

Economic Policy

hidden unemployment was very real, direct and meaningfully felt by young Canadians in their part of Canada, stating that it was they who had given up.

Some cases were cited, not as part of the formal brief but in informal conversation, of young people in the Vancouver area who had been out of school for two years, had been searching incessantly for jobs and had found none.

One has to draw the conclusion that as people get depressed, they lose their incentive as well as their respect for government and authority. It is a perfectly understandable normal reaction by people who grow up in a society which treats them indifferently. They are inclined to react in an indifferent manner. We will get exactly what we deserve from such young people, no better and no less.

A sensible proposal that the labour council made to create jobs was to completely modernize the port of Vancouver. Surely it makes sense to carry further the containerization process on the west coast. If needed capital were put in there, it would provide jobs now, as well as provide an expanded harbour operation for the future. That makes good sense. It is a practical proposal that should be taken up by the national government, and if not, by the government of British Columbia.

Finally with regard to the briefs I will refer to in Vancouver was the one presented by the British Columbia Employers' Council. That is not exactly a hotbed of socialists. In fact, if you look very hard at their membership, it would be hard to find one socialist. I do not say that in any critical sense. They happen to be a group of people who, as a rule, differ in their perspective from that held by my party. They presented a serious brief. In fact, it was presented by the former postmaster general of Canada, Mr. William Hamilton. Mr. Hamilton, on behalf of the Employers' Council of British Columbia, urged an early end to the controls program, something we have been advocating since the controls program was brought in. He made the point that we made at that time, that this controls program has a harmful effect on job creation, that we should put an end to it quickly and introduce measures that will produce more jobs for Canadians.

I want to conclude the report on my three day visit to British Columbia by citing what I think is the most moving testimony of all. It was presented by a 59 year-old mother of two teenage children. She was looking of a job. This woman told the story of a job opening in Abbotsford, a small community. It appears that for a very short time there was an ad in one of the papers by MacDonald's, the hamburger chain. It stated that they were going to open at a new location in Abbotsford and that they wanted to hire a handful of young people, I think in the neighbourhood of 20. Within 24 hours a line up three blocks long appeared. These were young people looking for jobs. They came with haversacks and sleeping bags and stayed overnight in that community looking for that handful of jobs. What does that story tell us? It tells me that among the unemployed in Canada, and I think particularly of unemployed young Canadians, there is not a shiftless attitude. There is not an attitude that they would prefer welfare, the easy life, or hand

[Mr. Broadbent.]

outs. Quite the contrary. The attitude among the young people of Canada is that they want to work. They want to be able to make their contribution, to look after themselves, probably to marry before long and to raise families. They want to have the same opportunities in their lives as immigrants to this country for the last 100 years, and as the parents of those who have grown up in the past couple of decades always assumed, that this would indeed be a land of promise. That is what the three block line up in Abbotsford meant. But because it was three blocks long and because people came from the surrounding areas so quickly to get the jobs, we see that unemployment is indeed a very serious problem and that there are now thousands out of work. It indicates not only the healthy attitude of Canada's young but the alarming and cruel failure of the government.

● (1650)

There is no more serious issue today than unemployment. It affects every community in the country. It is running at 30 per cent in Newfoundland, 28 per cent in Cape Breton, 25 per cent in the Gaspé region, 25 per cent in the Powell River area, and 14 per cent in Nanaimo. In Montreal the figure is 20 per cent. It is a national crisis and it is time the government, so long frozen into indifference and inertia, began to act.

[Translation]

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, first I must congratulate the mover of that motion who gives us an opportunity to deal with issues which deeply concern us; I congratulate the spokesman for the Progressive Conservative Party but at the same time I am rather surprised when reading his motion to note that while condemning the government he has probably forgotten to make suggestions which his party would have in mind to solve our problems.

Indeed, we read in the motion that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) is condemned and urged to be forthright with the people of Canada by revealing in the budget the specific goals he will be seeking to reach with regard to employment, inflation, Canada's trade balance and the rate of economic growth.

As to the representative of the New Democratic Party, he gave us an interesting report of his three day tour in British Columbia. I congratulate him for that, but frankly if I talked about all the cases that go through my office on weekends alone, Mr. Speaker, I think I would have enough for a week. That is why I will spare you that narration. I will just simply talk about a few items in today's motion.

I just read a very interesting book dealing with the funding of Confederation, a book that impressed me because it is a résumé of all the meetings that were held since 1867, including all provincial government and federal government relations. What transpires from those discussions? It was a prime minister at the very outset of Confederation who said: Never forget that Confederation is based on a compromise, and one realizes at the end of every meeting they had that everything was solved on the basis of that compromise. I mention this simply to say that if we really want to come to grips with the problem facing Canada today, that compromise will have to be dis-