

Why is this government such a failure on jobs?

Dear editor:

When you look at the numbers, it is clear that the Conservative federal government has been a major failure on jobs, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper's indifference to all those who are struggling to get decent full-time work is shocking.

There are 140,000 more jobless Canadians today than before the recession. Last year the economy generated fewer jobs than the year before, which was down from the year before that.

Job quality has hit a 25 year low according to CIBC. Lower paying jobs are growing faster than better paying ones, and more Canadians are in precarious positions. In fact, Canada has the third highest level of low-paying jobs in any developed country, according to the OECD.

Not everyone is blind to reality. The Bank of Canada worries that job market conditions are worse than the headline numbers suggest?the number of long-term unemployed has barely gone down, many part-time workers who want full-time positions can't get them and some have given up looking for work altogether.

Odds are that you know a young graduate who has been struggling for years to get their career established, taking part-time work and contracts just to get by?sometimes well outside their field.

Mr. Harper's only response to these everyday struggles is to blame the recession. But the recession ended six years ago. He inherited a large surplus, squandered our fiscal strength and put us into deficit BEFORE the recession even began.

While he claims to be focused on growth, Mr. Harper's priority is to implement a \$2 billion tax cut?Income Splitting?that will overwhelmingly benefit the wealthiest, completely exclude 85% of Canadian households, and do nothing to generate economic growth.

Instead of Income Splitting, Canadians would be further ahead with a vigorous plan for investments in community infrastructure, post-secondary learning and skills, and research and innovation.

Those are some of the elements of a growth agenda. With better policies?and hope, ambition and hard work?Canada can regain its economic momentum and rebuild the legitimate expectation of progress, from one generation to the next.

Ralph Goodale, MP

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