

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 11, 1984

The House met at 11 a.m.

• (1105)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

APRIL UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker the appalling performance of the Liberal Government is not without its root causes. Those Canadians desperately seeking non-existent jobs know what to blame. It is the Liberal zero growth policy. It is the Liberal high interest rate policy. It is the Liberal anti-investment policy, and the Liberal lack of concern for economic and job related issues.

Today's Statistics Canada figures speak for themselves. Our unemployment rate remains at 11.4 per cent, in comparison with only 7.8 per cent in the United States. Last month youth unemployment increased from 18.2 per cent to 18.5 per cent. The number of long-term unemployed is now double what it was three years ago.

Canadians have a right to expect a better deal from their Government. They know that neither the Liberals nor the NDP can deliver jobs. Therefore, let us bring on an election and change to a Conservative Government dedicated to high rates of permanent employment right across the nation.

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EMPLOYMENT

SUMMER CAREER ACCESS PROGRAM—CHANGE IN FUNDING

Mr. Stanley Hudecki (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, last autumn the Government of Canada consolidated its 12 existing job-creation programs into four. This was a welcome move in that it made it much easier to keep track of the programs and to advise constituents. However, one aspect of this consolidation has led to complaints from a number of my constituents at McMaster University. This is in relation to the change in rules between last summer and this summer in what was called the Summer Canada Student Internship Program. The corresponding program this year is called Summer Career Access.

The problem has occurred with those programs which were approved in principle last summer for three years funding with

the understanding that the same students would be hired for three consecutive summers, allowing training at a higher level each year. However, with the program change, instead of the Government paying the students' full wage, only 50 per cent of the wages will be paid up to a maximum of \$3 per hour for a 40-hour week. In addition, for charitable or non-profit employers, another \$80 per week will be allocated per student for additional costs such as OHIP, et cetera.

For projects which were approved in principle for three years, the rules have been changed. This has jeopardized a number of student jobs because the universities were not able to budget for the difference in the wage subsidies. I would therefore recommend that the Government provide a special supplement to these projects which were approved in principle for three years' funding last year so that 100 per cent of the students' wages will be covered until the end of those three-year projects.

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HOUSING

DECLINE IN NUMBER OF STARTS

Mr. Scott Fennell (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, according to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing starts in most Canadian cities posted a significant slow-down during the first third of this year. On a national basis, housing starts fell for the second straight month in April. According to the director of statistics for CMHC, many housing experts have trimmed a few thousands starts from their housing forecasts for 1984.

With the bank rate the highest it has been in two years, and going up, and mortgage rates following, the situation in the housing industry is becoming critical. The proposed increase in the federal sales tax on building materials scheduled for October is only going to exacerbate the problem and cause more lost jobs.

Economists are predicting another recession by the end of this year, or at least by the beginning of 1985. If we go into another recession with 1.5 million people unemployed, it will have a traumatic effect on the average Canadian household. We need to help the people of Canada by keeping mortgage rates at an affordable level. This in turn will help those people in the construction industry because they will have jobs and will be able to go to work every morning.