

Employment and Immigration

If the government really wants to put the boots to the separatists, it has to show the young people of this country that there is something to be gained from participating in federalism. Young people should be able to get jobs because of the initiatives of the central government. They should be assured that the central government is strong enough to direct the economy and to satisfy their aspirations and hopes in terms of employment opportunities. The government should be able to satisfy their dreams about material gain. Let us not forget that that is a very strong incentive these days. Hon. members opposite talk about incentive and about giving corporations incentive. When are they going to start talking about giving incentive to young, unemployed people and to the unemployed generally? Unemployed people want jobs so they can earn money to buy things that television tells them they are not complete without. The government should be providing jobs, not fiddling with the Unemployment Insurance Act and trying to tighten up when we are experiencing high unemployment.

In addition, last Tuesday I was discussing some of the serious problems within the country and hoping the government might zero in on those problems. One of our problems is that our country has developed a hinterland economy. I referred to Japanese-Canadian trade relations as a microcosm of the problem that faces Canada. I believe that problem was the reason for the visit of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to Japan some months ago. The problem is that 96 per cent of our exports to Japan are raw materials, while 95 per cent of our imports from Japan are finished products, primarily automotive products, cameras and electronic equipment. We have locked ourselves into the position of being producers of raw materials. Our people are hewers of wood and drawers of water. That is as it always has been. We mine raw materials and ship them out either in a semi-processed state or in a raw state. That is the experience in the area from which I come. We export raw materials and we export jobs along with them. We have no infrastructure for research and development. That is all found in the parent company countries. It is not found in Canada.

I am not the only one who is saying this. I am not an economist, and certainly not a corporate elitist, but it is interesting that as every day goes by we have more ammunition. We can pick up any paper or document, whether it be a Manpower publication or a private sector publication, and in those papers and documents we have ample ammunition for this debate on the question of employment in Canada. I would like to refer to an article which appeared in the Toronto *Star* of Monday, July 4, 1977. The article is headed "Lack of science means fewer jobs". This editorial quotes the chairman of the Science Council of Canada as saying:

Council Chairman Josef Kates says the impetus must come from governments, which account for 40 per cent of Canada's collective spending. And the main thrust must come from Ottawa, because the problem is national.

He was talking about the development of an industrial strategy to develop strong Canadian capabilities in science and technology; in other words, research and development. The article continues:

[Mr. Rodriguez.]

The areas in which Canadian know-how is weak, he says, touch every individual: housing, energy, natural resources extraction, communications and electrical transmission. Other areas, such as Arctic and oil sands technology, are ones in which Canadians should excel—and benefit from—but have been left to foreigners to develop and exploit.

The rewards for asserting what Kates calls "technological sovereignty" are many. "The economy will be strengthened, employment will be generated. We will have the capability to solve our own problems and adjust to change and we will strengthen the sense of Canada as a nation."

By failing to accept the challenge, Canada instead has a weak economy, high unemployment and a heavy reliance on outsiders to solve our problems and make our decisions.

Kates echoes the sentiments: "A selective 'buy-Canada' attitude should be reflected in policy formulation to ensure the long-term well-being of firms deemed essential to support technological sovereignty. Most industrialized countries have in place policies which favour indigenous companies over foreign firms."

There is more at risk than the loss of Canadian scientists, managers, entrepreneurs and other essential economic movers to the United States and elsewhere.

What's really at stake is the ability of Canadians to arrange their own economic affairs—and, by extension, their own political and cultural affairs—in a way that's best suited to Canadians rather than as an adaptation of somebody else's brain power.

That was the chairman of the Science Council of Canada speaking on the whole question of the need to develop Canadian technology, research and development. That is the very basis for creating an economy which will expand and provide jobs for the many gifted and talented young people our school systems are producing but who presently stay unemployed. Indeed, they cannot even find the necessary eight weeks of employment to qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. Our amendment proposes that clauses 29 and 30, dealing with the qualifying period, should be referred back to the committee. We said this was a very serious step, moving from the eight-week minor attachment period to a regional rate that ranged from 10 to 14 weeks, depending on the unemployment rate in the 54 regions of Canada. We criticized this step because of the bureaucracy that will be needed. Members of parliament deal with unemployment problems every day and well know how complicated is the act. We can envisage the nightmare when 54 regions are superimposed on the act and the people who administer it have to sort out what the rate is on any given day and consider who has moved into the area, what their last address was, and so on.

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Everything is blamed on the computer these days, not on the bureaucrats who put the information into the computer. Just as unemployment is the scapegoat for the inadequacies of this government, so is the computer the "fall guy", for the bureaucrats. Even moving to the regional rate, going from the minimum 10 weeks to 14 weeks, depending on the rate of unemployment in a region, will place hardship on many of the unemployed who cannot find eight weeks' work, much less ten.

This matter was brought to our attention by L'Association des Travailleurs de Rivière du Loup who sent a brief to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration in which they pointed out that it is not easy for many people to