

of any lack of compassion or interest in human beings. The record of the Liberal party is proof of that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and myself have had the opportunity to visit, this summer, several areas of Canada and to get acquainted, on the spot, with the problems of the people who live there. I am convinced that as a result, we are both better equipped to assess these problems and the advisability of the solutions which we intend to bring about. In fact, since the house adjourned, all hon. members went back to their respective ridings and have been able to travel all over Canada. We all have had new opportunities to realize the greatness of our country, the pride of our national spirit and the scope of our achievements. In short, we have been in a position to further discover the Canadian fact. We came back with the conviction that we are the citizens of a country which is not simply a northern extension of a foreign state, nor an historic accident, nor the result of the casual gathering of people of various origins. Quite the contrary, we constitute an homogeneous community, with a dynamic, a social organization and a future of its own.

During these last weeks, again we have seen and observed with pride the struggle of the Canadian people against a severe climate and a stubborn soil so as to become the masters of the riches promised to people who are at once industrious and perseverant.

On the other hand, we have noticed with an increasing concern some results of that struggle: the ruthless destruction of a landscape and the useless pollution of air and water. We were all able to assess the price that our society pays for the urban and industrial expansion which, too often, destroys the soul of our land, even though it increases our material welfare. Once again, we realize that an industrial growth, uncontrolled, is a source of danger.

Mr. Speaker, we are all determined, I am sure, to tolerate no longer the human sacrifices of comfort, health and efficiency which are forced upon us by an environment overcome by noise, noxious fumes and industrial waste.

We have all noticed, also, with great interest, the advantages and the benefits enjoyed in the economic field by a very great number

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of our fellow-citizens. But this could only emphasize in our opinion the sad situation of thousands of other Canadians who, because of circumstances over which they have no control, have to face serious financial difficulties. Those difficulties are numerous and manifold.

Here we have the Maritime fisherman, whose income has been scanty for so long that he could never get but a minimum of essential goods. There, we have the Prairie farmer whose competence and courage made him exceptionally successful and who could buy considerable amounts of land and machines; but he now is threatened with a total loss, because a sudden decrease of his income prevents him from meeting his financial commitments. Elsewhere again, the townsman who lives in a slum, unable to break out of the vicious circle in which he is kept by unemployment, illness and lack of education.

We cannot, nay, we must never give these people the impression that we regard programs, studies or laws as ends in themselves. Such measures have only a meaning if they bring relief to the people in want.

We must not think for instance that the very fact of living in a city allows to hope for economic miracles and that we can solve the problems of the farmers and of the fishermen simply by directing them towards different occupations in the urban centres.

It is beyond doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the population shift from the farms will go on at a constant rate, but this is no reason to agree with those who claim that rural life can no more profit to the country at large, nor to the citizens who have chosen this way of life. And that goes far beyond the simple question of economical effectiveness, even if that question remains extremely important. Thus, we should ask ourselves how we are going to meet the employment and other needs of men who, as landowners, were for many generations independent and self-sufficient people. We must also know what steps are being taken in cities in order to instil into the young people who came from rural areas an awareness of their responsibilities and usefulness, which they often acquired naturally in their native environment.

● (2:10 p.m.)

Lastly, it seems reasonable to ask ourselves whether we were not partially the cause of the present restlessness of the young people, by forcing upon them a social system that seems devoid of stimulants for the individual.