

Adjournment Debate

What we have to do in the current economic context, particularly concerning the international trade sector, is to look to the future. What the New Democratic Party would have us do is to stand pat in the present, if not go back into the past. The only future they seem to envisage is inaccessible: extended services, increased public outlays, more grants, reduced taxes, fewer expenditures. It is impossible.

We are a responsible Government, Mr. Speaker, and we intend to study this report. Within the weeks and months to come we will decide what Government measures should be taken. We will not know that tomorrow morning, we have to study the report and, as we have always done, we will promote the interests of Canadian farmers.

[*English*]

YOUTH—JOB-CREATION PROGRAMS

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, you will recall that on March 18 I asked the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) what programs, if any, her Department had in connection with youth. As well, I asked her to advise the House if there are in fact such programs. I asked her to advise us how many there are and how many young people are involved in them.

I asked the question at the time because I believe that the majority of the people of Canada are under a false impression at the present time. I believe that they are under an impression which has been given them by the Opposition and by the media to the effect that the present Government does not have any programs for youth. I believe they are under the impression that the present Government has not committed any money for youth programs and that, in fact, there are no youth participating in programs put together and in place by the present Government.

Mr. Speaker, you know and I know that that is not the case. We know that there are programs in place. We know that the Government has put a great number of programs in place. However, I am under the impression from what I read in the press and from what I hear in my constituency and across the country that there are a substantial number of our fellow Canadians who do not realize what the Government has done. They do not seem to realize that the Government shares the concerns of all Canadians with respect to the problems of youth. They do not seem to realize, or they do not remember, that during the last federal election campaign, one of the main issues was the whole question of unemployment and the economy. A major part of those issues revolved around the issue of youth unemployment. A large portion of the public do not seem to know or realize that when the Government took office, it put into effect a review of all of these programs, programs for employment, for youth employment and youth training.

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The main focus of that review was to make sure that the money being spent to benefit the youth of Canada was being spent as efficiently and effectively as possible and would

ensure that the youth of Canada got the most out of the money that was being spent to help them. The review focused on youth employment and how to get more jobs for unemployed young people. As a result of that review, all of those programs were redesigned. New programs were put in place. One of the major new programs was called Canadian Jobs Strategy.

You and I are aware, Mr. Speaker, that in this current fiscal year, something like \$734 million is being spent on youth training and job-creation programs. We are aware as well that in this current fiscal year, something like 222,600 young people are participating in all of these various new government programs. As well, we are aware that more money is being spent and more people are involved than were involved under all of the previous Liberal Government programs, including Katimavik. Even at the height of youth unemployment, which peaked in 1982 at something in excess of 21 per cent, the former Liberal Government did not have anywhere near the amount of money committed to youth employment and training programs that is now committed by the present Government under these new programs.

In the years between 1980 and 1984, during what has now come to be called the great recession, 142,000 young people lost their jobs. They lost their jobs at a time when the former Liberal Government was in power and claiming to be helping young people and interested in them. We are aware as well that since September 1984, when the present Government came to power, 75,000 new jobs for young people have been created and that has helped youth unemployment to fall.

I believe that most Canadians are not aware of these facts. I believe that they feel that Katimavik was the only program for youth employment that was in place. They know that it was established as a training program for youth and to give youth life training experiences. What I do not think they understand is that though Katimavik was created and established by a very honourable person, Senator Hébert, when one establishes any program, one becomes personally attached to it and feels that it is a very special program that should be not changed in any way or eliminated. We know that everything in life changes, and hopefully for the better. In fact, what has happened since the new Government put its programs in place is that youth unemployment has been falling. More and more young people have jobs and are getting jobs. Not enough young people have jobs, but still youth unemployment has been falling.

Tonight I hope that the Parliamentary Secretary will make those points to the Canadian people and will make the Canadian people aware of what the present Government has been doing as far as youth programs, employment and training are concerned. I hope as well that he will give us some real examples of the types of people who have been benefiting from the new programs that have been put in place by the Government since September 1984.

Mr. Pierre Blais (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I could say that what the Hon. Member said is absolutely true. On behalf of the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald), I would