

cussed because I feel that employment, unemployment, and inflation concern the provinces as much as the federal government. This government is being blamed—one could include all previous governments—only because it took over from its predecessor, and so on.

The problem facing us today is not necessarily a problem of one government, it is a national problem, a problem of generation, and it must be looked at from that standpoint. Speaking of employment, of course, everybody realizes today, one does not have to be a prophet or a soothsayer to know that our labour force is for the major part unemployed. When dealing with the issue of employment in the present situation we only look for short term seeming remedies to the unemployment afflicting us today. I say "afflicting us" because the plague of unemployment is a natural consequence of our economic evolution. We must indeed realize that it is simply a natural consequence because you do not try to solve unemployment with full employment. Temporarily, yes. And all means are being used, and previous and present ministers are trying with all means available to bring down unemployment but they will always be temporary means.

● (1700)

We must stop thinking for the immediate future. We should at last initiate a discussion to find long term solutions, although we have had all kinds of new projects in recent years. I still remember winter works, as everybody else does. Those were about the first big projects to be initiated to try and reduce unemployment, like for instance the ARDA projects, regional economic expansion projects and manpower training courses whose purpose was to retrain workers who had been laid off in some sectors. Those workers must be retrained to go back to the labour market, but after such projects we realize that even those workers, whose retraining was supported publicly, do not find jobs either because they simply increase the number of workers in already overcrowded sectors.

Today they say: At least we will train educated unemployed. But that will not give them a job. How many of them are coming to my office nowadays, young people who have completed their up-grading course or vocational training and who say: Now we could work but we have no job. The requirement is two or three years of experience. While these poor young people have just completed their studies, three years of experience are required. I believe it is merely another way for the employer to say: We have no job to give you.

We have also developed programs such as LIP, Opportunities for Youth, and now we have Canada Works and Young Canada Works. All these programs are aimed at temporarily lowering the current unemployment rate. We should first of all seriously wonder what is the best long term solution, not to eliminate unemployment, which is impossible, not to create permanent employment, because we will never achieve permanent full employment now, unless we decide once and for all to reject out of hand all modern techniques, unless we chose to move 50 years backwards.

Economic Policy

If we moved 50 years backwards and returned to the era of the small shovel and the pick, unemployment would probably disappear but this is impossible. We cannot take regressive steps and we cannot deny our present economic evolution simply because society could not follow a parallel development. Economics is not at fault. As far as economics is concerned, we are advanced and are not lagging in any way behind any other industrialized nations. I suggest we have completely forgotten to adjust the social sector to the economic sector. Therefore, if a machine or a given discovery, as we see them everyday, is going to remove 200, 300 or 1,000 workers from their jobs, if that machine produces less than those 1,000 workers, let us get rid of it.

But such a technique produces ten times as much as any group of workers, and yields ten times as much revenue for the state. The proof it yields much more revenue is that each year we see the gross national product increase. Therefore, it means that our economic development does not work against the nation, but for the nation. But because of our economic development, are we going to allow those people to starve to whom this technique is prejudicial? No. I think there are some measures to be adopted. If our country's production is ten times greater because of our economic development, we should be able to find some measures to allow those people to get retrained, but in the right sense, without considering that to let them live we still have to keep the old principles, the obligation to work.

We used to say, 50 or 60 years ago: "You do not work? You have no right to live!" That is not so today. Somehow we must find a way for the unemployed, now representing some 20, 24 per cent of the manpower, to live in our rich country. In other words, we have to change principles. We made scientific and economic progress, so Canadians must now share in that progress, because they were responsible for the whole process.

They must not be cast out because they produced too much, rather, they must have a share in this country's production. Such is the proposal we have been putting forward all along. As long as this government does not consider that proposal of a guaranteed minimum income for every Canadian from 18 to 65, or better still 18 to 60 when full pension is provided to Canadians 60 and above, this problem will be with us. We shall go on putting band-aids as we are now doing. I do not blame the government for what they are doing today, it is the most they can do now.

It is always possible however to consider something else. Pending a major operation, the patient is given temporary medication to strengthen and prepare him. All those small projects we now have can be no more than temporary medication to prepare our society for real action, for the long term cure that will ensure a parallel course between economic and social progress, so Canadians can share in this country's fantastic production.

It is therefore imperative in my view that we enter soon into the a very serious discussion that is vitally needed, since things are getting worse all the time. We heard it said that the