

Social Credit party suggests an effective solution: giving Canadians sufficient purchasing power to dispose of the production which I trust Canadian industry will supply.

• (2140)

Mr. Florian Côté (Richelieu): Mr. Speaker, today's proceedings emphasized all the shortcomings of the present government as a result of a motion brought forward yesterday. I became aware of it only at noon and I saw that it blamed the government for its inability to face its responsibilities during the past four years. In fact, it is said that the money made available to industry for the purpose of coping with regional disparity had not successfully settled the problem of unemployment.

I know there are problems, those which every country has to face for its development are similar to those we have in Canada. However, the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Richardson) mentions the efforts made by the Canadian government in the field of employment and in this field we are second to no other country. We have made noble endeavours even though we still have a long way to go. In fact, if it had not been for the present government, the unemployment rate of 6 per cent—which some like to bring up to 7 and 9 per cent—might be 10 or 15 per cent as in other countries.

If we consider some of the formulas suggested today by the movers of the motion, I do not see there, if I understood well, any real solutions; they merely pointed out what they think is wrong with government policies.

Industry was blamed because it did not do well enough in Canada. But industry—and this is normal—is somewhat like a human being; it is born, it can be sick and it can die. What can the State do to avoid this difficulty? It establishes and tries to establish industries in depressed areas in order to keep there those who are seeking a job not too far from their environment.

Therefore, we try to create some new industries. In fact, I have not heard a member of the opposition criticize this policy of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, nor have I heard of anyone refusing the grants and saying: "I refuse these grants because they are not advantageous for my area" Opposition members knew as well that it was impossible for the government to fill up everything it wanted to and that there would still be a bit of room for criticism.

I was somewhat disappointed to hear the hon. member for Kent-Essex (Mr. Danforth), of whom I have a very high opinion, begin his speech by saying that he was tired to hear members of the present government repeat what the government had been doing. It is unfortunate that he be tired, Mr. Speaker. I would like him to get some rest, so that he may come back to us in form, after the next election which will certainly take place within a year. I wish he will not be tired enough to fall apart during the election period, because I have a lot of respect for him. If he came back, he might be of some help to us.

He mentioned in his speech the weakness of the agricultural policy as well as the program concerning industrial investments. Now, I noted, during the meetings of the committee on agriculture, which I attended whenever possible, that a proportion of Canadian industries are not as flourishing as I would like them to be, but that they had

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made tremendous progress, despite the very difficult conditions that agriculture, in every part of the world, had to suffer. We can be proud, as Canadians, to have an agricultural industry that survived somewhat better than elsewhere.

But in order to make this industry even more flourishing, we introduced truly good measures, and provided the establishment of the Marketing Board. Even if my colleagues from the Social Credit party opposed this bill from the beginning, they were compelled to approve it later because farmers have exerted pressures in order to have it passed as soon as possible. This bill was passed within less than one year. We might then have spared this industry some difficulties, assisted it with more effective marketing of products, given farmers a greater purchasing power, as my hon. friends from the Social Credit party usually say. We wanted to do so, but it was not always easy, because the government's policy was ill-understood by the opposition. I would not blame them, because everyone does not possess the ability to grasp and understand the meaning of everything. However, had we enjoyed a little more cooperation there would be fewer hon. members complaining in the House and our constituents would feel a little more proud of us. I admit all these weaknesses.

Mr. Speaker, I am a bit inclined to talk about the Social Credit party, and the reason is not that the other parties are brighter, since they did not show any recognition of the government's efforts. The leader of the Social Credit party for Canada (Mr. Caouette) has not even dealt with the motion. He preferred to rave about the Bank of Canada and his own philosophy, and ended his speech by asking us to play "Social Credit" even though the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) thinks that we do nothing but play in this House. Nobody would forgive us that kind of game.

I feel we must not misinterpret statistics if we are to come to the right conclusions. I fear that the hon. members whom I had already asked to give me figures may misinterpret them. I saw two possible interpretations. Either those figures were misunderstood, or their full meaning was not grasped. I was right. All this came up in the agricultural committee, where I did a great deal of work, as well as in the committee on finance, trade and economic affairs.

After dealing with agriculture, I will now turn to the question of grants during the few minutes which I have left.

My constituency has taken advantage of our programs, although no more so than other constituencies in the country. I was a bit hurt at hearing today the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) criticize the government for investing several million dollars in Eastern Canada, while it failed to do the same for Western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, whenever a committee sits, or this House discusses a bill, we are given the chance of helping any part of the country. I went out of my way last spring to urge this House to vote as soon as possible the \$65 million to be given as grants to the Western Provinces, for I was convinced that Western Canada needed that money more than any other regions. However, whenever Eastern