

management of the economy, the mark is failure. When it comes to the management of government internal finance, the mark is failure.

Honourable senators, let us look at one or two other things that are of some importance in this issue. Let us look at the question of the youth—the young unemployed people of this country, about which Senator Hébert made some interesting and constructive remarks. I must say that the government statement about youth is one of those passages which, somehow or other, we seem to have heard before. In the Prorogation Speech, dealing with the record of the government since the last speech in 1980, this was said:

Young people have also been a particular focus for Government action, which dealt with the primary concerns of youth employment and academic prospects.

Well, that is nice to know. I am glad I was told, because if I looked around this country today I would find it difficult to see the evidence of this concern that would meet my idea of what an appropriate policy response ought to be.

In the Throne Speech there is more of the same. We are told in the Throne Speech, for example, that there is going to be \$1 billion expended in special efforts to help the young people of this country. When that sum is broken down a little and subjected to some analysis, however, it does not look quite as good as it sounds. Of that \$1 billion, \$690 million—nearly 70 per cent—is going to be recycled money—that is, money taken from something else. What else we do not know, there is no indication of that, but certainly somebody is going to get it in the neck if they are going to lose nearly \$700 million to put into this program. Fifty million dollars is to come from the unemployment insurance fund—a fund which already stands at a deficit of \$4.2 billion, if you please. Another \$50 million will be added to that deficit, because it seems that that kind of figure does not bother the government. We know that unemployment insurance has heretofore been paid mainly by wage tax and by employers' contributions; that it is one of the most regressive forms of taxation that we have; that it adds to the cost of living; that it is one of these administrative prices the government says it is going to control, yet it is going to raid that fund for \$50 million.

Let us give the government credit for this: there is another \$260 million in new money that will go into these programs. The figures that I am about to quote to honourable senators were released yesterday, I believe, by the Minister of Finance. Youth unemployment for both sexes at November last was at a rate of 18.8 per cent. For young men from ages 15 to 25, there was an unemployment rate of 21.3 per cent—one in five was unemployed. Have they ever been hired? I think not. There are 400,000 young Canadians who are jobless today.

Honourable senators, \$1 billion may sound good, even as a gross figure, but I think that it sounded just as good the last time we heard it. It sounded just as good when the honourable minister, Mr. Axworthy, in April of 1983 proposed the \$1 billion plan during his tenure in that office. I suspect that the only thing that has changed between then and now is the

minister. We have a new one and he has to have his own \$1 billion program, even if there is very little change in the policy that the government has enunciated.

Honourable senators, on the basis of the record of the administration in its first session of Parliament, one is not really encouraged to think that there is much good to come of this. We have to hope that there will be. We have to hope that some of these measures, at least, will be effected. We have to hope that the government really is seized of the seriousness of the matter and that some good will come of these things. I do not decry them because I want to score a point; I decry them because I think they are inadequate. If we are to have the conservation corps and the parks and the voluntary sector increased through government action in order to employ people, that has to be a good thing and the more the merrier. I hope that it goes ahead full steam. But one thing is certain: these measures are short-term. Another thing is certain: they are not permanent jobs. And there is one probability, and that is that for many, they may be dead-end jobs. That really is the kind of patchwork and temporizing policy which one really cannot support. It seems to be devised solely to get the government over the next election, and possibly it may be of assistance. It seems to me, however, that the public is going to ask: "Where are the long-term policies that will help put this country's economic affairs to right? Where are the long-term policies that will make us quick and adaptable and ready for changes to meet the demands of the second half of the twentieth century and the competition of our international rivals?"

Honourable senators, I like to be hopeful but I have to be sceptical because, after all, I have the record to go by. It certainly is pretty cold comfort, indeed.

Let us move on to something else, honourable senators. Let us take a look at the national energy policy. On a reading of the Prorogation Speech, that is another bold initiative. There were four such initiatives mentioned: the Constitution; the six-and-five program, on the backs of the civil service, whether you like it or not; the Crow—why anyone should want to talk about the Crow when he has to eat it is something I do not understand, but that is what is going to happen in western Canada as far as my honourable friends are concerned—and the national energy policy. I want to talk about this bold initiative, the national energy policy, and I want to begin with what was said about it in the Prorogation Speech: "Energy Security at a Fair Price."

A blended, made-in-Canada oil price, fair to producers and consumers, has resulted in average wellhead prices significantly below world levels.

It goes on to say:

The commitment made in 1980 not to impose an 18¢ increase in the excise tax on transportation fuels has been honoured.

I have to admit, honourable senators, that that is literally correct. It is true that an 18 cent increase in the excise tax was not imposed. The government felt that what it had done in