

Income Tax Law Amendment Act, 1971

government would do well to realize that it has spent a long time trying out the trickle-down recipe which has not worked. It never has worked and will work less well as time goes on.

I think the government would do well to realize that what we have in this country is a group of captive consumers. We have many people whose income is relatively small. They have to spend money as soon as they get it, and we know what they spend it on. They spend it on the bare necessities of living, and do not spend much on the luxury items. So I think the government would be well advised to consider reversing this taxing arrangement and giving the really big tax reductions to the people who need them, namely, to the captive consumers who are bound to spend what they have on the goods and services which the country needs to produce in order to keep the wheels of industry and the services going in this country. These are the people who should be given the tax concessions.

• (3:20 p.m.)

Instead of that, this is another piece of legislation which proposes to give tax reductions to what I will call the uncontrolled corporations as opposed to the captive consumers. Because when this money is handed over to the corporations, either in the form of direct grants or tax reductions, no conditions are attached to it. No attempt is made to evaluate what is done with the money, to find out whether this money stays on the Canadian side of the border or whether or not large amounts of it are siphoned off to other countries, notably our neighbour to the south.

The worst part of this arrangement as embodied in the bill is the fact that the taxpayers, among whom are found many people who can ill afford to do so, have to pay for the care of the casualties of the operations of the big, uncontrolled corporations resulting from our way of doing business, which is that those people who have shall be given more by government concessions, and those people who have little shall have even that little taken away.

The high cost of treating illness, malnutrition, nervous and mental disorders, retardation of various kinds, delinquency and crime results from having a large group of people in our midst who do not have decent homes, proper nutrition, good clothing, decent educational opportunities, health care and the rest of it. These are not frivolous statements at all, and these are the reasons why we are opposed to the earlier clauses in this bill which propose to make larger concessions to and tax reductions for uncontrolled corporations than to captive consumers.

I know that members on all sides may think that we in this corner are not uttering words of sense and wisdom. I would remind hon. members opposite, and particularly those occupying the government benches, that when years ago Canada had a severe depression everyone knew there was a depression. Even the government of the day knew there was a depression, which is more than can be said for some subsequent governments. The trickle down recipe which we now have did not work at that time either. It was only when the president of the United States decided that human conditions and people in the lower income brackets needed looking after, and established programs

to care for their needs and built up the economy, that there were the beginnings of a glimmer of hope.

I do not intend to deal any further with the earlier clauses of this bill because spokesmen among my colleagues have dealt with them very thoroughly. I do not think there is any need for me to do more than to say that we do not accept the principles underlying the first part of this bill.

However, I wish to deal with the second part of the bill on which very little has been said today. The second part of the bill has to do with the on the job training program. The government proposes to make available for the winter of 1971-72 the sum of \$20 million for this new on the job training program. I want to say right away that we in this party consider that this program is based on a good principle and that it has possibilities. Consequently, we are much more favourably disposed toward it than toward some other programs to which I could make reference.

One principle, which I think is very good, of this on the job training program is that it removes the impediments which we have found in earlier manpower training programs and which we have opposed. These restrictions prevent women in households where there was male support from being able to avail themselves of the programs to the extent of receiving living allowance. This restriction is removed in the new program and the allowance applies both to women and to young people. Under the terms of the old manpower training programs, in order to qualify for training allowances people had to be in the labour force for three consecutive years, and it was found that women in the home and young people were prevented almost entirely from taking advantage of these programs because they were unable to meet this qualification.

To this extent I consider that the on the job training program is an improvement and has possibilities. However, I believe that certain questions must be raised at this point. The principle of giving money to employers to train their employees on the job is not a new one. It has been operating in industry since 1967 under the occupational training for adults act; but so far as members of the House are concerned we do not know very much about the success or otherwise of this program.

I want to ask the minister why there has been no evaluation of this program which has been in operation now for about five years. We want to have answers to a number of questions before we can be sure that the new on the job training program is going to work. We would like to know how many people have been trained since 1967, how many men and women are involved—because obviously there are women who have qualified, not the ones I mentioned but some others—and for what kind of jobs the training has prepared them.

I see the minister moving his hands out in a sort of Kewpie doll salute.

Mr. Lang: It is all available.

Mrs. MacInnis: It may be available but there are questions on the order paper that have not been answered. Perhaps it is available but one would need a prospector's pick and other equipment to dig it out, as well as a

[Mrs. MacInnis.]