

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jacques Hébert: Honourable senators, as the Minister of Finance just reminded us, the Tory government's dismal economic performance will have the effect of keeping unemployment rates above 10 per cent until 1994 and even beyond that time. That is what the Minister of Finance told us.

Youth unemployment is even worse. According to Statistics Canada, 17.6 per cent of young Canadians now between the ages of 15 and 24 are unemployed — a total of 420,000.

My question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Since yesterday's budget contains no measures to help young unemployed Canadians, what does the government intend to do to put them back to work?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I may remind Senator Hébert that our colleague, Senator MacEachen, has already tabled a notice of inquiry requesting a debate on the budget policies and measures.

I suggest the honourable senator express his views on the subject next Thursday.

Senator Hébert: Honourable senators, this is Question Period. We can be expected to ask questions about anything at all, and we have the right to expect an answer. Perhaps my supplementary will give Senator Murray enough time to think up one of his usual answers that mean absolutely nothing. I will give him a chance.

Young people are always the first to be affected by the short-sighted economic policies of this government, which is fortunately on the way out. Consider the cuts in employment programs for young Canadians. Between 1985 and 1991, the budget for the Summer Employment/Experience Development Program was practically cut in half, dropping from \$149 million to \$80 million. The Tories also cut the budget for Challenge, which dropped from \$205 million in 1985 to \$144 million. The same applies to summer jobs created under the government's Summer Employment Program. Their number also went down during the same period.

Considering, and this is my supplementary, that 420,000 young Canadians are looking for jobs, could the Conservative government tell us whether it will make further cuts in training programs or whether it will allocate funding in order to deal at least partly with the problem of youth unemployment?

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, Senator Hébert referred to the present government's economic performance as dismal. That opinion is not shared by international organizations like the International Monetary Fund, which predict that in 1993 and 1994, Canada's economic growth rate will be higher than that of any other industrialized country.

Senator Molgat: That is not what the unemployed are saying.

Senator Hébert: Unemployed Canadians will be delighted to hear that.

[English]

PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

PATENT ACT REGULATIONS—RESTRICTIONS ON GENERIC DRUG COMPANIES

Hon. M. Lorne Bonnell: Honourable senators, can the Leader of the Government tell us why the government has come to the aid of pharmaceutical industry patent holders with new regulations that further limit the activities of the generic drug companies, as reported in the *Globe and Mail* under the byline of Dan Westell?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have a note on that general subject which I shall read to the honourable senator for his information and possible edification.

The new regulation directly links the drug approval process under the Food and Drug Act with the protection of property rights under the Patent Act. Issuing a notice of compliance for a generic drug before a patent expires on the innovator's product enables the infringement of that patent.

Further, the enforcement of patent rights remains under the jurisdiction of the courts, and is not administered by the Department of National Health and Welfare.

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Senator Bonnell: Honourable senators, that sounds well and good. In fact, however, the government has required the generic drug companies to tell the government and the patent holders about any patent for which they might wish to apply. The patent drug companies may then go to court and hold up the situation perhaps for years, and at least for 90 days. This puts the onus on the government for making the decisions with respect to who can obtain a patent on pharmaceutical products, rather than having the patent drug companies protect their own rights.

Why is the government protecting the interests of the patent drug companies rather than those of the generic drug companies?