

I believe it is accurate to say that in the past Canada has had the greatest economic recovery of any country in the world. In terms of growth, we are expecting to be able to report that in 1983 we had, and in 1984 hopefully will have, the largest real growth of any of the summit countries. Just recently the U.S. Conference Board noted that Canada has achieved the largest and most dramatic economic rebound of any country in the world.

Towards this end, in the first half of 1983 the Canadian economy grew at an annual rate of 7.5 per cent. It is hoped that these trends will lead to economic growth rates among the largest, if not the largest, of any industrial nation. The OECD has projected that the Canadian economic recovery will be the strongest among the seven largest industrialized countries in 1984.

We have also had the largest decline in inflation. In fact, speaking of over-achievements, we have over-achieved with respect to targets with the present rate, as you know, at 4.9 per cent. Among other economic indicators, it is interesting to note that consumer confidence in Canada is at its highest level in 18 years.

Just recently, a survey of 80 top U.S. industrial corporations by McGraw Hill Economics reported that their foreign capital spending was expected to decline during the next three years, but that there are two very significant exceptions: increases are expected in the European Economic Community and in Canada—13 per cent in the EEC and 21 per cent in Canada.

As many economists tell us, we are entering a new economic age. There are some very important things that we should keep in mind as we enter into this age. The new economy is producing goods and services at a very different employment level. The production of the economies of the western world has exceeded pre-downturn levels, but still some 25 million to 30 million people are left unemployed in the western world.

For those who suggest that we should look at Japan's economic performance as the ideal barometer—Senator Macdonald made reference to Japan—their 1983 unemployment rate reached 3.8 per cent, which is actually 2.5 times the normal unemployment rate for that country. That is a clear indication that the unemployment phenomenon is world-wide. Most importantly, it indicates that we are entering a new economic era—an era that may produce the highest standard of living, never dreamed of before, but at a cost of marginalizing some 10 per cent of the potential labour force of not only Canada but of the entire western world. Particularly badly hurt are the new entrants into the labour force, most of whom are under 25 years of age.

In addition, as Senator Macdonald noted, there are those over 45 and 50 years of age whose skills may have become obsolete and are no longer needed in the new economic society. We must be aware of the potential disaster for the western world if we ignore the victims of this new age, an age that has been most commonly labelled "high-tech." No greater task awaits those who are responsible for policy decisions than to

find ways to alleviate the potential misery of those who will not fit into the new age.

It may be just a coincidence that we are at George Orwell's 1984. It is important that a way be found for all sectors to become involved in searching out answers to the dilemma. To devise the strategies which, hopefully, will produce the solutions, all sectors must work in concert and in harmony.

I also find it interesting to note that, in 1983, there were two conferences in Canada which looked at the so-called "new society." At the conference in Montreal in the early summer, the human effect of high-tech was listed as the No. 10 priority and, hence, hardly worthy of debate. At the conference held in October here in the city of Ottawa, the human effects were greeted with what could, at best, be described as studied indifference.

One of the reasons that high unemployment is so dangerous is that our concept of safety nets for economic victims is really only valid when we are looking at something less than 5 per cent of the work force being displaced at any one time. When structural unemployment is mired at 10 to 11 per cent, as is the case at present, there is less hope that there can be any kind of permanent, effective safety net.

Another potential, but very real, danger is that when employment of the individual becomes endangered those who still have jobs become less and less willing to share their affluence through tax contributions which really provide the safety net. These people see themselves endangered and develop a survival-of-the-fittest mentality.

Therefore, I think it important that we look at economic issues from a very realistic point of view, and, in doing this, we must understand that unemployment may remain abnormally high perhaps for the best part of the present century. That is my own view at present.

Let us also understand that there are no quick fixes. It is cold comfort for us to realize that the last time we were faced with such massive unemployment was when we came out of the depression of the 1930s. History reminds us that we were able to do little with high unemployment until well into World War II. We reached the target of full employment in 1942. That, as you well know, was at the cost of millions of lives and the wanton destruction of large parts of Europe. In our day we are reminded that war is not an alternative; that no sane person believes it is possible to enter into a nuclear conflict without destroying the world.

It becomes evident, then, that more than at any previous time in our history we, as a society, must seriously deliberate on the problem of unemployment. It is urgent that we begin these deliberations without being tied to rhetoric and stereotypes that were only valid at another time and in another age.

We have to seriously look at sharing work, at sharing employment, and sharing income. We have to find novel ways to employ people. These novel ventures must provide work that enables the worker to feel that he or she is making a real contribution to the well-being of the community, and the