

Job Creation

Mr. Stevens: However, that is not what these fellows are talking about. When they say there will be a \$2.5 billion reduction, they are talking about 1986. They are talking about some type of projection that they say will mean a deficit of \$10.2 billion by 1986, compared to \$13.3 billion at the present time. In short, it is just a dream, because we know that the one thing one can count on concerning this government is that its projected expenditure levels are the floor. Those projected levels will surely be attained; it is only a question of how much more the government will add to those levels and how big its deficit will be.

When we were introduced to Liberal economics upon being elected to power, I was absolutely stunned when the Treasury Board showed me that the ongoing anticipated deficit if the Liberals had been left in power would be \$18 billion by 1984. If one looks at the present figures, one will see that if the government had not grabbed \$9 billion further from the Canadian public, that is exactly the deficit figure it would be living with by 1984. That is this government in action; yet the Minister of Employment and Immigration says that to ensure jobs in the future we need, to use his words, proper economic management. If he believes that and if he has any heart for the people who are now being thrown out of work and are without jobs, largely due to his inaction, he had better resign tonight and show his protest against a government which has shown it does not know the meaning of the words "proper economic management".

When I say that, let us not forget that the federal gross national debt, as a result of this government's actions, will be about \$119 billion. That represents for every taxpayer in the country a debt load of \$12,500. It means, if one likes, that with interest rates at their present level it will cost taxpayers \$14.5 billion this year, amounting to another \$750 per taxpayer.

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To put that into perspective, you can assume that at least half of that debt is not necessary, which is a fair assumption bearing in mind that when the emperor first took power the total debt in this country was only \$20 billion. This budget indicates that by next year an additional \$100 billion of new debt will be on the shoulders of Canadians. Surely it is not unreasonable to say that at least half of that was totally unnecessary, and if that is so, that means approximately \$900 of unnecessary burden is being placed year in and year out on every taxpayer in Canada.

Think what that \$900 would do to help the poor of this country. Think what it would do if it were not being spent on yesterday's debt for interest charges. Think what it would do to help the unemployed, the senior citizens and those in need of better health care. That is the insidious thing which this government is doing. In short, it is squandering public money day in and day out. The government is squandering it to the point of going further and further into debt to pay yesterday's grocery bills, at the same time loading more and more debt not only on the people of today but on future generations to come.

Having said that, I noticed that the Minister of Employment and Immigration indicated that somehow there was an industrial strategy in place and that productivity was somehow a desirable thing. Let me point out that when the Liberals are asked to explain their high unemployment statistics, as a rule they like to respond by talking about job creation. For example, we hear the Liberals say that in 1980 job creation went up 2.9 per cent as far as total employment is concerned. Although they say that, they then admit in the next sentence that there was zero growth as far as Canada's economy was concerned in 1980. Therefore, what the Liberals are saying is that their economic measures were so improperly placed that it took 286,000 more people working in Canada to produce exactly the same gross national product that we produced in 1979. In fact, as a result of the government's mismanagement we find that for the last four years on a per worker basis an actual deterioration in Canadian workers' real income has occurred because of the government's actions.

In short, how can we have this minister somehow or other attempting to take credit for what he feels is a good job-creation record while at the same time we know that, with 891,000 Canadians out of work, we have continued to post the worst record for unemployment among the major OECD countries? That is this government in action.

Again using OECD figures, we find that between 1973 and 1980 Canada had an average productivity growth of 0.2 per cent. That is one-third of the productivity growth in the United States. During that same period productivity growth in the United Kingdom was 1.5 per cent, Germany 3.1 per cent, France 2.7 per cent, Italy 2.2 per cent and Japan 3.4 per cent. Surely most members would agree that a government with that kind of a record, one that attempts to justify its budget brought in here on November 12, in truth has no shame when it starts to pretend that its record entitles it to the confidence of this House.

Perhaps when we deal with statistics we lose sight of the human element. We forget about the people who are actually being thrown out of work. I see the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gray) is in the House. I hope that before today's end he will stand up and explain a few things. I hope he will explain to the people of Kitchener why it was necessary for Budd Canada Ltd. to give indefinite lay-off notices on Monday, November 16, to 826 of its 1,100 employees. We should bear in mind that Budd Canada Ltd. employed 3,100 workers two and a half years ago and this latest lay-off will reduce that number to a mere 700 employees. Surely some minister on that side of the House must feel that he has to give an explanation why that kind of situation is occurring.

Perhaps some minister can tell us about Canadian Admiral Corporation, an appliance manufacturer which has shut down its operations in Mississauga, Cambridge and Montmagny, Quebec. On November 13 that company issued dismissal notices to 2,450 employees. The key reason for this, the company said, was the high interest rate structure and lack of