

**Mr. Benjamin:** We have surpluses in good times and in difficult times we have deficits. There is a reason for that. We did it in the days of the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) and we are doing it now under Premier Blakeney. You invest when things are at their worst, when the economy is slumping. That is the time to invest for the public good.

The per capita debt in Saskatchewan is \$985. In Ontario, it is something like \$2,100. Hon. members should realize that we paid as we went, and our people are working.

Manitoba has the unenviable record of experiencing the highest increase in unemployment in the past year of any province, beating Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. The increase in the last year has been 35 per cent. That is their restraint. That is their cutbacks. That is their Proposition 13 mentality. It is not public dollars but private dollars that have got their people into the mess they are in. We have had Culver Tories and we have had Lyon Tories, as well as suppositories, such as my hon. friend from New Westminster talked about. A Tory is a Tory is a Tory, and that did not come by chance.

The minister spoke about people being prepared to move to find work. Mr. Speaker, people will move to work if there is work to move to. I did it when I was 17; the only reason I was able to move though was because there had to be a war to put everybody to work in munitions production or the shipyards. I went berrypicking, I joined a threshing crew. I worked in the shipyards. I paid unemployment insurance premiums but never got to use any benefits—I could have done so, but I joined up. I wanted to work, and the whole country wants to work.

The government ought to be bringing down another budget—the last half dozen they have given us were next to worthless. We need a budget which invests billions of dollars in what the country needs to put people to work. We need a minimum of a billion dollars a year invested in the transportation system. We need another additional billion invested in housing.

We need a municipal capital development fund of \$3 billion or \$4 billion from which municipalities can borrow at less than the bank rate, with the nation as a whole picking up the additional interest cost. The municipalities know what has to be done in their communities, whether they are little villages or the largest metropolitan centres in the country. We can do something about unemployment and pollution at the same time. We could say to the municipalities: you have the use of a fund at less than the bank rate with which to provide, for example, tertiary sewage treatment in every city in Canada with a population of over 5,000. Imagine the number of people who would be put to work manufacturing, assembling and operating projects of that sort. As I say, something could be done about pollution and employment at the same time while improving the well-being of our society.

Then again, instead of building 200,000 housing units a year we might invest in 500,000 units a year, putting people to work and reducing the cost of housing at the same time. Some of the financing for all this could be provided by those who are not paying their fair share of taxation and should be doing so.

### *Unemployment Insurance Act*

In addition to the \$8 billion that unemployment is costing our economy this year there are another \$8 billion lying on the books of the Government of Canada in the form of deferred taxes. Whatever argument might be advanced in favour of deferring taxes owed by corporations it would surely be reasonable and fair if those companies paid a modest rate of interest on those taxes, because those taxes will never be paid. A rate of interest of, say, 9 per cent, lower than anybody else in Canada can get, would provide another \$700 million a year in revenue for investment in the kind of job creation I have described.

This double taxation principle in clause 1, even though it is a relatively high income earner, flies in the face of anything that is fair and reasonable. The minister could not get away with it if he tried that system on the financial institutions or on any other part of the corporate sector. Neither the Grits nor the Tories would even contemplate it. But they will do it to somebody who has to rely on wages.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lapointe) made a speech worthy of someone who is upset by this legislation, and I hope he shows his feelings with his vote. He made a good speech though I suspect it was operation SLBS—"Save Lapointe's Backside." He wants the government to take another look at this. He talks about unemployment in his riding running at between 23 per cent and 26 per cent. How he can sit over there in almost the same row as the minister who is sponsoring this legislation, is beyond me. I hope he will put his vote where his mouth is. And I hope the hon. member for South Western Nova (Miss Campbell) and a number of other members from that side of the House who feel the same way will do so too.

It is important, also, when you ask people to make sacrifices and exercise restraint, that it should apply to all, not just to salary and wage earners. No one section of the population should be asked to carry the load by themselves. I think of the crude and unconscionable returns which are expected and obtained by the corporate sector—one would not mind so much if this money, or a large part of it, were reinvested in job creation. I have not heard the government or the official opposition suggest to shareholders in the corporate sector that they should show some restraint, take smaller dividends or take half the dividends they expect and invest surplus revenue in their country instead of putting it into their own fat pocketbooks. I did not hear the government or the official opposition ask financial institutions to stop the unconscionable record 26 per cent increase in profits over the past year. I have not heard them say that there should be restraint or cutbacks there. There has been no requirement on the part of shareholders or executives to cut back and to invest in employment or in the people of our nation.

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To try to reduce government deficits at the expense of wage and salary earners is unconscionable. That should be beyond the conscience, the decency, and the morals which are in the hearts and minds of the Liberal and Conservative parties.