

Supply

However, this government has decided to provide the programs and resources to help people who often have trouble entering the job market owing to a lack of training. We have allocated the necessary funding and resources to give them that chance. That is a concrete measure that was not mentioned by the hon. member for Hamilton East. That is all I have to say.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I remember that during my first year in the House, the first thing this government did was to cut the unemployment insurance program by 30 per cent. The last year the Liberals were in power, the unemployment insurance fund had \$1.3 billion, and the first thing the former finance minister did was to cut it down to \$700 million.

• (1740)

This works out to a 30 per cent cut, at a very difficult time for Canadian workers. Enough of these falsified figures. The fact is that 30 per cent of the cuts were already right there in the former minister's first budget in 1985.

Mr. Robitaille: Mr. Speaker, a point of order. The hon. member accused me of falsifying figures, but I want to make it clear that these are official figures and that I could table them at any time in the House of Commons.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Mr. Speaker, I would normally be pleased to participate in a debate in this House but I am not so sure about what is going on here today.

When I hear the volatile language going back and forth, I cannot help but wonder if there are people across Canada who are unemployed today, what they think about what they have been listening to here. They would be pretty destitute to be still listening, given the level of discussion that we have been hearing.

I do not know what this motion is doing, taking up a day in the House. I cannot help but see this motion as nothing but a cynical exercise in mischief making by our friends on the other side. Reportedly the motion includes quotes from a member of this side of the House

who articulated some concerns with respect to proposed legislation. I would have thought it was the right and responsibility of that member.

The member raising the discussions has sat down with the minister responsible and discussed the proposed legislation which I would remind this Chamber has not even come before this House. That member of Parliament should be commended for speaking publicly and strongly about areas of concern that he has articulated. I am sure, when the legislation comes to this House, it will be very significantly improved because of the initiative of that member and other members in coming forward with their concerns.

What about this motion? How many people will this motion put back to work? Perhaps it is going to provide a day's employment for all the people here today, but that is not going to be of much benefit to Canadian taxpayers. There are a lot of serious issues which I would have thought an opposition that was genuinely concerned about this country might well have brought forward for debate today.

As I listen day after day in Question Period, those members are reaching in all directions, trying to convince Canadians that the country is falling down around us, notwithstanding the fact that this is probably the finest place in the world to live. Most of us are proud to be Canadians. Most people in Canada are anxious to find employment opportunities, if they do not have them. Most unemployed people are pleased to have the opportunities that are created through some of the measures of active unemployment insurance which this government has brought forward in the last few years, measures, I might say, that were opposed by my friends opposite.

I am sure members from every single riding are delighted to assist people in their communities to take advantage of section 25 programs, for example, which provide good work opportunities for unemployed people and the training and various other programs which have been made available through the Labour Force Development Strategy. They take full advantage of these programs in their ridings and then come here and scoff them.