

The Budget—Mr. Marshall

of hypocrisy. I can think of a lot of better places to spend \$7 million at a time of spending restraint.

• (4:50 p.m.)

When are we going to start taking some positive action toward helping the poor? Why are we having more committees to study poverty? I pointed out in November, 1968, in my maiden speech, that the Economic Council of Canada did all the work in respect of the poor. They carried out 32 staff studies, and had five conferences. They presented seven papers and nine or ten other reports. Here we are spending months and months on another study. I suggest the homework is done in respect of the 5 million poverty stricken Canadians. The examinations have been written and we all passed with honours, so why do we keep procrastinating?

When are we going to do something about putting some action where our supposed expert minds are? This is not bullying or threatening, Mr. Speaker, this is a plea to the humanitarian feelings of this government. When the Senate committee has completed its report, are we going to have another white paper or is Information Canada going to send out questionnaires to the poverty-stricken asking them again if they are poor? The Economic Council of Canada came to the great decision two or three years ago, after all the studies I mentioned, that poverty was real in Canada. What are we going to prove when the Senate committee has finished its work? Mark my words, Mr. Speaker, that committee will come to the same conclusion and there will be a startling announcement that poverty is still real in Canada and we have to do something about it.

Unfortunately, we are faced with a crisis on our continent as a result of the evils of pollution, that is the pollution of our environment. I must give credit to the minister responsible for taking some positive steps to combat this evil. Let me ask about the pollution of the 5 million poverty-stricken Canadians who are under-nourished. What about the pollution of the bodies of the poverty-stricken who are living in unsanitary conditions and are subject to sickness and lack of medical care? This is not a new problem; this type of pollution has been with us for many years. Why have we not taken some positive action? Why do we procrastinate and hide the real reason? The poor be damned; let us fight inflation regardless of who it hurts.

Can anyone in this House of Commons say, conscientiously or with any sense of humani-

[Mr. Marshall.]

ty, that we have any higher priority than dealing with poverty in Canada? Instead of sending \$7 million worth of messages telling the people of the great policies of this government, let us give them \$7 million worth of assistance. Let us concentrate the many millions of dollars we spend on other things to ensure that under-nourished children will have a decent opportunity to grow up and become contributing Canadians. There is an old military expression which teaches that an attacking army can only advance as fast as its slowest element. We should learn this principle. We should stop now, look over our shoulders and strengthen the weak to help them catch up.

What did we accomplish by our race to prosperity? We have attained richness by following a path to affluence through modern technology, which is running away with us, and we have polluted everything around us, in the process. Now, we are going to have to make huge expenditures to provide a cure. As a result, our state of prosperity is really false and we are being devoured by greed and selfishness. In the same vein, Mr. Speaker, I ask when we are going to look behind us and do something really worthwhile for those regions which need an injection of funds to inspire true development? When the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) announced that he was designating special areas for an infusion of funds, why did he make chalk of one area and cheese of another?

I thank the minister with all my heart for mentioning certain areas in Newfoundland, especially those in my own district of Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe with names that have never been mentioned in this House, such as Stephenville, St. George's, Port au Port, Hawkes Bay, Port Saunders, Port aux Choix. These places have been designated as special areas for development funds. However, there are other areas which he did not mention and which have been neglected for many years. The people there are also Canadians and deserve equal opportunity. These are the words of the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

I note that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and his whiz kids are on a northern kick. They are going to the north now. The Prime Minister keeps going north with his band of highly paid experts, but I should like him to know that the north stretches a long way across Canada. There is a northern Newfoundland which he evidently forgets about and does not visit. There is no one who agrees more than I that we must develop the