

Supplementary Borrowing Authority

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance had a great deal to say about the survival of the fittest in these times. The Prime Minister said that the weak must be assisted and helped. What he meant, of course, was that the 2 million people unemployed today are weak. I find that a very painful statement. I find it to be a very thoughtless statement coming from the Prime Minister of this country. To think that 2 million people who are presently out of work because they are weak is wrong. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is a result of the ill-conceived economic policies of this Government over the last 14 years. That has resulted in the economic environment which has led to these 2 million people being unemployed. I realize that there are other circumstances that must be brought to bear on that explanation as well. There are external factors that influence the picture. However, we would have to admit that to a large extent the Government of Canada brought us into this mess and it is up to the Government of Canada to get us out of it. Work, not welfare, is what the unemployed in this country want.

What did the Minister of Finance say about assistance to the forest industry, an industry which cuts across every province and territory in this country? He said nothing to assist the forest industry. He said nothing to assist the mining industry. He said nothing to ease the energy costs of farmers and fishermen. He said nothing to assist the various service groups in this country and nothing to assist the small business sector. Sorry, that is not true. The Minister did say that he had something to assist the small business sector. He was referring to the small business bond. But try to get a small business bond, Mr. Speaker. Small business bonds are provided through the banks of Canada. The banks of Canada do not issue small business bonds because the banks have already used up that capacity. But the Government takes out full page ads in the newspapers and magazines of Canada stating, "Here we are, we are helping small business. Take out a small business bond." But small business bonds do not exist in this country. There are no small business bonds. Then the Government says, "We have another program as well to assist small business but we have not introduced it into the Commons yet. We will, however, approach the banks of Canada asking them to have faith in us."

Would you have faith in that group over there? Would you have faith in the Government of Canada considering where it has taken this country? The bankers do not have faith. Canadians do not have faith. There is no way on this earth that the banks of Canada will introduce a program until it is signed, sealed and delivered in this House of Commons and the Senate.

Again, where is the assistance to small business, other than in the myths and in the rhetoric that we have become used to in this country? There is nothing for the steel industry. There is nothing for the auto industry? There is nothing for the home owners of this country, except for a couple of minor programs. We have seen how successful they have been in stimulating the construction industry. I look across the way at a person who

understands the housing crisis only too well. Today he must admit that the stimulation we were promised for the housing industry of Canada is yet to come. We are still waiting for it.

There are nearly 2 million people in this country who are unemployed. Canada is known as the basket case of the western industrialized nations. We are the losers. We are the laughing stock of the western industrialized nations. It is with a great deal of concern that I say that. I have just had the good fortune of returning from attending an international congress of small business. There was talk about small business around the world. People from Sweden, West Germany or Britain ask which country you come from. When you say Canada, they have a funny look on their face. People thought that Canada was one of the richest countries in the world. People thought that Canada had more advantages than virtually any other country in the entire world. Why then are we the basket case of the western industrialized nations? Why is Canada falling behind?

Mr. Cosgrove: It is your fault.

Mr. Deans: You could not build a house.

Mr. Riis: This man across the way could not build a house. He is responsible himself for the housing situation in this country. It is at the lowest ebb it has ever been since the 1930s, and he is saying that it is our fault?

We should have three priorities in this country. I was hoping the Minister of Finance in his economic statement yesterday would identify those three priorities. Those three priorities ought to be jobs, jobs and jobs. Until we start putting people to work in this country, there will be no economic recovery.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Start spending money.

Mr. Riis: You cannot have an economic recovery in a system like ours, a capitalist system that depends upon continued expansion in terms of goods and services, if people cannot buy them. That is what we are up against today. People cannot purchase goods. People cannot purchase services. The way, presumably, to resolve this is to throw a few more people out of work.

The Minister said that he was going to set aside \$500 million to create 60,000 jobs over the next year and a half, jobs essentially to get people back on UIC. What he is saying is that so many people now have been on UIC for a year who are now moving on to welfare and we have to get them back on to UIC. Therefore, we have to give them a temporary job for a few months so they will requalify and so continue on UIC benefits. That is an imaginative way to get Canadians working in a meaningful way. To accomplish this the Minister of Finance is going to take some money out of one pocket in order to put it into another. He is going to take jobs from the energy sector and he is going to take jobs from the foreign aid sector. There are a number of jobs in the foreign aid sector when you start cutting back considering the amount of tied aid that our colleagues across the way have. They are going to be losing