

I do not want to use up all my time on that issue, but I was, as I say, somewhat dismayed by the remarks of the Minister of Transport. I will not say they were unwarranted in a political sense because I am not an expert on prairie federal politics. I got the impression that the minister was speaking extremely defensively. He created the impression that both he and his party were in trouble in western Canada. Otherwise, I do not know why we witnessed a burst of emotionalism on his part, especially since he was a former minister of justice and dean of a law school. This is the last thing one would expect from a person with such a background. Perhaps someone like myself, a small town school teacher, could be excused for becoming very emotional over an issue similar to that.

Dealing with Bill C-56, there is one matter I should like to zero in on this evening. I do not want to spend a lot of time because there are a number of other speakers who want to address themselves to this important piece of legislation both this evening and perhaps tomorrow.

In order to provide a brief background to the major problems in the economy, on this date we are still faced with a major unemployment problem. June 6 is a memorable date in Canadian history. On June 6, 1944 our veterans stormed the beaches of Normandy. At the present time approximately one million people are registered as unemployed, and another 500,000 have given up. Inflation is still increasing in very important sectors of the economy. There have been various federal job creation programs over the last several years which have flopped. The figures indicate this. New jobs have not been created. Certain private sectors have done their best in the area of job creation. Members of this House have not accomplished in the last few years what we should have.

As a result of the April budget, one program was introduced. I am referring to the \$100 million employment tax credit program. Obviously no one in the Department of Finance, including the minister himself, took a look at the British experiment which occurred three years ago. At that time a tax credit program to employers did not work. It has never worked anywhere in the western democratic world, not at a time when there is falling demand. We have been experiencing that for the last two or three years. Even business and labour groups have indicated that the program is a flop.

For example, the program was supposed to create 50,000 new jobs in the first year. It was implemented approximately three months ago. Thus, I am talking in terms of the first quarter of this program. Approximately 25,000 of those new jobs were to be created in the province of Ontario. In the first three months of this program, approximately 1,900 jobs have been created in Quebec which has an 11.8 per cent unemployment rate.

Perhaps that is why the minister was somewhat upset about possible falling fortunes in Quebec at the present time, or at least the ongoing battle between the Quebec minister of finance and the federal Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) as to who will receive the votes and who will put money in whose pocket in order to buy votes. That is not what the minister said, but certainly that is how I interpret his remarks. If

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money can be tucked in a person's pocket, one can be assured that that person will be sympathetic to one's party at election time. Of course, we did not have an election, and the entire matter has become somewhat topsy-turvy.

The employment tax credit program is not a bad idea, but employers will not create new jobs within their plants or rehire those who have been laid off unless they are in receipt of orders. I am referring to purchases and a demand for the goods they produce. I do not care if they are subsidized to the tune of \$5 an hour, employers will not create new jobs or rehire unless there is a demand for their products. It has not worked before and it is not working now. Approximately 1,900 jobs have been created in Quebec, with its 11.8 per cent unemployment rate; 262 jobs have been created in Ontario; and a smattering of jobs have been created across the country. Demand induces an employer to rehire or create new jobs. One cannot expect to have demand in Canada with its sluggish economy, unless people have enough money to spend on basic necessities.

For approximately a year now, the New Democratic Party has stated that tax cuts for the benefit of middle and low income earners is the only way in the foreseeable future to pump money into our economy, stimulate demand and put people to work producing necessary goods and services.

● (2142)

I should like to make another point in respect of what happened this afternoon in the House in the form of the motion for closure at the second reading stage of Bill C-56. We are dealing with a bill that is creating even greater dissension and animosity between the Liberal government here in Ottawa and the Québécois separatist government in the province of Quebec. In spite of that and the importance of this matter, this government is closing down the debate on second reading, preventing members on both sides of the House from continuing to make some input to this matter. I think it is a shame that we are to be muzzled tomorrow at 5:45 p.m. by a forced vote.

The impression I have been getting is that Liberal members feel they belong to the only party that has any influence in the province of Quebec. Unfortunately, some bigots in my riding are now suggesting that the Liberal party is the French party in Canada. I wonder how many men and women in the Liberal party on the other side of this House realize what is happening in my part of the country. I am just talking about the southwestern part of Ontario and the city of Toronto, where the anti-French feeling is building to the point that things are going to boil over unless the government does something very quickly about Ottawa-Quebec relations.

I am not championing separatism or patting René Lévesque and Jacques Parizeau on the back, saying they are doing a good job. I am simply suggesting that they are in power in Québec. We on this side of the House are not in favour of separatism, yet many members of the federal Liberal party in this House, whenever they rise to speak, damn us on this side of the House for being anti-Quebec and anti-French.