

Economic Growth and Employment Situation

agricultural committee to tell us what they are doing. It will probably take a Philadelphia lawyer to figure it all out.

I have touched briefly on the circumstances with which we are faced in the employment field and in the agricultural field. As I say, instead of moving in a clear direction we seem to have adopted a method of spreading the misery around through a profusion of agencies of government departments and the grain trade so that people fall all over one another's feet and do not even know whose feet they have tripped over. Then there is balkanization in various areas to make sure that somebody from Saskatchewan will not be going to Alberta to take a job away from someone in Alberta who badly needs it. I suppose the same gimmick will be used in Ontario that is being used in Alberta by the regional offices of this government. Mr. Speaker, perhaps some day this government will improve a little or, more fortunately, we might be able to get rid of it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Minister without Portfolio responsible for citizenship.

Mr. Stanfield: Hear, hear!

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) for his welcome to this debate. I also thank the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Douglas) for raising this subject today. I am only disappointed that they did not put forward constructive criticisms concerning the program which was announced this week in the field of summer student employment.

Mr. Stanfield: We are waiting to know what the proposals are.

Mr. Stanbury: The general economic situation has been ably dealt with by my colleague from Calgary. As this House knows full well, the rapid growth of inflation has been arrested and there are indications that our economy is now on an upward swing. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics yesterday reported a very slight and somewhat smaller than usual increase in the number of persons unemployed. While there were 7,000 more persons without jobs—and when anyone is without a job this is to be regretted—there were 9,000 more with jobs.

We all know that the labour force is the largest in our history and, indeed, one of the largest and fastest growing in the world. This fact, combined with inflationary pressure, has presented the government with unique economic problems to solve. I see no indication that anyone in this House could have faced such circumstances more resolutely or imaginatively than this government has. If the growing vigour of the economy was to absorb with reasonable and increasing speed those seeking permanent work of a conventional kind, as I believe it will, it was of the greatest importance that the government should intervene to assist substantially the private economy in the task of absorbing the enormous number of young people who will be seeking employment during the summer months. It was precisely because we wish to allow young and old who are seeking permanent employ-

ment—to the extent that that phrase is applicable in the modern world—to be assisted and protected in that search that the government has introduced a great variety of special student programs for the coming summer.

Hon. members are aware that the situation of employment and the attitude toward work and its value has changed since the 1930s. We are aware that the young in this country, as in other countries, for some years have been trying to tell us something about values, purpose and the proper aims of society. We must be aware that it has been the young to a very large extent who have reminded us of the dangers of unbridled pollution, the needs of the poor and deprived, the value of increased participation by individuals in their own affairs and the necessity of moving resolutely toward a just society.

I would remind members of this House, as I have been reminded, of three basic facts. First, there are a great many tasks to be undertaken and accomplished which the private economy does not automatically support. Second, there is a great deal of youthful energy, imagination and determination in this country which is waiting to be unleashed, provided it can choose outlets that seem valuable and deserving and in which pay or remuneration is only a secondary consideration. Third, there are many young people who do need money or do not need as much, and a program of activities had to be found which would provide for a variety of valid personal goals.

This is the meaning of the government's new student employment and activities program for this summer. It offers conventional employment at reasonable rates of remuneration for those who wish it. It provides unconventional employment at reasonable remuneration for those with sufficient imagination and courage to create it. It also provides the way to accomplish a variety of social goals for those whose imagination and devotion to Canada is as important to nourish as are their incomes. In this program we are offering a challenge to the voluntary capacities of our citizens, particularly the younger citizens, that has been unmatched since the general mobilization for war in 1939. If we have been searching, as have many modern societies, for what the American psychologist William James called "the moral equivalent of war", we believe we are taking a substantial step in that direction. New and important goals for Canadians are being matched with the enthusiasm, energy and will to accomplish them.

So that the scope and nature of the summer '71 program will be clearly on record, I should like to review briefly its various components. The Department of National Defence proposes to provide employment for some students who will undertake regular summer militia training of both an elementary and continuing nature, and also for some who will enjoy special training in first aid, hunter safety, bush survival, search and rescue, water safety, watermanship, adventure training, leadership and instructional techniques. I think many will agree that these new and imaginative opportunities offered by our armed forces are most welcome. The Department of National Health and Welfare will provide opportunities for development of young athletes, for studies of drugs abuse and for a very important study by the

[Mr. Gleave.]