

Supply

On November 16, 1982 the Hon. Member for Rosedale (Mr. Crombie), as reported on page 20694 of *Hansard*, asked for details of the program. The Minister of Employment and Immigration at that time replied by indicating that it "is not a program" so much as "an allocation of funds that were set aside in the June Budget" and "allocated to a number of different Departments to fund projects which were on the shelf or which could be funded directly through them". He went on to suggest Order Paper questions, and I am not sure whether questions were placed on the Order Paper—I see my colleague nodding his head. But the questions were never answered.

On November 30, 1982 and again on January 21, 1983 the Hon. Member for Rosedale raised further questions. Then we had the April Budget of the present Minister of Finance. A full year has gone by and we know nothing about the program. We know nothing about the criteria of the program. Information has been denied to the Official Opposition through oral and written questions by our official critic, the Hon. Member for Rosedale. A whole year has gone by and \$150 million in public funds have been spent without any accountability whatsoever to the House.

It emerged again in the long Budget of April, 1983 wherein it reads:

● (1220)

A further \$150 million will be provided for increased spending on local employment intensive projects.

The program now appears in the Budget papers under a new name. The name has been changed. It is now called the Special Employment Initiatives Program.

I am not going to bore the House with any other details in terms of the genesis of the scandal, which is what it is, except to bring the House up to November 29, 1983 when we asked questions in committee to find out more details about this program. Press releases were coming out and they were very interesting. I have a whole handful of them but I will just refer to a couple of them. I quote:

Swift Current: Senator Hazen Argue, Saskatchewan's representative in the national Cabinet, announced Monday a \$100,000 federal grant toward the completion of the community arena in Cabri.

Congratulations, Cabri, I hope you got your arena. Where was the Member of Parliament for that constituency? Not only was he not given the courtesy of advance notice, he was not even consulted, as is the case in all other existing programs.

I go on to Senator Olson, the Cabinet representative for Alberta. I quote from a release of October 8, 1982:

Senator Bud Olson, Leader of the Government in the Senate, announced today a federal government grant in the amount of \$1 million to the Canadian Hostelling Association (Alberta Association).

Again there is no reference whatsoever to the Albertan Members of Parliament who sit in this House. It goes on and on and on. In a committee of this House, we were denied information on this program. We were denied criteria as to how this program applies. The Deputy Minister of Employment and Immigration, in reply to my colleague from Kingston

and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), said: "I believe the criteria will be provided in the next day or so". In reply to a question I asked, the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) said in the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration on November 29:

I think there is only really one thing I can say to you: When you receive the criteria, if you believe there are some useful projects in your area which would meet the criteria, you send me the suggestions and I will consider them.

I thought that was a generous offer at the time, although I was concerned that there may be no money left in the kitty because at that time \$138 million of the \$150 million in the Lalonde budget had already been spent on 844 programs, some of which I just quoted announced by Liberal Senators.

I took the Minister at his word. In my province the unemployment rate is 20 per cent and 42 per cent of the work force is on unemployment insurance. I was grasping. I wanted to take the Minister at his word. I waited and I waited and I waited. I asked the Minister a question in the House on January 17. Again he said it was a fast-track program and that he would supply me with the criteria in a few days.

When did we get the criteria? We got the criteria on February 2. Yesterday we were told in the House by the Minister of Finance that we did not get it until February 2 because he was not satisfied with it, it was rather obscure, it was not clear. He was not quite satisfied with it, yet it was good enough to provide funding for Liberal Members of Parliament and Liberal constituencies. It was good enough to allocate \$288 million on unclear, unrefined criteria. Now, before he can give the criteria to us so that we can take advantage of the program, the Minister finds it has to have some fine tuning. We finally get it on February 2. The program is probably dead because there is no money left in it.

I will make you a wager, Mr. Speaker. I am prepared to bet any amount that we will see that porkbarrel emerge again in tomorrow's Budget under another name. You watch for it, Mr. Speaker, because it will be there.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): The Chair has considered the amendment submitted by the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) and finds it in order. There is now a ten-minute period for questions, answers and comments.

Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis) for moving this motion today. In view of the comments of the previous speaker from the Conservative Party, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton):

That this House continue to sit through the lunch hour for the purpose of continuing consideration of Supply Motion No. 5.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): The Chair has considered the proposition of the Hon. Member and finds it to be in accordance with Standing Order 8(4)(a). Those opposed to the motion will please rise.

And less than 25 members having risen: