

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Caccia: Third, we have worked very hard, despite the howls from the opposition benches, to establish a price for Canadian oil several dollars below the international price. We have put an export tax on oil, despite the howls from the opposition benches, to pay for the cost of oil imported to eastern Canada. Fourth, we have again imposed in this budget a 10 per cent surtax on corporate profits earned between May of this year and April of next year to catch undue profits.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, how do these picayune measures proposed by the Tories to trim government spending and establish an inquiry into the UIC stand up as measures to fight inflation against the background of our Liberal policies? I ask you to comment on this. Obviously, there is a bankruptcy of ideas on the other side if that is all they can come up with, Mr. Speaker.

In the limited time left to me I would like to speak briefly about our manpower policies and unemployment.

Mr. Oberle: It will take too long.

Mr. Caccia: The hon. member is quite right, particularly in trying to straighten out the confusion in his mind because only last week he was trying to link the unemployed with empty seats on airplanes. Imagine that!

● (2110)

May I now touch on immigration. I take this opportunity to urge the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Andras) not to yield to the temptation, evident in some quarters, of linking immigration to unemployment.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Caccia: I do not subscribe to that theory. There is no study to this effect. Since coming to Canada 19 years ago I have seen no evidence to support the notion that immigrants take jobs away from others, or that they fill jobs which would otherwise be filled by native Canadians. The evidence shows the contrary, that immigrants fill vacancies in construction, in mines, in factories, in restaurants and in hotels, and that these vacancies occur because Canadians do not wish to fill these jobs. This subject has prompted much political rhetoric in the past few decades.

When the green paper sees the light of day, probably on a cold day in January, I hope the minister will deal with immigration on its own merits. He should ask whether Canada wants immigration, what kind of immigration it wants, and where, and not link immigration to unemployment levels, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a relationship between the two. Personally, I do not believe there is such a relationship.

I believe that immigration has served and continues to serve Canada well. Besides filling economic vacancies, immigrants have become and will continue to become new consumers and stimulate new production of items such as furniture, clothing, appliances, etc. Immigrants seeking jobs numbered between 60,000 and 92,000 on average in recent years for which statistics are available, or less than 1 per cent of our labour force. At the same time, in the third quarter of this year 120,000 jobs in Canada remained

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unfilled. I suppose that figure can be interpreted several ways. Personally I think these facts point to two things; first, to a probable flaw in recruiting policies abroad; second, to a flaw in our manpower training program. This, after all, is understandable, as it is difficult to keep pace with the changing demands of employers in the post industrial society.

I should like to pursue these thoughts in a broader sense. It seems to me that the time is rapidly approaching when we in Canada must offer people work of a sort that fits a post industrial society. What we have done in the past few decades served a useful purpose, but we are on the threshold of a new age and we shall need a new approach for dealing with men and women in the labour force from the time they enter it until they retire.

Our private enterprise system, while it has been a system that has produced a higher standard of living for more people than any other system we know of, has had and continues to have the inherent weakness of not being able to generate full employment. This is true despite the many government spending programs and policies introduced in the post war period to support it.

There is a growing number of people, including myself, who believe that our unemployment insurance scheme should have a more positive orientation. But we should not engage in the kinds of witch hunts which opposition members have been proposing. We, in the Liberal party, do not act that way.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Caccia: I believe that we should assess the system and see how it can be improved. I see merit in giving our unemployment insurance scheme a more positive orientation. It should not merely be an instrument which reacts passively to the cycles of varying degrees of unemployment our private enterprise system seems unable to overcome, despite government spending programs and policies designed to do just this. Therefore the question is: why unemployment insurance? Why not employment insurance?

Employment insurance, presumably, could be based on our present approach to unemployment insurance, namely, a fund. All Canadians who are working would contribute premiums to that fund, which would be available to Canadians who are out of a job.

Mr. Oberle: That is merely another form of unemployment insurance.

Mr. Caccia: This fund would have two functions. It would provide income to maintain those who become unemployed while they are seeking employment, and it would provide employment for those who cannot find jobs in the private and established public sector of our economy. It would be funded in the same way as the unemployment insurance fund.

Since the major function of the employment insurance fund would be its job creating aspect, perhaps I might deal with that first in the time available. Many useful jobs could be created which would benefit society as a whole. In making the selection, perhaps three factors should guide us. First, the jobs should be non-profit in nature;