

Employment

Mr. Ogle: You just said that Canada had the largest surplus ever the other day.

Mr. Kelly: Because we export so much of what we produce, we are the greatest per capita trading nation in the world. We trade more than the Americans, the Germans, the French and the Japanese.

Because we trade so much, any rise or fall in demand in foreign markets, will help or hurt us severely. The latter is what has happened in the last few years. A drop in demand in the United States, western Europe and Japan because of recession—and the Japanese are not immune to these forces, as hon. members opposite should know and tell the Canadian people—has meant that we are not selling as much as we used to, and because of that we have lost a lot of jobs. That is obvious, Mr. Speaker, and there is nothing in there that I see of government policy.

● (1640)

Government policy did not create a recession in these other countries. We did not tell them to stop buying goods or cut back. We have to understand that, Mr. Speaker. We cannot rant and rail against this government because of that.

Mr. Blaikie: I know you can't.

Mr. Kelly: This government faces the same problems that other governments and countries face—a simple lack of international demand. The key, Mr. Speaker, in a situation like that is again not to yell and hurl insults at each other. The key is to figure out what kind of policies we can introduce as quickly as possible that will find alternate employment for Canadians who have lost their jobs in those industries affected by a slump in our export markets.

I think the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) tabled a document at the first ministers' conference two days ago which addressed that situation directly and candidly. Over \$400 billion will be invested in resource megaprojects in this decade alone. If we add to that the revitalization of our economic base, close to \$1 trillion will be invested in Canadian industry in the 1980s. That is a fantastic amount of money. The Prime Minister has stated, boldly I think and so far without credit in the press, that he is prepared substantially and materially to assist in the funding of those projects. But I hear nothing from the hon. members opposite. Not that I am expecting praise, frankly—

Mr. Nielsen: For what?

Mr. Kelly:—but I would expect some recognition of those policies, an indication that they are prepared to promote them in the interests of the unemployed workers on whose behalf they are posturing this afternoon.

There is another reason Mr. Speaker, why we are regretfully experiencing more unemployment than we had anticipated. Over the last few years, in consultation and in agreement with the member states with whom we do business, we have been lowering our tariffs. Now, I cannot remember too many

voices raised in this House by spokesmen of the opposition parties deploring that lowering of trade barriers. Regrettably, one of the results of that lowering of trade barriers has been that certain parts of our industrial sector have proved to be uncompetitive with the foreign industries now selling their goods in Canada.

One alternative to a situation like that, frankly, is to reintroduce the tariffs. However, I have not heard anyone on the other side insist that we go back to the high tariff days that marked Canada in the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century. This is because we know there are benefits to lower tariffs. We know they give us in the long run cheaper goods for our consumers, and we know that competition will ultimately produce a leaner, more efficient and more productive industrial base in Canada.

Now, the hon. gentleman opposite was shaking his head in total disbelief. He just could not believe I would advance these arguments in explanation of the unemployment levels we are experiencing today. Mr. Speaker, I would ask him, if he is participating in this debate, to prove me wrong.

Mr. Nielsen: Your time is up.

Mr. Kelly: I would ask any member opposite to prove me wrong.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. gentleman.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro)—External Affairs—McDougall report—Query respecting departmental reorganization (b) Role of Minister; the hon. member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn)—Industry—Effect of high interest rates. (b) Canadian Admiral Corporation in receivership. (c) Importation of foreign manufactured appliances.