and we are left without any redress, while they are at liberty to dump commodities into this country. I cannot understand why the government takes this attitude so far as the primary producers are concerned. The measure before us is an indication that the government does not consider the primary producers to be important. Never in the history of this country have the producers of food been more important. Never in the history of this country should we peruse bills of this nature in a more intense way than now, because our primary producers must not be hurt financially any longer if we are to retain them in this country. It is shocking to realize how many Canadian producers are looking for other countries to which to immigrate and produce food where the economic climate is more favourable than here in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper. Before I call notices of motions I should like to call the attention of hon. members to the terms of the special order providing for the debate commencing at eight o'clock this evening.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

[English]

APPROPRIATION ACT

SUGGESTED SPECIAL STATUTE TO COVER GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS COSTING OVER \$5 MILLION ANNUALLY

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, where a government program entails the expenditure of public funds in excess of \$5 million annually to a purpose detailed only in an Appropriation Act and the program continues in existence for more than one fiscal year, the government should introduce a measure to incorporate such program in a distinct and detailed statute.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak to my motion I want to place on the record the basic considerations that prompted me to put forward this proposition in the first place. I aim at restoration of parliamentary control over matters with which parliament should be able to deal. I submit that it is fundamental to our form of parliamentary

[Mr. Danforth.]

democracy that government be under an unremitting, moral responsibility to introduce legislation covering programs involving major expenditures from the public purse. This obligation weighs even more heavily on the government when these programs are of a continuing nature or are repeated year after year.

● (1700)

The government has introduced far too many such programs without seeking the consent of parliament, without giving us the opportunity of considering the principles on which these programs should rest and the safeguards, in the shape of operational and financial controls, on which we should be able to insist. There has been an increasing tendency on the part of the government to rely on short-term, stop gap measures for the creation of jobs.

My motion reads that where a program entails the expenditure of public funds in excess of \$5 million annually, to a purpose detailed only in an appropriation act, and that program continues in existence for more than one fiscal year, the government should introduce a measure to incorporate such program in a distinct and detailed statute.

The argument prompting me to put forward this resolution boils down to this: If programs of this sort and this scale are worth launching and continuing, they deserve—nay, Mr. Speaker, they demand—in terms of parliamentary supremacy to rest on a statutory foundation. Anything less is a usurpation of parliament's rights and prerogatives.

It is in the area of manpower programs that the government most conspicuously has resorted to by-passing parliament, and therefore it is in this area that I wish to concentrate my remarks. Without extensive research it is just not possible to isolate all the programs offending my premises. LIP, OFY and LEAP are the most obvious. New Horizons, although not directly in the sense of an employment program, is certainly another.

It is especially in the area of manpower programs that the government has fallen down in its legislative responsibility. This perhaps is significant. The government has reduced parliament, which has legal and legislative supremacy, to a rubber stamp for decisions that have been made elsewhere. And where are these decisions being made? I suggest that many of them are being formulated in the civil service, and to this I shall return in due course.

As interim measures the Local Initiatives Program and Opportunities for Youth may be satisfactory. I say, "may", be; whether they are or not, Mr. Speaker, is something for parliament to decide. They could perhaps be justified, if that is the term, as being the only direct job creating efforts the Trudeau government is willing to make. And they are only temporary. That is a poor justification.

A series of LIP type programs laid end to end over the years cannot replace long-term employment growth strategies. We need positive legislation in this area to provide continuity, and to provide jobs and satisfaction for Canadians.

We need a long-term strategy of a permanent nature in industrial and employment terms, one that will probe the true needs of our communities. There is the question of