them. But the Fathers of Confederation did not do that—and we must not. They chose to pool their resources. They chose to create a constitution and to invent a great country. To those who say that confederation is a failure, I reply that it brought about a stable democratic system of government, it protected cultural and regional identities, it opened the door to geographical expansion, it provided liberties and rights, brought about an effective system of social justice, led to economic growth, to the establishment of a strong financial system, and to a respected position among the nations of the world.

To those who call this a failure, I say I hope that we, in our time, in our efforts to renew our national spirit of community, can fail so well. But we shall not fail, Mr. Speaker. We can succeed, we must succeed, and we will.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, having heard their weekly sermon, the Liberal backbenchers are now preparing to leave, and we wish them well. Back in September, 1968, I returned to speak at a high school in Oshawa which I had attended some years earlier as a student. In the course of meeting with the students a fellow at the back of the assembly got up and said, "Mr. Broadbent, I understand that you studied at the London School of Economics. Is that right?" I said, "Yes, that is right." He went on, "I understand that a fellow named Trudeau, the new Prime Minister, also studied at that institution. Is that right?" I had to say, "Yes, he went there as well." Then this student turned to me and said, "How is it you came back a democratic socialist and he came back a Liberal?" I said, "Well, the Prime Minister always was a poor student."

An hon. Member: No wonder the backbenchers are leaving.

Mr. Broadbent: If the people of Canada with the most elementary education in economics could have listened to the first half of the diatribe we heard this afternoon, they would have agreed 100 per cent.

● (1752)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: Just listen. We listened for an hour and a half; now it is your turn. For an hour and a half we listened to a sermon which contained only two new items. Firstly, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) scooped the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) by announcing the government is going to spend $100 million on some job creation program. He was so scared stiff that the rest of the hour and a half of his speech would put everyone to sleep that he had to mention that at the outset. He then trotted out all the old stuff. Some of it we will agree with, and I want to deal with the points he raised. For better or for worse, I have thrown my speech away and I will try and engage in some serious debate on the issues.

The Prime Minister continued for an hour and a half, and then near the end of his speech made another announcement. He said the government is going to bring forward a bill

covering federal referendums. I happen to think that that is a good idea. That is something I was considering, and I seriously thank the Prime Minister for it. Why did the Prime Minister do that? He spent no length of time justifying the referendum at all. Nor did he elaborate on the $100 million which is going to be spent on job creation. He knew that the people sitting in the press gallery and those who may see some of this debate on television, hear about it on the radio or read reports, would have learned absolutely nothing new this afternoon, so he trotted out a couple of announcements.

I want to deal as seriously as I can with the economics argument, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that the Minister of Finance or some Liberal backbenchers will take up this argument tomorrow. What do we hear? First of all, let me say that the end of his speech was the sort of culmination of a series of insults. The Prime Minister had the audacity to say to the people of Canada that somehow they were at fault. At a time when, compared not with the poor countries of the world but with The Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, West Germany, Japan, our economic performance has been deplorable, the Prime Minister had the nerve to say that Canadians are a bunch of bitchers. That is what the culmination of his speech amounted to.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: One point is to be made about the unemployed, Mr. Speaker. I have just come back from Newfoundland, and I can tell the Prime Minister that the unemployment level in that province is the same as it was in 1932. Let me remind the Prime Minister of a little economic history: 1932 was the depth of our depression. I do not know whether the Prime Minister is going to go to Newfoundland and say to the people in the fishing communities or in St. John's, "You're a bunch of bitchers, fellows. The fact that there is no job for you is somehow your own fault". Perhaps he will tell those Newfoundlanders with a 30 per cent unemployment rate, "You're soft", as he said to Canadians in general. Or, "You're lazy; you are not out there trying hard enough".

The other day, in London, the Prime Minister said that Canadians simply did not want to work and that was the reason we had unemployment. He said that they were soft. I want to list some of the points he made today. He said that the problem with the Canadian economy and with the Canadian people is lack of productivity. He said that we were outpricing ourselves in world markets. He said that earnings in Canada are 7 per cent higher than they are in the United States, that they are more productive than we are.

A number of these generalities, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to contest. I am not going to say that a number of the statements the Prime Minister has made and which I have just quoted are wrong. He may be right. But I should like him to narrow down the sectors and to tell us which ones are not productive. That would be serious work. The impression that he tried to leave with us in the House today and with the people of Canada is that somehow his government, the Liberal party, has been non-existent in this country for the past ten