

*The Address—Mr. Chrétien*

conditions which should not be tolerated in a modern, honest and generous society.

The days are past when the individual, entirely on his own, without any help and trusting in God alone, had to fight his way to the top. The golden days of the Rockefellers, the Vanderbilts and the Fords is practically over.

Today the situation is quite different and no one should hope for the return of that individualistic society. In the last 50 years our country has turned more and more toward collectivism, and what MacKenzie King advocated in 1918 has become a reality with the passing recently of social security measures such as the labour code and the pension plan, and with the forthcoming medicare plan. All those projects have been translated into legislation, thanks to the party which sits on this side of the house.

It is obvious that the Liberal party, more than any other, has understood the great currents of history, has seen the changes happening throughout the country and has found solutions which have brought about the collectivist society we know today. In its philosophy, its leadership and its policies, the Liberal party has kept in touch with the traditional trends of thought and action, but it has always understood the evolution of our society. That is why today it is advocating the two attitudes necessary to our country's development, namely economic planning within the administration and the establishment of a new way of life for the two groups which constitute our great nation.

Last December the Economic Council of Canada submitted its first report setting out the objectives Canada should try to attain for 1970.

This report did not receive all the publicity it deserved on account of difficulties experienced by parliament at that time, in December last; however, I believe that it was a turning point in our economic and political history. Now, of necessity, the political parties will have to reckon with the report the Economic Council of Canada will submit every year. The annual report will become the basic document for the Canadian electorate inasmuch as it will reflect the economic situation of the nation.

If Canada is to have full employment and achieve the standard of living set by the council, the government will have to tackle resolutely the most serious problem facing this country: the standard of living in rural areas of the east and unemployment in small urban centres far from the big cities.

[Mr. Chrétien.]

The designated area program has surely been helpful to many regions close to the great economic centres of Canada but it has not been successful everywhere. For instance, it did nothing for the town of Shawinigan, even after it was designated but it was beneficial to other communities in the same district.

I am glad to see that the speech from the throne mentions that the government intends to revise its program to improve it and provide assistance for areas where the standard of living is too low and unemployment too widespread. That is most welcome because we have to rid Canada of any form of pauperism. Every corner of this land must provide for its inhabitants a decent standard of living, one which befits our wealth.

Inasmuch as the standard of living depends directly on productivity, the necessary agencies must be established to enable people who lose their jobs to re-establish themselves as an asset in the economy by finding a job as soon as possible. To do that the government will have to set up also a more dynamic program for the re-training of those workers displaced by automation, and a more modern policy as far as the mobility of workers is concerned.

Why not set up a financial assistance program for people who must move to another city in order to take a new job because of automation?

I am convinced that the Liberal party, which was always in the van in the field of social policy in Canada for the past 50 years will tackle with vision and determination, within the scope of the economic objectives set up by the economic council, the re-training of displaced workers, the mobility of manpower, as well as productivity and industrial decentralization so that every area in Canada might become a comfortable oasis for every citizen. I am happy to see that the speech from the throne provides for the study of new programs in this respect.

However, the most prosperous nation would not be happy without the flame of ideals burning in the heart of its youth. We see that young people, especially in the province of Quebec, are not interested in federal politics, and that the climate of tension which prevailed in this house where it took weeks and weeks to settle ordinary problems has simply aroused their indignation.

This is why it is urgent to establish for the young people imaginative programs of action which will stimulate their spirit of dedication and service and their ideals. I am