

will not be for very long, only as long as it takes to rebuild the Canadian economy and restore a free enterprise system in this country in which the small businessman is a player and has the necessary inducements and incentives to create new permanent jobs. All these policies have been tried for the last 15 years. When I travel to the Hon. Member's constituency I find that people are starved to talk to somebody who does not distort the truth as he sometimes does. We have to restore a free enterprise economy because we will not be able to compete in the world by nationalizing all our prime industries, using the criteria that government-owned enterprises use as instruments of social policy.

● (1640)

An Hon. Member: You are going to wreck Canada.

Mr. Oberle: You see what we will do. The quickest way for you fellows to find out what the Progressive Conservative industrial policy will be is to entice those fellows over there to call an election. You will then find out very quickly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Order, please. During the question and answer period may I request, first of all, that Hon. Members stand to make interjections and also that Members address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, I have a brief supplementary question. I am sure that Hon. Members noticed that the Hon. Member for Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle) did not answer the question about Schefferville or questions about international forestry or international mining funding by the Conservative Party. He did not touch on the fact that the Tories cut almost all job creation projects in Canada while they were in government.

When the Hon. Member was in my constituency not too long ago, he raised one particular matter and I received a flood of letters from public servants about it. He said that at least 60,000 public servants should be fired immediately after the next election. Mathematics demonstrate that that would mean that about 9,000 or 10,000 people in British Columbia would be fired. Some of the RCMP and most of the military in British Columbia would be fired.

I wonder if the Member would tell us whether he intends to get rid of all the federal public servants related to federal health and welfare in British Columbia. Knowing that he has already promised to fire 9,000 people in British Columbia, would the Hon. Member tell us if he knows how many federal public servants there are in the province before he gets the hatchet out?

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, I thought I told the Hon. Member in my first answer that he was not correct when he said that we phased out all job-creation programs in 1979. That is not what happened. With regard to firing 60,000 civil servants, the Hon. Member's memory is very good. That happened in 1979, but in that short period we discovered that, without any fuss or bother, through attrition and the reorganization of some

departments, we were half way there without a single person being fired.

I can tell the Hon. Member that I am not very much enamoured with Mr. Bennett's program in British Columbia. He did not discover the recession until the day after the election. We have known about it for some time. He could have done what the Progressive Conservative Government in Ontario has done over a period of years. Through attrition, intelligent planning, retraining and adult education programs, it has rearranged the structure to permit the Government to reduce its bloated Public Service. That can be done intelligently without creating the kind of pain and misery that the Hon. Member wishes to attribute to me. It was done back in 1979.

The Hon. Member referred to Schefferville. The reason the plant had to be shut down—and unfortunately if we keep these fellows in power very much longer there may be some other Scheffervilles—was that we are just no longer competitive. Five years ago Brazil was number five in the world in iron ore production, but today it produces more than Canada and the United States together.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member but the time for questions has expired. The Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's (Mr. Simmons).

Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin-St. George's): Mr. Speaker, my good friend from Skeena (Mr. Fulton) should not be too hard on the gentleman from Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle). He should keep in mind that he is one of the moderates in that Party; one of our friends, philosophically. He is really a soul-mate. Besides, he has already indicated to the House that he has been promised a position in Cabinet—like about 85 others over there.

Miss MacDonald: You had better not speak from experience.

Mr. Simmons: The Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) talks about experience. I admit that she and I have something in common; we both went through Cabinet on a conveyer belt.

Miss MacDonald: I did something.

Mr. Simmons: We know you did. We know that the lady from Kingston and the Islands did something. We have spent the last four years trying to undo it. One need only talk to the Minister of Justice (Mr. MacGuigan), formerly the Secretary of State for External Affairs, to find out what kind of things the lady did.

I want to talk about what I thought was the outstanding performance of the Hon. Member for Prince George-Peace River, Mr. Speaker. Today he confirmed what my good friend, the Hon. Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), has been telling the country for a number of months, and that is, that if you want to know what the Tories stand for, you have to elect them. You have to buy a pig in a poke. That is what members