

The Address—Mr. Berger

legislation on rental which does not even allow owners to cancel leases to make repairs. Consequently the parties enter into endless legal proceedings which bring no adequate solution. I welcome the statement made by the Prime Minister last week in this debate when he said that his government would undertake to launch studies if that could lead to better solutions than those proposed by the government. I urge him and his minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to undertake a study on how this problem can be resolved as soon as possible and to refer that study to the appropriate House committee.

Mr. Speaker, unemployment is another major concern in my constituency. Not only are jobs needed, but the problem is even more far-reaching since we have to face structural unemployment. It seems to me that the young men and women graduating from high schools and community colleges do not have adequate education. They do not know how to find a job and they often have qualifications in fields where there is no job. I recall a few years ago I heard someone in the aviation industry say that his company badly needed aeronautical engineers. Unfortunately not one single student graduated from Quebec schools in that particular field that year. Canadaair was faced with a similar problem; because of the success met by its *Challenger* operation in the last few years, it had to set up training programs for non-qualified labour.

Mr. Speaker, how could we fail to understand the growing impatience of a population faced with such permanent problems and unacceptable conditions such as the grain handlers strike in the port of Montreal, which has already been going on for five months, and a public transit strike which paralyses the whole city. If the Minister of Labour (Mr. Alexander) were here, I would ask him how long he intends to wait before taking measures to put an end to the strike affecting the port of Montreal. That question has been put on several occasions in this House. We all know that we live in a great country whose wealth in natural resources is unparalleled and we should ask ourselves why nothing is done to solve these problems.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about the new government. It says that it is committed to efficiency and to cutting out waste. Important steps in the process of reform were initiated in the last Parliament, as has been acknowledged by a Conservative minister. But I am afraid that for the sake of satisfying its doctrinaire philosophy the government will cut out good programs and dismiss competent personnel. It has already done so. We are now losing a considerable amount of the expertise which has been assembled in Ottawa in the past 16 years.

The Anti-Inflation Board, while often criticized, accomplished much for which it will receive a general recognition in the future. During the summer I read a publication of the Board entitled "Inflation and Economic Policy", which I believe was distributed to all members of the House. The authors of the report stressed the limitations of economic policy. Because

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of the slowness of the economy to respond to monetary and fiscal stimulus, they favour a policy of gradual expansion. Selective measures, they said, should be used to correct weaknesses in the economy, for example, to fight structural unemployment, to which I referred earlier, and to develop particular industries. This government, with its doctrinaire philosophy, has ignored this advice. Rather than improving programs that were developed after much research and consultation with experts in many fields, it has wastefully committed \$2 billion annually for a housing program that everyone knows is not a housing program.

Another important program which has suffered from budget cuts is the Canada Works program which provided employment and tangible social services to my riding and many others with high unemployment. I have received dozens of calls, from distressed older persons in particular, who benefited from this program in the past and are at a loss to make do in the months ahead. I urge the government to restore the program to its original levels. Unfortunately I feel my words and those of my colleagues fall on deaf ears.

• (1710)

We in Quebec have been preoccupied with the referendum. It is part of our daily lives. Bill 101 has been confusing for many English Canadians in Quebec and across Canada who have difficulty reconciling the apparent contradiction of a unilingual Quebec with a bilingual Canada. Initiatives by the Parti Québécois to shift the burden of bilingualism, as they put it, and to give Quebec a French face, have created tensions and led to economic loss and hardship. Some aspects of Bill 101 are clearly excessive and will be changed by a Liberal government, but English Canadians must recognize the concern which French Canadians have for the survival of the French language, as well as the economic consequences that language has for French Canadians to this day.

Most Canadians rebel at the thought of legally obliging children to attend French schools, yet in many cases French Canadians have always been forced to learn English in order to earn a living, which in effect amounts to the same thing. Furthermore, no matter what language legislation is adopted, or even if Quebec achieves independence, any French Canadian who wishes to advance in many areas of human endeavour will have to learn English.

Perhaps no aspect of Liberal policy was more controversial and misunderstood than the previous government's efforts to create a sense of belonging to Canada for French Canadians, and yet no policy was more vital to the survival of our country. I must confess that I have great difficulty in understanding the begrudging manner in which some English Canadians greet the French presence in our country. I am proud of our two principal languages. On a trip to Cape Breton Island some years ago I was pleasantly surprised to find a number of French villages along the coast which, in spite of all obstacles, had managed to keep their language, culture, and character. The French language outside of Quebec is like a precious flower Canadians must cherish.