

*Canadian Economy*

office any government which pretended that a country can survive on the basis of that kind of attitude.

Furthermore, in the course of the past ten years we have witnessed what I consider to be an unprecedented intrusion into the daily lives of Canadians whether as individuals or as business groups. Never before have certain aspects of their democratic rights been eliminated as rapidly as has been the case under the present administration. I ask hon. members to consider how our nation acquired the prosperity which made so many of our social undertakings possible. It is easy to see. The economy was based on private ownership and private enterprise. The tax system was designed to stimulate growth and, consequently, the development of employment.

The economy, in short, did not reflect the belief that government had the answer to everything or that government must run everything. One of the reasons the economy is drifting toward disaster today is that we now have a government in power which believes it must be the master and control everything. It does not want to give people the opportunity to exercise their initiative, their imagination or their ability to produce. I do not believe we need to look too far afield to notice the difference in productivity between government-operated production systems and those which are controlled by the private sector. We need only look to countries behind the iron curtain or behind the bamboo curtain to assure ourselves that an economy based on the state controlling and owning the means of production turns out to be extremely cumbersome, inefficient and distrustful of individual initiative. We need not look far around the globe to see that an economy based on production in private hands is more successful and leads to a higher standard of living.

Therefore, I should like to say to those who sit on the treasury benches opposite that as long as they are in charge—which I suppose will be for the next three years—they should reassess the urge on their part to control every aspect of our lives and business as if this were somehow an inescapable part of their duty to the people. We recognize that government has an obligation to help those who cannot help themselves, but we also recognize that this process should involve, not making them permanent dependents on government but, rather, giving them an opportunity to improve their own positions. One can illustrate this easily by an example which has become a cliché, and it is the only cliché I will use in this speech, "You can give a man a meal by giving him a fish, but you can feed him for the rest of his life by teaching him how to fish." This is a principle we must incorporate into the welfare aspect of our society. If we are to come to grips with poverty on a long-term basis, we must make an effort to stimulate self-reliance rather than prolonging a need for dependence on government for more and more handouts.

We need only read the story of Robin Hood to be reminded that simply taking from the rich and giving to the poor will never erase the condition of poverty in the long term, though it may be a necessary solution in the short term. Canadians, or, for that matter, others who are living in conditions of poverty, must be given an opportunity to look after themselves. They must be given educational opportunity; their ability to earn a living must be upgraded. Programs must be designed to achieve those goals, and

job opportunities must become available if we are seriously to tackle the problem of poverty in this country.

We know that taxes are a necessary evil in our society. Taxes are necessary because there are certain public services and projects which governments are obliged to provide. But the tax system must recognize the principle that initiative and enterprise should be rewarded. It must be designed in such a way as to stimulate growth. I have to say, frankly, that our tax system does not do this. Any one of us can look back over the past year and think of individuals, old friends, who have said, "Why should I work any harder; the tax people take it all away?" There is a reason for this feeling: it is that the tax system has become cumbersome and has destroyed the initiative of many Canadians, discouraging them from working harder or doing what is necessary to make our country grow. We must, therefore, work toward far reaching changes in the tax system, changes which recognize the need to reward initiative. Through the provision of equal opportunity we must motivate people to pursue excellence and greater productivity for the benefit of Canada.

● (1550)

I have already said that I do not think government must be the master of the people and perhaps I should say what the government should, in my view, do. The role of government is more properly one of the guiding hand, a body creating the economic atmosphere in which private individuals or groups of individuals, corporations or any other Canadians, can exercise their initiative and imagination to do the things required to make this country grow and be great. We must also insist that the role of government must be to create the atmosphere in which no Canadian is exploited by other groups, in which no Canadian is dominated by external political or economic forces. In this regard I think our party has a good record. We have put forward policies that would have achieved these ends and which would have been in place now had we won the last election. These policies are still our policies and will be placed before the people in the course of the next election.

I have said that I am very concerned that the policies of the government are designed, it appears, to create dependency on government. The LIP and OFY programs are very good examples of policies that create dependency on government. We need to achieve new directions. Somehow we must reawaken in the minds and hearts of Canadians the concept of self-reliance. We must give all Canadians the opportunity to look after themselves and their dependants with dignity and security. I am not saying that Canada is an easy country to govern. We have much diversity. We have people of many different races from virtually all parts of the world living together within our borders. Our geographic regions are very much different physically, economically and socially.

I see you are sitting on the end of your seat, Mr. Speaker. Are you going to give me another minute to wind up?

**An hon. Member:** One minute.

**Mr. Yewchuk:** In short, Mr. Speaker, Canada requires new directions and policies that are designed to allow individual Canadians to exercise their own initiative, that