

feel that tariff policies in the present day are out of date? What is their approach to this? We want to hear from these up-and-coming fellows. We want to know what they think about these matters, and what effect they think they will have on the long term picture of unemployment.

How are we to improve conditions in this country unless we find some way of fitting into the developments in Europe? I am talking about the European economic community and Great Britain, which wishes to join. Should we have a continental energy policy?

An hon. Member: What do you think?

Mr. Osler: Should we try to get into the "Pacific rim"?

An hon. Member: What do you think?

Mr. Osler: I did not propose this motion. I am just saying that I wish the motion had been amplified in this way. I am doing some thinking on this subject. I am trying as hard as I can. However, I am not going to throw it away on an opposition day. I am going to talk about it in caucus and other places where intelligent people might listen. But these are the sorts of things that should be brought up during debate if hon. members are intelligently concerned about the over-all problem.

• (4:50 p.m.)

Instead of saying "gloom, doom and things have to get worse, and we hope to hell they do get worse, for if not we will be wrong," we must tackle this problem at three levels. There is an immediate level, a mid-term level and a long-term level. I have heard very few suggestions about any of these levels. Perhaps we could attract some of the provinces that are reluctant to deal with unemployment by suggesting a "forgiveness" clause of all the labour contained in the federal loan if they will get on with the job. It would be a little more imaginative than the loan which the government has made available and of which some have not taken advantage. But there can be very little additional figuring than what is being done at present to get out of the present situation.

The mid-term is going to be upon us very shortly. Municipal and provincial bodies should be encouraged to assemble an inventory of public works so that next time they will be ready when public works are again required. Instead of having a three, four or six month lead-in time—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

Mr. Charles H. Thomas (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, this government has often been compared, and rightly so, with that character made famous by Stephen Leacock, who jumped on his horse and galloped off in all directions at once. How many times have we heard contradictory statements issuing from different ministers? I need only refer to the most recent one, the bumbling and fumbling over the Francophone decision, to illustrate what I mean by the mixed up attitudes this government adopts toward a national policy.

Alleged Non-Support of Employment Programs

Unfortunately for the country, there is one area in which the government has been consistent. It has been consistent in its stubborn insistence in carrying out economic policies which have been recognized as outmoded and ineffective by everyone but their own befuddled experts. It has been consistent in demonstrating to the country the true meaning of the phrase "participatory democracy". The greatest number of Canadians in history are now actively participating in the hopelessness and despair of—unemployment—deliberately created by the policies of this government.

The government has been consistent in its blind refusal to consult with provincial and municipal authorities before embarking on projects which can only add to the tax load and welfare burden of these municipalities. These policies have placed staggering financial burdens on the municipalities. Because of the desperate plight of these local governments and the necessity for federal action to alleviate the results of federal policy, I am pleased to support the motion of my colleague, the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Ryan).

When the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) made the statement a year ago that if his policies created 6 per cent unemployment, it was too bad and the unemployed were a regrettable side-effect, I wonder if he actually realized how many of these "regrettable side-effects" there would be in February, 1971. Is the Prime Minister so cruel and heartless that he can look on some 700,000 to 800,000 Canadians as side-effects or is he just all fuddled up? While he and his colleagues play the numbers game, close to a million Canadians are broke, disillusioned, and in many cases hungry. The municipalities are desperately looking for new funds to take care of the ever increasing relief rolls.

Let us look at what the government's programs have done to the provinces and municipalities. Just this week Premier Bourassa of Quebec placed a great share of the blame for the problems his province is having with unemployment on federal policies. He flatly stated that there should be more co-operation between provincial and federal authorities, as suggested in this motion. The hon. member for Spadina spoke about the burgeoning welfare costs in metro Toronto which may reach close to \$100 million in 1971. This estimate was recently made by North York controller Paul Godfrey. This problem of how to handle ever increasing welfare costs is not confined to the cities.

One thing emerged from the recent welfare ministers conference in Ottawa, overshadowing all else. That was the fact that the heavy unemployment resulting from a national anti-inflation policy had placed a tremendous burden on the tax revenues on the municipalities. The provinces and municipalities are carrying an undue share of the cost. Also emerging was the clear duty of the federal government to take two immediate steps. They should increase unemployment insurance benefits immediately, as well as their share of welfare payments under the Canada Assistance Plan.

The Hon. Brenda Robertson, minister of youth and welfare for New Brunswick, spoke out for her colleagues