

*The Address—Mr. Hogan*

for lower oil prices. In an open letter to President Ford which appeared in the *New York Times* last week, the Venezuelan president reminded him, among other things, that the developed countries had some years ago made a commitment to give at least 1 per cent of their gross national product in aid to the developing countries. He pointed out to the United States president that this had still not been done. We in Canada, who are among the fat cats of this world, should consider it shameful that as of 1974 we have not fulfilled this obligation. Let us hope the present government, now that it has a progressive left wing Cape Bretoner as head of the external affairs department, will fulfil this promise during the life of the thirtieth parliament. It is, surely, the least Canada can be expected to do.

During the election, government spokesmen argued that inflation was largely an imported phenomenon and that little could be done about it except such things as indexing income taxes and pensions so as to relieve some of the worst effects. To judge from the Speech from the Throne, having been given a decisive mandate to govern, hon. members on the treasury benches seem so uncertain about what to do that they are talking about meeting all kinds of groups in Canadian society to find out from them what action the government should take. This suggests a series of mini summits which would be a pale imitation of the recent international summit meeting in which the President of the United States took part. In my opinion, it also suggests an abdication of the role of leadership which the party opposite has just been given.

Their spokesmen argued successfully before the electorate that they indeed possessed the capacity for decisive leadership. Let them now show it and govern this country and fulfil their mandate. We heard the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) during the campaign proclaim that as well as seeking votes he was exercising his notion of participatory democracy in order to set the stage for action in the next parliament. Mr. Speaker, the next parliament is here. Hon. members and the Canadian people are asking for action, not for more words and public relations meetings without action.

We are all interested in that part of the Speech from the Throne which says the government is "conscious of the need for restraint". There seems to be an implication here that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) will be using fiscal restraint when he hands down the budget. The Speech from the Throne goes on to say that the government "does not intend to deliberately generate slack in the economy to combat inflation".

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that Canadians have heard this song before. My mind goes back at once to 1969 and 1970. Surely the government has learned this lesson. It would be the poor, the working poor, the Atlantic region in general and parts of it in particular, that would bear a crushing and uneven burden if this path were again followed. I mention in particular a good deal of Newfoundland, which is surely due for some special and positive consideration on the twenty-fifth anniversary of its entry into confederation, as well as particular areas in New Brunswick.

With this Liberal policy of 1969-70 came the usual increase of unemployment in the Atlantic region which

has become the earmark of our place in the Canadian confederation. In Cape Breton, for example, that policy helped to bring the unemployment figure to some 20 per cent, as reported by the president of the Cape Breton Development Corporation when he appeared before the Standing Committee on Regional Economic Expansion in 1973. In this connection I want to remind the government that in concocting the formula for this winter's LIP program, the office of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Andras) reported a figure of 16.6 per cent for unemployment in my constituency of Cape Breton-East Richmond, a 15.5 per cent figure for Cape Breton-The Sydneys, and a 15.3 per cent figure for Cape Breton-Highlands-Canso.

These were last winter's figures, and it would take more than "lip" service and LIP grants to prevent them rising to 20 per cent or even 25 per cent if the government pursues a policy of tight money and fiscal restraint which would see national unemployment increase substantially from the present rate of 5.3 per cent, seasonally adjusted, to the 7.8 per cent forecast for the fourth quarter of 1975 by the independent researchers of the conference board. In terms of the current labour force, this will mean an increase from slightly more than one-half million unemployed at the present time to some 780,000 people unemployed. Expressed by way of annual averages, this will mean the highest unemployment experienced in Canada for many, many years and will amount to the highest percentage figure in 13 years. We all recognize the dilemma which the government presently faces, but when it comes down to choosing between inflation and the rate of unemployment suggested, my colleagues and I would always have to choose what we consider in these circumstances to be the lesser evil—inflation. Why? I repeat, it is because government policy, designed to create unemployment, has always in the past, even in the very recent past, fallen most brutally on those who are most helpless.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize for having to read extensively from notes, but this is my first speech in this House. We all entered kitchens and living-rooms across this country during the last election campaign and looked face to face at human beings who in this seemingly affluent Canada lack money on which to live in 1974. There are people in this nation making trips to the supermarkets to look for bones for soup, as many had to do in the depths of the depression, scrounging for the cheapest possible cuts of meat, whenever they can afford meat at all.

These women and men, many of them old, some of them working poor, many of them native people, go from aisle to aisle in stores and supermarkets hoping they will not meet any of their friends and thus reveal the desperation of their situation. Moreover, in my riding—as many national reporters testified during the last campaign—the housing situation is, for some, desperate and almost beyond crisis proportions.

● (1810)

As my time is drawing to a close, Mr. Speaker, in this my maiden speech in the House of Commons, I would be less than honest if I did not pay tribute to the hard working efforts of the Cape Breton Development Corporation to reverse an economic situation in that part of the world that almost seemed impossible as recently as eight