

Business of Supply

In this regard one of my particular concerns is for our student population, both those who will be graduating this year and those who hopefully will be returning to university in the fall. This group embraces many thousands who depend on the few dollars they can earn during the summer months to enable them to go back in the fall. At the rate we are going at present a great many students will not be returning in the fall because they will not have the money.

● (5:30 p.m.)

This year's graduates are trained and ready to find permanent places in Canada's labour force. But by all indications from university placement officials, industry, and even the Department of Manpower the outlook for them is bleak this year. As far as I can perceive nothing has been done by the minister or his department to prepare adequately to meet this problem. They have shown no awareness that I can see that these young people, highly trained, highly skilled, enthusiastic and dynamic are one of the country's richest natural resources. If they cannot find a place in our national scheme of things they will look elsewhere. Who shall blame them? The gain of the United States or of Europe will be Canada's loss. Last but by no means least, we have students who depend upon summer employment in order to continue their studies. Literally many thousands depend upon summer employment to further their career. I am speaking now particularly of university students, but this also includes many at the secondary school level. I believe this area of employment for graduates and students should have priority within the department of manpower at this time. If nothing is done within a few short weeks the damage done as a result of student unemployment will be irreparable.

It is for the reasons on which I have touched in my remarks that I support this motion with fervour and conviction. I believe it can be truly said that this government has failed utterly to capitalize on our national manpower resources and has irresponsibly endangered the careers of countless young Canadians who would normally have every right to expect a smooth transition from the long years of learning to the laying of a career foundation.

This government has failed to discharge its responsibilities to the older generations of Canadian workers and most particularly to the people of Canada's "have-not" regions. The minister of manpower comes from, I

[Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys).]

would suggest, the most depressed rural area, a county which was used for the purpose of a study by the commission which studied poverty in Canada. He, above anyone else, should know how serious and how terrible unemployment is in the Atlantic region. I hope he will take his responsibilities seriously and not change his song or theme from what it was a few short years ago when he said that unemployment was the responsibility of the federal government.

Mr. Charles L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us today is broad in scope. Speakers from the other side of the house who have expressed their views so far have proceeded to make a series of criticisms in respect of things the government has failed to do. At the same time, they have outlined the problems. The problems have been defined by various speakers, yet in the course of the debate so far members opposite have produced very few suggestions in the way of solutions. I always thought the function of any opposition to be to demonstrate to the government and the people of Canada that it has better solutions, better ideas and better means to arrive at certain goals in our society.

The Leader of the Opposition, who drafted the motion, included in his motion a reference to students and concentrated his remarks on students for almost the entirety of his speech, as if the manpower of the country consisted of students alone. Where are the labourers, where are the semi-skilled, where are those who have a skill which is becoming obsolete; are they not important? Where are the migrants and immigrants and those who need rehabilitation and need mobility programs; are they not important? They have not been mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition.

Whatever suggestions the Leader of the Opposition has put forward can be indicated in two points. First, the department ought to cut across every federal department in order to co-ordinate and play a greater role whenever there are cut-backs or changes in governmental policies which affect manpower and employment. In other words, he is telling the department to intervene every time another department wishes to reduce certain programs in an attempt to reduce government spending. If this is what the Leader of the Opposition means, how does he reconcile this with his concern about inflation and the speeches he has made concerning increasing governmental spending? Surely, there is a