

I am amazed that a member of the House of Commons, one whom I respect, one of the finest mayors in Canada, would stand up and play a political posturing game and say that it was based upon confrontation. The fact is that we now have in place proposals for a new national training program which would allocate money for training in areas with job potential. We will offer to the provinces major capital investments to modernize their training institutions. We will develop a new forecasting system for training so that we can operate with the private sector and provincial governments to develop more accurate projections as to where the shortfall in skilled workers will be so we can provide remedies for those shortfalls.

Right now, provincial government officials are meeting with our officials to discuss those proposals and work out joint projects. We will be meeting again. Is this an example of confrontation, when we are working toward an agreement for new training programs? The only confrontation is that which exists in the minds of members opposite. The only conflict is in the mind of the hon. member for Rosedale, because that is what he wants to see. He wants to conjure up this scenario of the federal government being at war with the provinces. We are not at war with the provinces over training, Mr. Speaker. What we do have to say to the provinces and to many institutions is that too many regions of our country are training people for jobs that do not exist. Four out of nine people in our training programs are being trained for jobs which do not exist. Of our people being trained, 30 per cent are ending up on unemployment.

We have to change our priorities. As one of my colleagues said, certain provinces were training more hairdressers and barbers than there were heads to cut. Surely a federal government which is spending \$900 million must have a sense of priority as to where the money is to be spent. I am thankful that the provinces are now accepting those priorities. We took the leadership in establishing those priorities. I believe it is the responsibility of the federal government to take leadership in those areas, but to work completely with the provincial governments and the private sector in the reallocation of moneys and those training programs.

So, Mr. Speaker, this could be a useful debate today. I think it is an important debate and that Canadians are looking forward to it. But it should be a debate based upon facts and realities, not upon fiction and rhetoric, which is what we unfortunately heard from the hon. member for Rosedale. He did not do himself or his party much of a service by simply getting up and again repeating the same old song, singing the same tune, instead of coming forward with constructive solutions, with a positive approach and suggesting that we work together to solve these problems.

We are presently examining our employment programs. We are trying to find answers and are looking at the problem of the employment of young people and special groups in this country. We want to develop new measures which can be used more effectively, to get a much better and more efficient use of the moneys we have. We are in the process of doing that and have been in this process for several months. The training

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program was the first instalment of a major change in our labour market programs. But it is based upon the co-operation of all sectors. We certainly wish for the collaboration of members opposite in coming up with ideas because many of them have worked in this field and may have good ideas based upon their experiences. We will not get those ideas if all we get from them is conflict and confrontation, if what we receive from them is not a willingness to work together but to work apart.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that Canadians do expect their Members of Parliament to try to find better answers, good answers to the problem of unemployment. I would offer to members opposite the chance to use this debate to come forward with those kinds of ideas. I, for one, will listen to them and make sure that cabinet hears them. But if we simply hear again the old song that nothing is being done, that all is going to wrack and ruin, then this debate will go for nought, Mr. Speaker, and Canadians will be the poorer for it.

Miss Carney: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. If the minister still has some time, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if he would answer a question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): That can only be done with unanimous consent since the hon. minister's time has just expired.

An hon. Member: No.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I listened with a good deal of interest to the speech just completed by the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy). There was really only one thing he said with which I could agree and that was his wish that today's debate could be useful. Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, I had to wonder whether the minister was talking about the country we both live in. It seemed to me that he was talking about another country, and maybe even another planet.

But I must keep in mind that, with that exception of the short-lived nine months of Conservative government, we have had a Liberal government continuously since 1963—almost 20 years. We have more unemployment now than we have ever had, and for the first time in our history we have more than a million people unemployed on a seasonally adjusted basis. We have the highest rate of inflation that we have ever experienced in our history. I must ask myself, why is this so? Where were all these wonderful programs which the minister told us about? Why did they not work? Since they did not work, how can the minister tell us that everything is fine?

Let us examine the record. For the last month for which figures are available, there were more than a million unemployed on a seasonally adjusted basis. This is despite the fact that the labour force declined and that there were 122,000 fewer jobs in December than September and 57,000 fewer jobs between November and December alone. There is the report about which questions were asked today which indicates that there will be another 175,000 people unemployed by March. I found the answers given by the Minister of Industry, Trade