

Supply

Atlantic Canada, is another area that suffers because of high interest rates.

As long as we have these tremendous disparities and discrepancies, the application of macro or global economic policy is going to discriminate and hurt very badly many Canadians that live in my part of the world, more so than Canadians who are fortunate to live in areas with high employment.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of problems that are structural. The government is not responding to those problems. If we had a meaningful parliamentary system where we could hold the majority government accountable, then government backbenchers and opposition MPs could force this government to address those problems. This is the reason why we need some serious parliamentary reform so this institution has more clout in trying to get the government to address the problems of the day.

We have serious problems that have been brought about because of globalization, because of massive technological change. We have to be competitive internationally. We have to specialize in certain things and do them very well.

As someone who comes from the prairies, I have said that for a long time. We have to specialize in things like upgrading the raw materials that come out of western Canada, or our other resources or our food. We have to develop a mining equipment industry and a farm machinery industry, things we do not do very well. But there are a lot of things that we could be doing well and should be doing well and we are not. That is the real world that is out there. But we have not been doing that. As a result we now have tremendously high unemployment.

What has been the government response? The response has been high interest rates which have driven a lot of people out of work; a free trade deal that has given up a lot of Canadian sovereignty and independence in terms of addressing our problems; Americanizing this country in terms of giving away some of the flexibility and freedom we had in the past to deal with problems of this sort. We are starting to see that exhibited now more and more.

The government is now trying to negotiate a free trade deal with the Mexicans. If this is accomplished I suggest it is going to hurt Canadian workers. We have a high Canadian dollar, partly because of the free trade deal

which is making it even more difficult to create jobs. It makes our goods more expensive to sell abroad. It makes Canadian grain, potash, oil and our manufactured goods more expensive to sell, which is creating more unemployment.

We have across the way a government that perhaps lacks in imagination more than any government in the history of this country. Our country that has so many resources and so much skill and so much possibility is really going down the drain.

As I said, of the 16 countries that were studied by the OECD we rank number 15 in terms of the highest unemployment rate and that tells you, Mr. Speaker, a lot about the lack of imagination. Of the countries that were studied, as I said, by the OECD we ranked fifteenth out of 16. Only Spain is beyond us, Mr. Speaker, and that tells you a lot about the failure of this government over the last number of years.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions or comments, the hon. member for Québec-Est.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maurice Tremblay (Lotbinière): Lotbinière, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Lotbinière, of course.

Mr. Tremblay (Lotbinière): There is a difference, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to—

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Excuse me, there is a difference but you are both Tremblays.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Tremblay (Lotbinière): Indeed, Mr. Speaker. We will not ask the Chair to explain the difference.

That being said, and to get back to my speech, there are limits to tolerance and indulgence. Perhaps I may comment on some allegations made by the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville with respect to an OECD report that ranked Canada fifteenth out of sixteen. First of all, if I understand correctly and if my version is right, as far as I know the OECD has 24 member-countries, and in fact, I believe the hon. member mentioned the past twenty years.