

have to look back and see what are the responsibilities of each of us.

The Conservative motion could be useful as the government recognizes also the necessity to level off regional disparities. What was true yesterday still holds true today and, I dare say, will still be true tomorrow. It only takes a little honesty and realism to recognize this fact. Why then try to pretend? It is precisely what contributes to destroy the credibility of politicians who always find the solution when they are in the opposition but who would be quite powerless to act if they were in office.

Mr. Speaker, today's motion may once again be just so much wasted time, with all the stories people would like us to believe. But for us, we want to make history for the benefit of Canadians. As for me I want to commend the minister and the government for what they have accomplished. I believe that if the hon. member from Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) had taken the trouble to read the DREE annual report for 1975-76, he would have realized all the efficient work done by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. He could have read over the document on development context published by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. He could also have read various brochures on the development perspectives for each region of Canada, again from DREE. He would have found that these are not only empty words and vague hopes but concrete gestures to meet the needs of Canadians from whichever region they are.

Of course I agree with the hon. member that when one talks of a development strategy it happens too often that one cannot reach our remote areas where there is precisely the greatest need to show imagination and find the know-how to make our laws apply. It is well known, Mr. Speaker, that in my region, as it is the case for that matter in the whole of rural Quebec, people tend too often to think they are at the end of the world, that they never see anything from the government which always appears too remote. This is when we fall back on local arguments which are neither dynamic nor effective with reference to Canadian and regional economies.

I can understand the opposition's viewpoint but with some reflection and sufficient courage, the discussion can be carried on the national level. The government is not responsible for the present crisis and the solutions should rather come from the various government levels. Thus, the federal government must and does assume an effective leadership in regional development. Moreover this is the very essence of Confederation. The federal government is ready to do so, it is ready to provide that leadership without forcing its way otherwise we would already have heard complaints about its arrogance and its centralizing power.

Provincial governments also have a role to play, and even the one in Quebec must play that role to the benefit of Quebecers, because they have as much right to the benefits of Confederation as all other Canadians. Let the Quebec government be the true and good government they are committed to be, let them not prevent the Trudeau government from also being true and good government for Quebecers. But the way

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things are going, the Trudeau government will have to be not only the good government they are, but a tremendous one supported by a no less tremendous opposition, because they will have their minds up to whatever is needed to keep Quebec within Canada. I still believe this is possible, because it is what a majority of Quebecers wish for, with essential *provisos* that are nonetheless fair and reasonable. Mr. Speaker, all of us here in this House, wherever we may sit, we have an efficient role to play in meeting our constituents' needs.

Below provincial governments, there are municipal governments who are also responsible for development, and that development must indeed fit in with the wishes and possibilities of the people. Finally, citizens themselves are involved in development, to various degrees and in various capacities. In conclusion, I would suggest that the government is prepared to share its responsibilities. We know the job is far from completed, but together we hope to succeed in working for the good of all Canadians wherever they are, including those in Quebec and the Maritime provinces.

● (2020)

[English]

**Mr. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West):** Mr. Speaker, there is one thing that the present government can do that would be for the greater good of the country and that is to resign office tomorrow and allow a government to come in that would make an attempt to overcome the conditions discussed in the resolution now before the House. The policies of the government have led to the conditions set out in the final words of the motion which read:

... has resulted in a crisis of economic stagnation and unprecedented unemployment in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces.

Who should take the credit or the blame for that? The government that has been in office for the last 14 years, since 1963, has to take the credit or the blame for the present economic conditions in Canada. It is the same government that took credit when things appeared to be going well that has to take responsibility when we are in a period of abysmal and unprecedented unemployment in eastern Canada and the Atlantic provinces—this government, this Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and his predecessor, who have been in office for the last 14 years. The best thing they can do to show they still have a feeling for what is good for the country, is to get out. The country will be ruined if they stay for another year before an election.

Is there a crisis of economic stagnation and unemployment in eastern Canada? Let me speak for a moment of Newfoundland. The latest figures available show that from April 10 to 15 the actual work force in Newfoundland was 180,000 people, 145,000 of whom are employed and 35,000 of whom were unemployed. The actual rate of unemployment in Newfoundland for that week was 19.2 per cent. Any government that felt any pangs of conscience at all would resign from office in the face of those figures. Unemployment stands at 19.2 per cent, when a Liberal government has been in office for the last 14