

*Supply*

institution reflecting the interests and concerns of the regions has been put in jeopardy.

It is striking that the kind of questions raised on that issue by my Leader and others have not been raised by Conservative Members from the west. You would think they would want to make sure that we have a proper opportunity to examine constitutional proposals in this House, that we have a committee determine whether the proposals ensure that we have meaningful Senate reform.

Once again I echo the words of the Hon. Member for Vancouver—Kingsway who said that this is a story of the silent 20—perhaps the silent 40. When the time comes to fulfil their responsibility to their constituents to raise issues from a national perspective they are found silent and wanting. Instead they play with trifles. They find all kinds of extraneous issues with no relevance to the real meaning of what is happening in western Canada today.

We have heard now for six or seven months, I suppose, that one day the great economic diversification plan for the west will be revealed. The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) put a group of 20 civil servants in the abandoned science building in Winnipeg, which the Government closed down even though it would have given Canada the most up-to-date robotics research centre in the world, to develop a diversification program.

There is a certain irony there that even Tory Members might be able to understand. The Government was going to come up with this grand blueprint. However, it will not have any money attached to it. It will be a grand balloon. I suppose the Government is going to do what it did with free trade, put out a fancy colour pamphlet and put it in the shopping centres along with *The National Inquirer* and *People* magazine to tell everyone what a wonderful blueprint it has for delivering the goods. Except there will be nothing meaningful in it.

I see the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Bouchard) sitting there in all his glory. The unemployment rate in Alberta has gone up 3 per cent or 4 per cent since the Government was elected, but the amount of job-creation funds has not changed. The amount of money going to training programs has been cut back. That is the Government's response. There is effective Government for you! There you really see a Government that knows what it is doing! The Government likes to stand logic on its head.

**Mr. Malone:** When you point your finger at—

**Mr. Axworthy:** Unfortunately the Hon. Member cannot point a finger at his head because it is too pointed. Every time he does so he misses.

The real issue—

**Mr. Bouchard:** Everyone remembers when you were the Minister!

**Mr. Axworthy:** They do remember. As someone said when the Government brought in its refugee program, I was the last Minister to have control over my own department.

**Mr. Bouchard:** We had the worst rate in Canada with you.

**Mr. Axworthy:** The last one to have control over his department. Now we simply have a cipher who does not know what he is doing, but brings in the worst refugee program in the western world. He hardly should be shouting from his seat about grand accomplishments.

• (1200)

Let us talk about what the ultimate result of this should be. It is very clear that there must be announcements dealing with the agricultural crisis. We do not want Ministers responsible for trade and the Wheat Board holding press conferences to say how they will solve the long-term problem. Keynes once said that in the long term we will all be dead. The fact of the matter is that the problem exists in this crop year. It is necessary to have an announcement on deficiency payments now in order for farmers to plan their crop year.

There must be something more than a Kierans-type review on oil and gas policy and that will be addressed by my colleague, the Member for Cape Breton—East Richmond (Mr. Dingwall), later in this debate.

Most important, there must be a real economic development plan for the west which is worked out with westerners rather than in an isolated think-tank of civil servants which the Deputy Prime Minister has put together.

Finally, the ultimate test for the people of Alberta and those of us on this side of the House will be when the Government is prepared to say that it is committed to true Senate reform which will recognize the necessity for the regions to be equally represented on the national level, not from provincial Governments.

**Mr. Waddell:** Mr. Speaker, that was an excellent speech. I think the Member is right that the Conservatives are fighting yesterday's battles. We have to fight today's battles in the west. The Government could offer aid to the Husky up-grader. It could plan the next tar sands development with private or public companies or a combination. The Government has all these tools. It could aid small oil companies with a price regime which would help them. It could ship Alberta coal, which is cleaner burning, to Ontario.

The federal Government as well as the Alberta provincial Government could stop squeezing the domestic demand in Alberta. We learned from British Columbia that when restraint is put on when the economy is going down it only accelerates the worsening of the economy. Therefore, there are lots of things that could be done.

Peter Lougheed, former Premier of Alberta, and the late Grant Notley, former Leader of the Opposition there, spoke about using Alberta capital and economic diversification. I