

the results of the failed programs which this government has brought in to help the people of Canada. The problem is that at least 50 per cent of the Canadian population is feeling no positive benefits of the government's programs at all.

• (1730)

If one is unemployed, then the effects of the unemployment insurance changes which may or may not come about—let us all hope that they do not—will be devastating to the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario. They will be just as severe on the other provinces. The number of people who will be in the poorer categories of our society will increase, even on the basis of the government's own predictions. Last year we had an unemployment rate on average of 7.5 per cent. This year the government's own predictions are that it will be 8.2 per cent, while next year it will be 8.5 per cent.

We can see that it is absolutely senseless to say it is only three provinces out of the total. If you are poor, you are poor. If you are going to be suffering from the lack of income or the inability to purchase food, it does not really matter what province you are in.

I am certainly pleased to see that at least one province, with the co-operation of another, is taking the government to court on that matter. I can only wish them good luck because it is an abomination.

Similar comparisons could be made between the educational system and health care. The question of health care has a lot to do with free trade where we get the so-called level playing field with the United States, where those who can afford medical attention get it, and those who cannot pay when they enter the door, do not get it. That is precisely the kind of a situation we are getting into in Canada. There is no way that this government is going to be able to deny it. It is going to be a fact.

Madam Deputy Speaker: On a point of order the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, in light of the attention the hon. member's speech was attracting, I wonder if there might not be unanimous consent to allow him to continue.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate with the hon. member for Comox—Alberni.

Government Orders

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Madam Speaker, I was interested in the comments made on this amendment over the last few hours in the House, particularly some of the comments coming from the Liberal side. I am under the impression that the Liberals intend to vote against this motion. I think it should be stated again exactly what this motion is designed to do.

It is designed to require the national government to give legal notice to the provinces before it imposes this bill. As the member for New Westminster pointed out, that will require well over a year, at which point this bill will cease to have any impact. In other words this motion nullifies the effect of the bill.

The Liberals intend to do it this way. They know that 100 per cent of the Tories are going to vote in support of this bill. Thus they are saying that they want it implemented immediately, which is stupid.

Mr. Milliken: We are voting against this bill.

Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): You are voting against it. They are voting for it. The bill is getting passed. What you are saying by not voting for this motion is that you are asking for it to be implemented immediately. I cannot figure out the logic in what the Liberals are doing except if you know a bit of the background, especially in British Columbia.

As was pointed out by some members, it has been the likes of Bill Vander Zalm, the Premier of British Columbia, and Mel Couvelier, the illustrious Minister of Finance of British Columbia, who have advocated a cutback in federal transfer payments to the provinces.

Let us look at the political history of these two individuals. Mel Couvelier is a former leader of the Liberal party in British Columbia, elected by all of those Liberals in B.C. He is the person advocating a cutback in federal transfer payments to provinces such as British Columbia.

Then there is Bill Vander Zalm. Bill Vander Zalm ran for the leadership of the Liberals in the province of British Columbia. I do have to give credit to the Liberals because when Bill Vander Zalm came out in favour of public floggings and hangings he could not get a bare majority to support him to be leader of the party. He had some strong support, but he could not get the majority needed to become leader of the party in British Columbia.