

Supply—Industry

policy, if it exists, and I believe it does, according to my information which is not official.

I feel it is the duty of the Canadian government and the Department of Industry to look into this field, in order to inform the people and set standards accordingly.

Because of certain imports we must accept from foreign countries, some thought should also be given to promoting the textile industry and diversifying its production.

Since Canada does not grow cotton, a material essential to the textile industry, the Department of Industry should consider promoting industrial research in the field of synthetic fibres, or still, in the production of certain synthetic goods, which would enable the textile industry to keep apace and maintain its activities, and especially enable Canadian workers and their families to earn a living in those industries and, with the help of the department of manpower, soon to be created, to become skilled workers in the production of new goods.

Those are the few remarks I wanted to add with regard to the textile industry. I wish to assure the minister that if he has encouraging words for the Canadian people, they will be readily accepted, because over 5,000 weavers are on strike at present in the province of Quebec.

Besides, the problem goes much further than that of relations between labour and management. The problem arises from difficulty within the textile industry which, in order to compete with too many imports, had to step up its production and output. As a result, the profits of the industry were not reduced, but the textile workers were compelled to work in inhuman and unacceptable conditions while getting an inadequate salary.

Such is the alarming situation facing the textile workers and their families who look to the government, not only to the management, for a solution, and expect the government to take a firm position in order to improve the situation.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like the minister to make quite clear how foreign industrialists go about it when they want to come to Canada in order to open a subsidiary or invest capital.

How do they go about it? Do they apply to the Department of Industry or to the Department of Trade and Commerce? Do federal civil servants show them or lure them with industrial and economic advantages in all provinces, or in one particular province?

We need, in the province of Quebec, as well as in the Maritimes, an increasing inflow of new industry. Well, we want to know from the department, when foreign companies or businessmen apply to the federal government, how the economic and industrial image of Canada is presented to them?

For instance, we have 12 textile mills in Sherbrooke. I feel we have too many textile mills and that it is appropriate for the future, to think—and this is also of interest to other Quebec ridings—about keeping what we have, very well, but to think also of diversifying new industries, in different lines and that is the reason why we in Sherbrooke, need industries other than textile precisely to absorb manpower, which is sometimes totally or partially set aside, in order to maintain a high level of employment in Sherbrooke, in my area. And that goes for many other areas of the country.

Consequently, we should like to know how the government, the Departments of Industry or Trade and Commerce proceed to guide new foreign industries when they settle in Canada. I am asking publicly, today. I have often asked in writing. We, in Sherbrooke, are most interested in having new industries, in creating new industries.

We have a hard-working population, an enchanting site, adequate electric power, all necessary hydro-electric power, rivers, and we are close to the American border. We have a promising industrial centre. We are not going to send the Sherbrooke city council or the Sherbrooke member to Europe to meet various departments of industry over there. I am inclined to believe that foreign industrialists must apply to the federal government to find out which would be the best area, the best city in which to open a subsidiary.

I should very much like the minister to reply to this question. So, Mr. Chairman, I close my remarks and hope that the minister, when he speaks, will give detailed answers to these questions.

[*English*]

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, I have listened with some interest to the last few speakers and probably the tenor of my remarks will not be anywhere near that of some of the remarks to which we have listened. Most people in Canada have been very interested in the Department of Industry, because it seemed that it might be like the extension of some of the other federal departments we have had, such as the Department of