

*Government Orders*

• (1650)

He weighed all the factors and he went back to the ski hill the next day and told them that he would be happy to remain a volunteer at the ski hill, but if he took the job he would give up his UIC and his net benefit would be a drop in income. He did not particularly care to do that.

We have improved over the hardships that people like the hon. member's grandmother had to live under and deal with. As I say I think perhaps the pendulum has swung too far the other way and these are the kinds of things we are going to have to look at when we talk in terms of social reform.

One other factor that I want to touch on while still on the subject of the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood is that of women in business. Once again it is something that is moving in the right direction but with a potential problem as well.

We saw recently in the province of Ontario a provincial government ad that said in essence white males need not apply. There is no question that women, whether it be in business or in any other area, have been discriminated against in the past. I hope that time is coming to an end. I am sure there is still discrimination out there but it is being reduced, it is being dealt with and it is something that people are now very much aware of.

However, it is hard to really properly deal with it by introducing various types of reverse discrimination. There is a risk in doing that if you can help a woman to go into a business, to assist her and give her some benefit that is not available to other people. We see this not only in the area of women in business but we see it in many things. It applies in general business without categorization—it might be men to men—but nonetheless we have to take a very cautious look at any area which offers specialized help for any one group no matter what it happens to be.

We obviously have to reduce the amount of money we spend, the payments that we make, as it were, under social programs. It has been said by very learned people that by some time in the next decade the cost of our social programs combined with the interest on our debt—those two factors alone—will exceed the government's income. Obviously reductions can be made in other areas but if you eliminate everything, if you eliminate the departments of agriculture, fisheries, defence, foreign policy and all other departments, totally eliminate them, we still would

not deal with our debt problem. Obviously changes have to be made under social programs.

However, before we start reducing payments made under these programs we have to first reduce costs in other areas. These costs have to certainly be in the delivery of social program benefits. Not just under that, we have to look at all the other programs and all the other departments as well.

One of the things that will happen is if we stop removing so much money from people in all the other areas it puts less pressure on the social programs.

Something we might want to look at under agriculture, for example, is grain car allocation so that the farmers are better able to get their grain to market; likewise, the labour disruptions at ports. These are problems that affect the revenues of farmers. Not only that but as we saw in the last labour disruption in the port of Vancouver, it had a spinoff effect that started to shut down factories in other parts of the country that had absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with farming or grain. It is a matter of problems that tie up the ports and then start to affect people in other areas.

In my own riding Cominco Ltd. had I think about three days worth of supplies left before it had to start providing layoff notices. These are things that we have to look at.

On business subsidies, we are talking in terms of women in business. These business subsidies also apply in other areas. One of the problems with business subsidies is that not all people get them. How do we reconcile the fact that we give a subsidy to one business and not to another? We could end up with a government subsidized business competing directly with a similar business that receives no subsidy.

The hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood had a question after his talk about why there cannot be some form of program that allows people on unemployment insurance to start a business of their own while collecting it.

• (1655)

There is such a program called SEAP, the self-employment assistance program, which does exactly that. One has to be on unemployment insurance in order to apply for it. The benefit that one gets is one year from the point of time that one's program is approved one gets to remain on unemployment insurance for one year while one starts his or her business.

That has some potential but again it is one of these things where one cannot just arbitrarily say what a wonderful program. I have had cases come up in my riding recently in which people who were on unemployment insurance were given the opportunity to start a business and had their unemployment insurance benefits continued while they did this for one year. However, two cases have come up in which they are in direct competition with existing businesses.

The latest case that has come up has resulted in the person getting this assistance dropping his prices to carve his niche into the market which will result in the other competitor who is already there and did not get assistance before and is not getting